

THE VOICE

MAGAZINE

Vol 23 Issue 17 2015-04-24

Don't Miss the Gravy Train

AUSU Awards Deadline Looms

Alberta Elections

The Issues for AU Students

Course Exam

An Overview of ECOM 320

Plus:

Editorial: What Now?

*A Letter to the Students
and much more!*



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Magazine

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Karl;

Reading about the possibility of Athabasca students no longer having a Voice is counter to what public education and our country in general is in need of. We as a people need a Voice to speak for, against and to join debates in whatever issues we see affecting us.

To remove a student paper like the Voice would be a detriment to the university as a whole because if AU was wise they would be reading the articles and learning what is most important for the student (paying!) body. I first discovered Athabasca sometime in 2002 or 3 along with the Voice and have written a few articles over the years; it is an important paper because studying online is difficult and requires an immense amount of focus and time to accomplish the goal of graduating. During my studies I was too busy to read through what was happening and was always appreciative of the Voice because I could learn what the current issues were and what would affect me.

I believe it would be a loss all around for AU, it would be a detriment to the AU image and surely make myself and likely others feel that AU doesn't care about their students. That would be a shame!

Sincerely,
Gaurang

Thanks Gaurang, the support that's hit my mailbox, from students, journalists, and even legal counsel, has been heartening. I'm hopeful students have been heard and this will sort itself out.

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

What Now

Karl Low



Well.

That was an interesting week.

For those of you who haven't been paying attention, last week was possibly the last issue of *The Voice Magazine*, as there was an AGM scheduled on Tuesday that could have removed the protection and the funding that students had previously asked AUSU guarantee *The Voice Magazine*. As you're reading this, however, that obviously didn't happen.

A quick run-down of the events. I managed to find that following that AGM, there was to be a regular public Council Meeting, one that hadn't been announced in any of AUSU's social media or on their website. The agenda for that meeting initially contained a ratification of an email motion where Council moved money from the office staff budget to the budget for the Executive Councillor Wages. I reported on this, as best I could, calculating based on the numbers I could find in AUSU's own policies, as well as from other students unions around the web. I found that the President's wages, benefits included, had gone up to over \$50,000. A wage

increase of somewhere around \$15,000. I pointed out how the new wage seemed very high in comparison with a number of other students unions. And if it seems I'm being a little vague here, that's because of what happened next.

On Monday, the 20th, I was told by the new VP External, acting in her new role of EiC, that AUSU had received a complaint about the article, and demanded I remove all false statements from it or it would be taken down. So far as I was aware, there were no false statements in it. I was careful to point out that I was just calculating based on the numbers I had, and I knew that I didn't have all the information, so my calculations could be off. That wasn't good enough, apparently, and the article came down. Then the entire issue came down, because, as it was explained to me, they didn't know how to take the one story out of the PDF version of *The Voice Magazine*.

To date, I should point out, I have yet to see any evidence that this claim actually exists. It is entirely possible that the Executive, or at least someone on the Executive, could simply have decided they didn't like my exposure of what they'd done, and so had the article pulled, violating bylaws in the process. I think it's also worth pointing out that AUSU remains protected by those very bylaws, since they indicate that *The Voice Magazine* has autonomy, so AUSU is not responsible for the articles published therein.

Since then, I've been contacted by AUSU's lawyer, asking to provide verification of a number of the claims made in the article, including some items that I took directly from AUSU policies on their website. I've provided my verification, and been told that there will be a response next week. Essentially censoring the entire article for the entire week, making sure that by the time it goes back up, it will no longer be part of the issue on the website.

Hm. That wasn't that quick of a run-down anyway, was it? In any event, that puts us where we are today. At this point on Friday, the article still isn't posted. I still don't know who made the claim, though I'm being given every assurance by the VP External that one exists and that AUSU's attorney has indeed seen it before sending the request for verification. Now, in total fairness to the VP External, she's brand new to the exec position, and got dumped into this whole mess within her first few days, she's never been an editor, has no experience with publications, and, given that my previous coverage of her hasn't been exactly flattering, has been understandably concerned about what she might be getting into. I'm certainly willing to believe this is more a case of error than of malice.

But that doesn't change how I'm now having serious doubts about the ability of The Voice Magazine to publish without interference from AUSU Council, from the very people it is supposed to be reporting on.

Fortunately, the purpose of the bylaw when it was originally put in (and I know this because I was at the AGM when students did it, yes, I'm that old) was that The Voice Magazine has accumulated some significant reserves. It's done that. Enough so that now might be the time to start serious discussions about how *The Voice Magazine* can fully separate from AUSU, complete with running referendums so that we can have access to advertise to every AU student, and have an oversight board comprised of AU students to ensure that you're getting the publication that serves the students best for news, reviews, advice, entertainment, and, of course, reporting on the activities of AUSU.

And in addition to that, this week we also have everything from Alberta Election Coverage to how to apply for AUSU Awards before the upcoming deadline, to an excuse you might not have thought of as to why you're busy procrastinating right now with *The Voice Magazine* instead of doing your studies! Enjoy the read!



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 "serenebarb" reminds students of the AUSU Annual General Meeting on Apr 21, as well as the regular monthly council meeting following (both meetings we're subsequently postponed.) In the State and Legal Studies course discussion forum, user "KALinton" asks if the assignments for LGST 369 are essays. Other topics include courses ECON 401 and IDRL 305.

AthaU Facebook Group

Armin wants to know if he can request an essay be re-marked by a different tutor. Samantha inquires how long it takes to get marks back from a paper exam. Bethany weighs in on the question of *The Voice Magazine's* value for students. JoAnne asks students to name their most positive experience at AU.

Other postings include failing courses, how AUSU is spending your money, furry study buddies, adult education, petitions, the AUSU AGM, and courses CHEM 301, ECON 385, HRMT 300, IDRL 309, MATH 265, and PSYC 395.

Twitter

@AthabascaU tweets: "AU profs Joy Fraser and Norman Temple have written an excellent opinion piece on science in the @edmontonjournal <http://ow.ly/LXPVf>." In an earlier tweet, @AthabascaU posts: "In case you missed it, here you go: #Blackfoot elder Frank Weasel Head on CBC @daybreakalberta re new @au_press book <http://ow.ly/LQyRK>."



Don't Let the AUSU Gravy Train Leave Without You

Barbara Lehtiniemi



You have only one week to submit your application to AUSU to make the May 1 deadline for a number of AUSU undergraduate scholarships and awards. Since AUSU hasn't been promoting the upcoming deadline, applications are likely to be lower than usual, reducing the competition. This is your chance!

The AUSU Scholarship, Awards, and Bursaries Program has not been axed by council, but the way they're going, you just never know. Currently, there are two award periods, May 1 and November 1, while bursary applications can be made year round.

The following scholarships and awards have a May 1 application deadline:

AUSU Academic Achievement Scholarship

Got a healthy GPA? This scholarship is awarded to the applicants with the highest GPA over the last thirty credits. Two scholarships of \$1000 each are up for grabs on May 1. To qualify, you must be enrolled in an AU program, have completed 30 AU credits by May 1, and have not won this award previously.

To apply, complete the [application form](#), and send it to the AUSU office by mail, fax, or e-mail. You'll also need to provide a "preview" copy of your AU transcript, available from your myAU student account.

AUSU Student Service Award

Are you active in your community, or within AU/AUSU? This award rewards students who have made "outstanding contributions to their community." Two scholarships of \$1000 each are available May 1. You must have completed a minimum of 12 AU credits, have a minimum GPA of 2.00 over the last 12 credits, and have not won this award previously.

Applicants can self-nominate, or be nominated by a volunteer supervisor. Complete the [application form](#) and send to the AUSU office by mail, fax, or e-mail. Include a "preview" copy of your AU transcript and, if you're self-nominating, you'll need to include at least one letter of reference from a volunteer supervisor.

AUSU Returning Student Award

Did you return to education after a long period away? This award is for students who have returned to post-secondary education after being away from formal education for two or more years—the longer the better. Two scholarships of \$1000 each are available May 1. You must have completed a minimum of 12 AU credits, have a minimum GPA of 2.00 over the last 12 credits, and have not won this award previously. Preference is given to applicants who are AU program students, and who have overcome significant hurdles to return to education.

To apply, complete the [application form](#), and send to the AUSU office by mail, fax, or e-mail. This application requires an essay of under 500 words describing the challenges you overcame to return to school. Include a "preview" copy of your AU transcript.

AUSU Balanced Students Award

Are you juggling school with other commitments, such as work, volunteer commitments, or family? This award is for students who "balance multiple commitments." Two scholarships of \$1000 each are available May 1. You must have completed a minimum of 12 AU credits, have a minimum GPA of 2.00 over the last 12 credits, and have not won this award previously.

To apply, complete the [application form](#), and send to the AUSU office by mail, fax, or e-mail. This application requires an essay of under 500 words describing how you balance your commitments, as well as two reference letters. Include a "preview" copy of your AU transcript.

Each application form contains instructions on how to obtain a pdf "preview" copy of your AU student transcript, as well as a checklist of items you'll need to include with your information. Only AUSU members—in general, those enrolled in at least one AU undergraduate course—may apply.

As with all scholarships and awards, read the instructions on the application form(s) carefully and be sure to include all required information when you submit your application. A significant number of applications are disqualified each year due to missing or incomplete information.

For more information on these AUSU student scholarships and awards, or for information on AUSU bursaries visit the [Student Awards](#) page of the AUSU website. You can also find information in AUSU [Policy 7.02 Scholarship, Awards, and Bursaries Program](#).

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

Click of the Wrist

What You Didn't Know About the Bard

On Thursday we celebrated Shakespeare's birthday—but if you missed it this year, it's not too late to join in the festivities! This week we'll look at some things you might not have known about Shakespeare's story.

A Night to Remember

Scholars, actors, and directors regularly disagree about Shakespearean interpretation, but usually remain civil. Not so in 1849, when rival actors became embroiled in a dispute so bitter that it turned into a full-blown riot that resulted in 22 deaths. "Mysteries at the Museum" gives the shocking details.

The Original

Green with jealousy? At an icebreaker? Telling knock-knock jokes? These expressions—and more—can all be traced back to Shakespeare. This *mental_floss* article explains 21 phrases you may use every day without realizing the origins.

The Man and the Myth

There are plenty of myths surrounding Shakespeare's life and work—and not all of them are true. This podcast, produced by the Folger Shakespeare Library, sorts them out.



Alberta Provincial Election 2015 Why AU Students Should Care

Bethany Tynes



Maybe you live in Barrhead, Alberta, and you just aren't interested in politics. Or maybe you live in Yarmouth, Nova Scotia, and you're looking at implications of the Liberal's new budget on your own province. But even if you aren't normally interested in Alberta politics, if you're an Athabasca University student, it affects you.

Post-secondary education is a provincial responsibility. The government supports universities and colleges financially, and government choices have a direct impact on the quality and accessibility of post-secondary education. That means that no matter where you live, as an AU student, your pocketbook and learning experience could be affected by what happens in Alberta's provincial elections.

The new government could, for example, decide to give AU more, or less, funding, which would affect AU's ability to maintain our electronic infrastructure and retain the academics and front-line workers who are crucial to student success. In 2013, the Government of Alberta cut funding to AU and other post-secondary institutions by almost 8%, forcing AU to eliminate 113 staff positions. The recently released 2015 budget included a further 4% cut to post-secondary over the next two years.

AU is particularly vulnerable to changes in funding. The Alberta government's funding formula is not transparent, but is based primarily on the number of Alberta students each institution serves. As Athabasca University has significantly more out-of-province than Alberta students (24,442 to 15,543 in 2013-14), government funding does not support most AU students, contributing to a gross, chronic underfunding of the university.

The government also has the power change the rules around what AU is allowed to charge students in tuition. Right now, government regulation ties tuition for most programs to CPI – that is, tuition can't be increased by more than inflation. After the release of the provincial budget, however, Don Scott, the Minister of Innovation and Advanced Education, has said that "every option" is on the table, which means that tuition regulation may not be upheld, and the cost per course could suddenly jump.

So the composition of the new government will play a large role in determining AU's funding and, thereby, its future. Where do Alberta's four main political parties stand on funding universities?

The Progressive Conservative Association of Alberta has held office in Alberta for the last forty-three consecutive years. The PC platform pledges to "increase access and reduce financial barriers to post-secondary education in Alberta," but does not offer any details on how this could be brought about. Premier Jim Prentice has not offered any explanation how the cuts recently levied on post-secondary institutions by Progressive Conservative governments could aid in reaching his goals of increased access.

The Wildrose Party is the Progressive Conservatives' even-more-conservative competition. The Wildrose has a policy touting "world class" post-secondary, and notes that "labour shortages should be addressed through innovative programs that match graduates with jobs through incentives." Research would be funded by

"encouraging private sector partnerships." So if you're a business major or trades student, and your learning has direct employment outcomes, this plan might work for you, but if you're studying the humanities, or conducting bleeding edge research without obvious commercial applications, look out!

Alberta's Liberal Party pledges to "reduce tuition fees" and "ensure program choice," and while these goals seem slightly more realistic than the free tuition that the party promised prior to the last election, the Liberal promises are vague and the platform offers no hints on how these aims could be achieved.

The New Democrats have, by far, the most detailed post-secondary education platform, promising stable funding for universities and to "reverse the reckless Prentice cuts." NDP promises to restore the Summer Temporary Employment Program are aimed at a traditional, young post-secondary student demographic, and are unlikely to have much impact on AU students. Rachel Notley's "real tuition freeze for post-secondary students," however, could well meet the aim of making advanced education "increasingly accessible and affordable."

Not sure which party is the best fit for you? Vote Compass will ask you about your values, and let you know how they align with Alberta's political parties. And if you're still undecided, Change Alberta can help you vote strategically by recommending the progressive candidate most likely to win in your constituency (incidentally, it's also run by AU Professor Emeritus, Alvin Finkel).

So what can you do to ensure that this provincial election has a positive outcome for AU? If you're out of province but have any friends or family in Alberta, contact them to make sure that they know how important your education is to you, and how their vote will affect it. And if you are an Alberta resident, you can volunteer for or donate to a candidate or party that you believe in, but more than that, you can VOTE! Because voting is how we help choose the best government possible—and the best, most secure future for AU.

Bethany Tynes completed her MA in Integrated Studies through AU, and is a Canadian politics junkie.

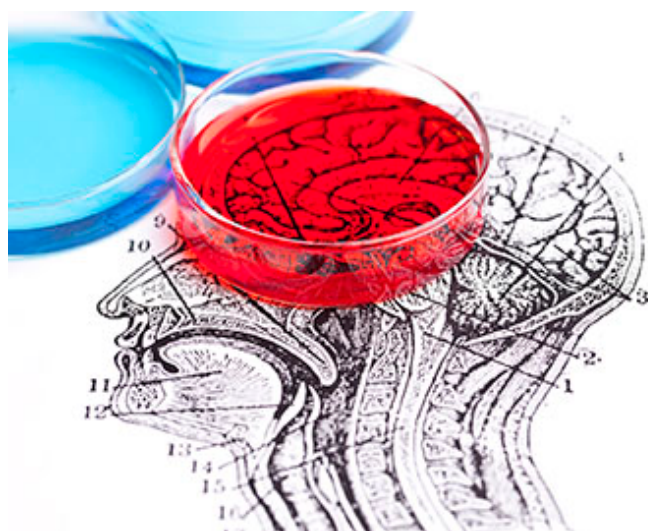


Primal Numbers The Science of Slacking

S.D. Livingston

Slacking off at school? Finding it hard to stay motivated? Whether it's you or your kids that are having trouble hitting the books, new research shows that the problem might be caused by your genes. That's right—genetics can have a bigger effect on your study habits than external factors do. But that doesn't mean you'll get a free pass on your grades.

The news comes from a study that included almost 13,000 twins in six countries. As *Science Alert* reports, researchers who looked at participants' study habits "found that up to 50 percent of their differences in motivation at



school could be down to the genes they inherited from their parents."

The key to this discovery lay in the different answers given by fraternal and identical twins. For example, participants were asked about their motivation in several different subjects—things like how much they enjoyed their studies or how well they thought they were doing. To a fair degree, the answers from the identical twins matched a lot more closely than the answers from the fraternal twins.

In other words, whether they were keen students or not, the identical twins tended to have about the same level of motivation as their siblings. Fraternal twins, on the other hand, showed a bigger difference in their enthusiasm for school.

But how does that point to genetics as a deciding factor in the motivation gap? Well, fraternal twins share half their genetic material. With identical twins, all their genetic material is the same. So after taking into account shared environmental influences (parents, teachers, socioeconomic factors), genetics is a prime candidate. Especially since the differences between identical and fraternal twins were consistent across all six countries, which means that cultural influences didn't play a major role.

So what does that mean for those who struggle to make themselves crack the books? Sorry, but it won't get you sympathy marks on that homework assignment or special accommodation in the classroom.

For starters, the idea of being genetically shortchanged in the motivation department would be impossible to prove, since researchers haven't identified anything nearly as specific as a homework-motivation gene. And unless you're a twin in a carefully controlled study, you'd probably have a hard time proving that other factors weren't to blame—like a busy schedule or plain old self-discipline.

It's also worth bearing in mind that researchers estimate only about half of your motivation comes down to genetics. The rest still has a lot to do with external factors that can be controlled or at least modified. We can change programs or courses, try different study methods, or find a partner or online group to help motivate us.

The good news, though, is that this research makes it even more obvious that education shouldn't be a one-size-fits-all system. True, the concept of learning styles might be debunked, as this [article](#) from the Association for Psychological Science explains, but far too often, people who don't fit into the traditional classroom structure still get labelled as academic failures when a change in approach is all that's needed to turn them into high achievers. Two notable examples are Walt Disney, who dropped out of high school in order to study film arts at night, and Richard Branson, who had poor grades because of dyslexia.

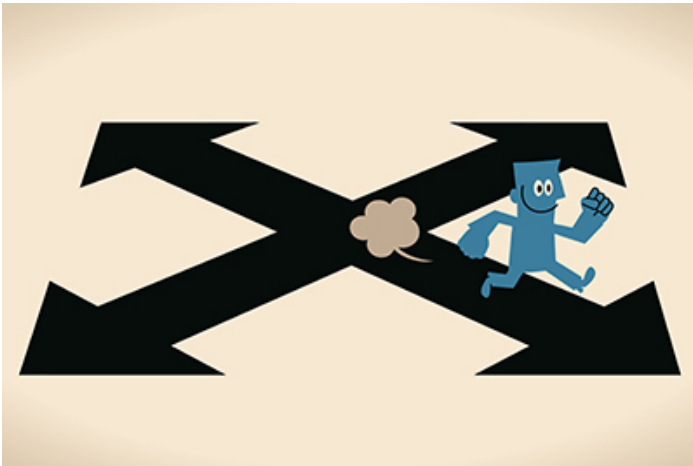
Is slacking in your genes? Science might never be able to tell. But if you're having trouble cracking the books, a little [motivation](#) from Sir Richard himself might help.

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

The Entrepreneur's Path

Rich Dad, Poor Dad

Marie Well



Scouting out books on entrepreneurialism from the shelves of bookstores always disappoints. On one hand, there exists a vast selection of books on tiresome topics such as how to write a business plan or the mindset of an entrepreneur. Worse still included a series on the cut-throat, unmerciful Dragon Den's advice, of which I own one book. On the other hand, most befitting of my tastes, a treasure trove of books on online sales and the world of social media occasionally appear. Yet, Rich Dad Poor Dad, a book by Robert T. Kiyosaki proves to be one of the best finds of all.

Passive Income: What to Do Instead of Work a Day Job

Kiyosaki outlines some prevalent ways of making money work for you instead of you working for money. Yes, the daytime job is frowned upon as anything more than a means to aid investments into projects such as real estate, stocks, and intellectual property. It's passive income—not labor intensive income—that should fuel your fire.

Kiyosaki (2012) outlines several means for gaining income, particularly passive income. These include running businesses that you own but do not work at, investing in stocks or bonds, investing in real-estate for revenue, providing IOUs, and, my favourite, gaining "royalties from intellectual property such as music, scripts, and patents" (p. 101).

But why is this so revolutionary? In my previous articles, I've already outlined a number of ways you can increase your revenue generation through passive income. Whether selling affiliate products or your own short books, videos or music clips, through Amazon, or building a Zazzle store to gain revenue. You don't need to be present to do any of this—and the income you generate grows with each additional download you provide. It requires some time investment and creative energy, as well as some means of promotion your store, but then all you need is a website, and a Wordpress blog can be set up as easily as a click of a button, guided by the Bluehost.com sales representative. The money follows.

But the easiest way to go mobile with making income, while less passive of all the above, involves simply setting up a Fiverr.com account. As I mentioned in a previous article, on Fiverr.com, you offer a gig, or service, for \$5 and add additional features for additional cost to the purchaser. Copy editing services, for instance, ideally lead to big revenue turnaround once you gain popularity with your Fiverr.com account.

So we already have a myriad of ways to make passive income. But to internalize this information requires you put it into action. By taking initiative, you can start padding your pocket sooner than the opportunities may otherwise arise.

Investing in Stocks and Bonds

I invest in stocks and bonds—delighting when an investment turns a 30% or more profit in a matter of a month. Kiyosaki alerts to the benefits of investing in stocks and bonds, and especially places testimony on the benefits of learning the art of investing through books and courses.

My particular strategy for wrapping my head around the market resides in paying for a market strategy commentary. The commentary costs over a thousand a year, or slightly less than \$150 a month, but provides education and sound advice beyond the value of the cash investment. Through the market strategy commentary I subscribe to, I gain a solid education on current market conditions globally while gaining insights into the undergirding of stocks, bonds, currency, and so forth, in addition to cause-and-effect patterns that comprise market predictability, although the market remains the most unpredictable beast on Earth.

Without the guidance of a market commentary subscription, I would surely blow up in the market, even after reading Tony Robbins' new book on wealth management.

About the market, Kyosaki says invest when the market is down, sell when the market is up. Most investors like to jump on the bandwagon when the economy is booming, but everyone knows that a booming economy means expensive stocks at their peak. You want to buy when the market is at its lowest points, as the only way for the stock to go is up.

An even better strategy is to delve into options trading, which can yield profit even when the market sinks. You can choose options on the bet that the investment will either improve or decline—or both. A basic understanding of stocks essentially paves the path for learning more about options. Yet, a solid foundation in options trading is necessary to make profit-generating strategies on a fairly regular basis.

Investing in Real Estate

Investing in real estate is something I unashamedly have no insight into outside of Kyosaki's rendition of how to invest. He urges the reader to go and buy inexpensive real estate on a down payment and sell for a higher price, recovering your full costs and padding your wallet with extra income. He advises to jog around the neighbourhood for at least ten minutes a month, gaining insight into what properties are for sale, what the rental costs of properties amount to, and so forth. By doing such market research, you may come across the opportunity of a lifetime, especially if a home stays unsold, and you offer the desperate seller a significantly lower bid than requested. Always make a bid, exhorts Kyosaki; that's the heart and soul of profit potential.

The Philosophy

Perhaps the greatest vehicle of wisdom used by Kyosaki is his advice to pay yourself first, never thinking "I can't afford that", but instead thinking, "How can I make more income to afford that?" I love these words of wisdom. Always diversifying your talents, you can engage in passive income generating projects that bring in extra cash. With a book that sells a meagre \$5 a week, that adds up to \$260 a year. With four books generating a meagre \$5 a week, that amounts to \$1040 a year, and so on. Add on additional passive income strategies, and your take-home rises even more handsomely.

References

Kiyosaki, Robert T. (2012). *Rich Dad Poor Dad*. Scottsdale, AZ: Plata Publishing

Course Exam

An Overview of e-Commerce (ECOM) 320

Philip Kirkbride



I've been meaning to do a course review for a while, but none of the classes I'd completed stood out. With e-Commerce (ECOM) 320: Overview of e-Commerce, that has definitely changed. ECOM320 is a foundational course which overviews the main aspects of e-Commerce. These include technology topics, business models, the virtual value chain, innovations, and marketing strategies.

One of the aspects that I really appreciated about this course was how up to date it is. With examples as recent as mid 2012 you're studying what's happening in e-Commerce now, not what was happening 10 or 20 years ago. Some of the examples covered include modern hard-hitters like Facebook, Groupon, and Twitter.

The course also covers foundational topics like the history of the internet, basic encryption, and logistics management. The topics covered are not all limited to 'virtual' topics. One of the most interesting lessons was *Lesson 5: Supply Chain Management and e-Commerce*. Supply Chain Management refers to the logistics required to actually store and ship thousands of products all over the world daily. The chapter does an analysis of Amazon.com and how they run their operations, including new innovations which have recently improved efficiency.

While the course has no prerequisites, I would recommend having either an interest in technology or business. My interest in both these topics made the course of a bit easier when dealing with complex concepts like public certificate encryption. I ended up doing well in the class because I found it interesting, but, in retrospect, it was a lot of work compared to other 300 level classes I've taken.

It was also one of the first Athabasca classes I've taken with a mid-term. Due to a scheduling issue and being out of the country I ended up taking the midterm and final in the same week. It's a strange feeling studying for the mid-term and final at once, but Athabasca regulations allow for it.

The assignments are some-what simple, with three short assignments and two exams, you really need to know the material well to do well on them. What this comes down to is a lot of reading and note taking. Many of the questions are specific terms or specific cases, so be prepared to memorize a lot of acronyms.

Overall, I think ECOM320 is a quality course. If you're looking for an easy elective to boost you're mark than avoid it all costs. If you're looking to learn valuable information about how e-commerce works and is evolving than this course is for you. While I took it as an elective it can also be used towards Athabasca's University Certificate in e-Commerce.

Philip Kirkbride is an AU Student with a penchant for travelling the globe while doing his AU courses.

The Travelling Student Goon

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 issue Matt and I landed in Sydney Australia. After getting some much-needed rest we went to work looking for a car.

As it turns out, Australian banks and governments are pretty used to dealing with backpackers. We saw other travellers opening and closing accounts at the bank we went to, and found that, in 2013, the Immigration Department issued a staggering 249,231 working holiday visas. With a population of 23 million, the travellers

account for a temporary 10% population boost each year.

Finding a car wasn't too hard. At any given time in Sydney there are several travellers looking to sell cars a few days before catching their flights. Matt ended up buying a beat-up, old station wagon that came with low-grade camping gear and a portable hot plate for cooking. The fabric of the aged interior was falling off and had been secured with several tacks. But, at a cool price of \$2000 for the working vehicle, we weren't complaining.

In our last few days in Sydney I made sure to check out a fair bit of the city, including the downtown area, the Royal Botanical Gardens, and I even watched a giant military ship dock at the harbour. The ship had so many personnel on board that the harbour area was flooded with Australian Navy eagerly heading to shops and bars.

The Blue Parrot hostel was quiet enough that I could study. I spent a few hours between a hammock in the backyard reading and writing on my computer in the kitchen. Of course, being in King's Cross, notorious for its nightlife, everyone starts drinking after dinner. After a bit of resistance I decided to join the festivities.

As one of the biggest wine producers in the world, Australia produces a staggering 750 million liters of wine annually. From what I can tell, it is the backpackers who drink a significant amount of it. If you're staying in hostels in Australia you will inevitably hear the term 'goon', which refers to giant, cheap boxes of wine frequently drank by backpackers.

While Matt avoided goon at all costs, I decided to give it a try. I have to say it doesn't taste too bad, but, more than likely, you're going to pay for it the next morning. By 11:00 pm I found myself feeling the jet lag and called it a night. Matt and a group of French travellers went out to a nightclub for, what I'm told, was an epic night of drinking and dancing.

The next morning we—or rather, I—woke up ready to hit the road. A few hours later Matt forced himself out of bed and we packed our stuff. After only four days it was time to say goodbye to Sydney and hello to Young, the cherry capital of Australia.



Study Tips from a Semi-Anonymous Friend

There is nothing more that The Study Dude wants for you than to learn how to flow—and flow fervently—with anything but the crowd.

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 part two of Joshua Schimel's *Writing Science*, a book to make any scientific writing clear, entertaining—and fundable.

The Secret of Effective Sentences

Has anyone read a book that describes in delightful detail how to draft a sentence? And what gives a sentence a lasting impression?

Joshua Schimel's uncanny knack for taking obfuscated scientific writing and simplifying it will make your head spin. When your brain is muddling over some scientific paper, you bet and believe that that particular author's funded projects are nonexistent. Who wants to fund something you can't decipher? Moreover, who wants to read the gobbledygook of bombastic scientific writing? Schimel challenges the notion that scientific writing should suffocate:

- Let your sentences introduce characters, such as oxygen or a formula; then proceed with showing what the characters do; and conclude with the character's outcome. [Does that sound like a recipe for some esoteric path to enlightenment? If you think, yes, you are not alone.] Yet, when you think of the subject of the sentence as the character, the verb as the action, and the object as the resolution, it all makes sense.
- You can place emphasis either in the sentence opening if you are using an LD (lead–development structure) or in the resolution if using a OCAR (Opening, Challenge, Action, Resolution) structure. (The LD structure doesn't have a formidable conclusion.)
- At the beginning of sentence comes the topic; at the end, the stress. The ending of each clause and sentence holds the greatest power, which is why it is referred to as the stress. Put your most potent words in your sentence at the very end. Your sentences will thrive on effective use of this power position.
- Put old information at the beginning of the sentence (at the topic); put new information at the end of the sentence (the stress).
- If you want to de-emphasize information, put it in the middle of the sentence. This de-emphasized word or phrase could be a widely known definition that you include as a hedge in case some readers haven't yet encountered it.
- Drop meta-commentary at the start of sentences—"it has been", "we have concluded", and those kind of phrases, you get the picture, all fall into the category of meta-commentary.
- Don't break sentences midway with a long incidental clause, especially if it breaks the flow of subject-verb proximity (as the subject and verb should be close together).

Find the Flow in Your Paragraphs

Writing paragraphs etches out, when done well, a formula. The formulaic ingredients combine to generate smooth flowing ensembles. Yet this connecting of sentences into cohesive paragraphs is not some enigma, but rather, an art.

How can you call writing paragraphs an art? Well, as an undergraduate student, I used to take a topic idea, fluff it up with lots of supportive quotes, and string the quotes together into paragraphs. While this may appear an effective strategy, it has glaring limitations. Amiss to this strategy is the art of paragraph flow. Paragraphs are like fine-tuned—fully tweaked—dynamic stories. A dynamic story isn't just a sequence of similar quotes listlessly strung together; a story is an evolving relay of entangled event that starts by introducing characters, where the end of one sentence naturally leads to the start of the next, often culminating into a climactic—even thrilling—ending (Schimel, 2012).

Back to my leaden strategy as an undergraduate student, it rehashed the same story, sentence after sentence, but with different quotes each time—creating a single repetitive argument rather than a story arc. You can, however, make your paragraphs more dynamic with tips from Joshua Schimel:

- A paragraph's sentences must nicely link together. To do this, pretend your sentences are running a relay race where they pass the baton to the next sentence in line. How does this come about in practice? Well, the stress of your first sentence should transform into the topic of the next sentences, and the stress of the next sentence should transform into the topic of the sentence after that. At the very end, a return to the topic of the very first sentence nicely closes the paragraphs.
- The start (topic) of the first sentence of the paragraph and the ending (stress) of the last sentence need not be the exact same words, but something similar would be fitting.
- If you start each sentence with the same word in the topic position (the beginning of the sentence), the paragraph becomes like a list.
- A paragraph break signifies a new story arc. How do you connect these story arcs? Use the stress (end) word of the first paragraph as your topic (start) word of your next paragraph. There! Problem solved. Well, that's the easiest solution anyway.

The Formula for an Energized Resolution

In undergraduate studies, I never had issues with conclusions. In graduate studies, I befuddled over them. Why this transition? In undergraduate studies, I made extensive use of outlines and cue cards, inserting all of my quotes into a structural schema. This structure enabled me to organize my thinking to a logical conclusion. In graduate studies, however, desperate for advice, I was told that my extensive cue card system was rubbish, so I abandoned that method of creating structure. As a result, my writing suffered. Without a means to structure my essays, the entire essay-writing process impaired my sensibilities to the point where I even forgot the art of writing an effective conclusion.

So, I wonder how less structured people write their conclusions. How *do* you free-thinking, unconstrained, uninhibited types go about drafting an A+ essay from the top of your heads? Well, Joshua Schimel poses tips for making your resolutions shine, regardless of your learning type:

- Your resolutions should contain your most powerful words.
- A solid resolution answers the research question that you pose in the challenge component of your essay (where the challenge is the "C" in an OCAR structure). Not only that, but a quality resolution also

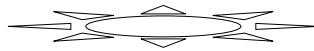
demonstrates how the solution to your question applies to the large context. Put the most significant words of your conclusion at the very end.

- Don't conclude with ideas that are ideally placed in your introduction, that common textbooks already dispense, or that everyone already knows.
- Don't introduce new ideas in your conclusions and ending surprises are recipes for disaster.
- The resolutions should synthesize findings and examine how the findings fit with the larger issues.
- Ending a paper strongly means your chances for funding magnify.

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

Schimmel, Joshua. (2012). *Writing Science*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.



In Conversation ..with Tumbleweed Wanderers, Part II

Wanda Waterman



Tumbleweed Wanderers deliver an original incarnation of soulful folk rock from the San Francisco Bay area. Their career started with busking and was accelerated by creative discipline; they soon found themselves a lauded stage presence at clubs and festivals.

Their soon-to-be-released album, Realize, is a rich, multilayered tapestry of the same kind of rootsy themes, masterful strings, and the beautifully blended vocal harmonies for which the band is known, with a delightful psychedelic dimension. Recently band members Jeremy Lyon and Rob Fidel (who both do guitar and vocals) took the time to answer Wanda Waterman's questions about

creative influences, musical experiences, and onstage flubs.

On Intense Musical Experiences

ROB: One of the best feelings is when Jer or I bring a song to the table and it just all comes together so quickly and effortlessly. Jer and I met in college in Santa Cruz and we've had so many great experiences writing and playing music in those forests.

Some of our most intense listening experiences were at Outside Lands 2012, lying in Golden Gate Park listening to Sigur Rós while the fog rolled in.

What do you think will make *Realize* stand out from the rest of this year's recordings?

JEREMY: I don't know. I haven't heard them yet— haha! This year's been great already for albums. *Black Messiah*, *I Love You, Honey Bear*, *To Pimp a Butterfly*, and the Alabama Shakes and My Morning Jacket singles have all blown my mind this year. We just made the best record we could.

Has anything weird or funny happened to you during recording, rehearsal, or performance?

ROB: I would say most times we're together something weird and funny happens. There've been a handful of times I've fallen during a performance—and not just stumble, but completely eat shit mid-song.

I can't tell you how many times I've walked off stage and realized my zipper was down during the whole show.

A lot of times we get pretty goofy and loopy when we're recording and it always keeps the mood light and fun. Pat (the keyboardist) is often the most entertaining member to record because the things that come out of that dude's mouth are hilarious. Sometimes he'll just start freestyling over our songs and it'll get picked up by the mics.

Your vocal harmonies are really tight. Do either of you have perfect pitch?

JEREMY: Thank-you! No we don't, nowhere close. We just practiced our harmonies a lot.

What conditions do you need in your life in order to go on being creative?

ROB: We recently recorded our new album, *Realize*, in Stinson Beach, CA and it was one of the most amazing experiences I've had playing music. This studio had so much natural light pouring into the space and such a beautiful view of the forest and ocean.

I'd say having a good amount of vitamin D is a big one for me. Most studios are cave-like, and it's easy to lose track of time and the outside world. I'm also a clean freak so I prefer my space to be cleaned and organized before I can be productive musically.

Are there any books, albums, or films that have profoundly influenced you?

JEREMY: *Dark Side of the Moon*, *Born To Run*, *Up From Below*, *Circuital*, *For Emma*, *Forever Ago*, *Fate*, *Déjà vu*, *Sea Change*, *In Rainbows*, *Sky Blue Sky*, *After The Gold Rush*, *High Fidelity*, and *East of Eden*.

New Listening

ROB: I've been listening to a lot of new music this year. Like Jer mentioned, so many great records have already come out like, *I Love You, Honey Bear*, and I've been really into the new Sufjan Stevens record. Dr Dog released a live album and it's incredible! I almost like it more than any of their studio albums.

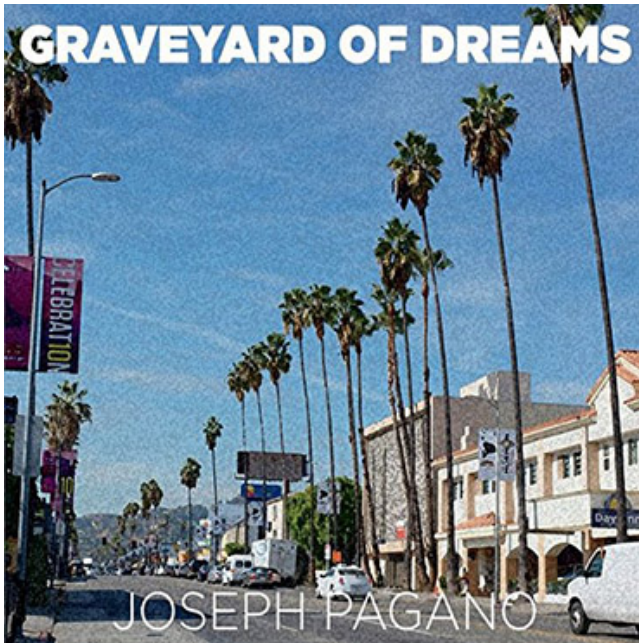
We are really looking forward to releasing this album and getting back on the road! It's been a long year of recording, and we can't wait to be back on tour and sharing our music with everyone!

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

Music Review

Graveyard of Dreams

Samantha Stevens



Album: *Graveyard of Dreams*

Artist: Joseph Pagano

Sometimes it's amazing where life can take us. One moment we find ourselves following one track, only to be nudged onto another track entirely. Joseph Pagano is one such person.

It seemed that music was always in Joseph's life. Over the years his life's journey brought him in contact with musical legends like Duran Duran's Andy Taylor and Judas Priest's lead singer Rob Halford.

Beginning his music career in New Jersey, Joseph started out by playing with his high school band Junior's Farm, with whom he won a Beatles sound-alike contest. *Graveyard of Dreams* is Joseph's first EP, written over the course of several

years. Drawing from life experiences, Joseph's music is like a combination between Brit-rock, Americana, and classic rock and roll. If you are a fan of The Beatles, Jon Bon Jovi, Bryan Adams, and Guns and Roses then be sure to check out Joseph Pagano. The EP is a short seven tracks, but each song is packed with such a powerful sound that Joseph's talents are perfectly showcased.

If I had to pick just one track on the EP to share with you, it would have to be "Little Girls". By far the cutest song that I have ever heard, Joseph sings about the joy and love that his two daughters have brought into his life. While the lyrics are beautiful and touching, it is the story behind the song that makes it stand out. When the track was being recorded, Joseph's daughters walked into the room to tell him something interrupting the recording. Instead of rerecording the song, Joseph left the interruption in making the song even more heartfelt. Today his oldest daughter is a young woman, and it is her photography and artwork that are used for the album's art and design.

The second surprise on this EP is the fully instrumental "The Sounds of Life". Once again demonstrating his diverse talent, the song is a whimsical piano and drum piece that ends the EP on a light and refreshing note, vastly different from many rock albums available today.

Overall, my favourite is "Don't Let Chances Pass You By" because it seems to directly reflect Joseph's personal and musical journey. The sound is typical for a rock and roll song, sounding very similar to Bon Jovi, but it is the lyrics that I really like. At times we are given opportunities that we have to grab onto before they are gone forever. With that message put to rock music, perhaps this song can bolster your courage to take chances as they come by.

Joseph's EP can be found for streaming on his [website](#), and it is available for purchase on Amazon, Bandcamp, and iTunes.

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

The Mindful Bard The Punk Syndrome

Wanda Waterman



"Pertti Has a Speech Defect and Can't Throw a Disco Party"

Film: *The Punk Syndrome*

Directors: J-P Passi and Jukka Kärkkäinen

Writers: Jukka Kärkkäinen, Jani-Petteri Passi, and Sami Janhukainen

"They give me pig food in the nuthouse.
I keep my mouth shut,
Otherwise I'll be stabbed.
I don't want a summer vacation—
I can't visit anyone because I make too much noise,
And I'd have to turn down the stereos.
Pertti is mentally disabled.
Pertti gets no coffee.
Pertti has a speech defect
And can't throw a disco party."

- lyrics by Pertti Kurikka and Kari Aalto of the Finnish punk band
Pertti Kurikan Nimipäivät (Pertti Kurikan's Birthday)

If anyone has the right and reason to create punk rock, it's people with developmental challenges.

Think about it: they're underemployed, ignored, despised, marginalised, and forced to conform to a world that has no interest in their self-actualisation. Their stress is often compounded by psychological issues; the conditions of their lives can bring on mental illnesses that rarely find a therapist qualified to treat them. In more enlightened societies they're forced to earn their snack and smoke money by tying doodads onto thingamabobs.

Wouldn't you be mad?

A case in point: nobody can speak for the rest of us against The Man with greater conviction than Finnish punk band Pertti Kurikan Nimipäivät.

And it's not just their social status that makes them good punks. Within punk culture handicaps have always been seen as glamorous, brandished like existential battle scars. In the world of punk—where musical complexity, grandstanding, and egotism are ever accursed—angry, mentally challenged musicians *rule*.

So, check yourself before doubting whether those with learning disabilities have what it takes to write and play music. I'm not privy to the latest scientific research in this area, but in my experience these people often manifest a capacity to learn and play music that's miles beyond their abilities in other areas; it's as if the part of

the brain capable of creating music somehow thrives independently of intellectual limitations.

Besides, disabilities can be assets. In Pertti Kurikan Nimipäivät, bass player, Sami Helle, and drummer, Toni Valitalo, both have Down's syndrome, which would enable them to learn their instruments by imitating others. The lead guitarist Pertti is autistic, which would help him to focus long enough to master basic rhythm chords. It doesn't hurt that he's a sophisticated music fan *and* that he carefully records his angst in a daily journal that lyricist and lead singer Kari Aalto uses to construct songs.

Kari's vocal delivery is punk *par excellence*, hard-driven by the beat of his own rage. The music is raw, real, and stirring—classic punk at its best.

The experience of being recognised and admired as artists visibly improves these men in a number of ways. As much as I deride the practice of sheltered workshops that oblige the handicapped to do mindless repetitive work, I can't get away from the good, old, Protestant work-ethic that affirms the redemptive quality of it. Even work that may, at the time, seem meaningless and futile. In *The Punk Syndrome*, we watch as the hard work involved in putting together a repertoire actually aids the struggle with fears, anger, and relational issues. By the time the band has achieved a tour in Germany, conflicts within the group have smoothed out, and Pertti has lost his speech defect.

The directors remark in an interview that the hardest thing about finishing this documentary was leaving the company of these four musicians. The film refuses to sugar-coat the difficulty of looking after those who can't always follow the norms of social propriety, but the flip side of their brutal honesty is the immediacy of their affections, loyalties, and values.

It's touching, for example, after hearing Kari tell his girlfriend, Sirrka, "Don't worry, you'll get some after these people leave," to discover that he really doesn't know anything about sex. When his manager loans him a video showing a loving couple's intimate moments, a look of serenity encompasses him. Not long afterward he decides to marry Sirrka.

The Punk Syndrome manifests nine 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 harmoniously unites art with social action, saving me from both seclusion in an ivory tower and slavery to someone else's political agenda.
- 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 inspires an awareness of the sanctity of creation.
- It displays an engagement with and compassionate response to suffering.
- It makes me want to be a better artist.
- It makes me appreciate that life is a complex and rare phenomena, making living a unique opportunity.

Does the Voice Benefit Students?

Deanna Roney



With the recent news about the Athabasca University Students' Union and *The Voice Magazine*, I have found myself a bit lost. Politics is something I do not excel at. I tend to believe what I am told; I believe that when someone says that they have my best interest at heart, they do. I still do not understand what the union is planning, and I was hoping these issues would be addressed and cleared up at the meeting last Tuesday. Even if the Voice had been removed from the agenda.

This uproar got me thinking, what does *The Voice Magazine* mean to me? Do I, and, by extension,

potentially other students and student-writers, gain enough experience from it to warrant keeping it around? For me, that answer is an unwavering, "Yes." Since I have found The Voice, which I did not know about for the first couple years of my degree, I have felt a sense of comradery, a feeling that I missed in the beginning of my degree. The Voice, for me as a student, allows me to connect to other students, to learn from other students, and to feel like I am a part of a larger community. I look forward to receiving The Voice each week, and taking a quick break from my studies as soon as it comes in to browse the articles. And when I need to take a break from schoolwork throughout the week, I always go back to it to read another article. The Voice has helped give me direction. Direction in where I want to take my schooling and where I want to take my writing. The practical experience that I am getting from The Voice is invaluable. As a writer for The Voice, I am able to get articles edited and published. This experience is worth so much to me as an aspiring writer. Without this exposure I would leave school with nothing extra to put on my resume. I would have a degree, but how would that compete with others who have a degree and experience with their student newspapers? The Voice has boosted my confidence in my writing and in my decision to pursue writing.

I would hate to see this opportunity disappear for students. I had discussions with AUSU where they assured me that this part of the student experience would not be affected, that, in the new website, students would still be able to write and gain this critical experience. A part of me doubts that it would be the same experience as we have currently with the Voice. Because, if that was the case, why does the bylaw need to change? Is it just to reduce the funding? And, if so, to me that means fewer students will benefit from the new website. If the issue is readership, traffic to the website, and updating the website, I am sure these are things that can be resolved with the current Voice. However, students *are* benefiting from the Voice the way it is now. Should the website be updated? Possibly, and it is my understanding that these issues are being addressed. I have about as much understanding of web design as I do politics, so I have no comment on what is, or is not, being done and why (or why not.) All I can comment on with authority is how the Voice has benefited me and enhanced my experience at AU.

I am also willing to bet, that with the recent, heated debates on public forums, there will be more students going to the website. Many students were not aware of the magazine, but now, after a week of discussions, that's probably changed.

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



Say Cheese

When a child is first born into a family everything changes. A couple becomes parents; their parents become grandparents. Everyone's cameras come out to capture every smile, every move, every nuance in expression that the infant makes.

We are fascinated by the miracle of life. The ten perfect fingers and toes; the eyes, ears, mouth that work as they should. The incredible softness of the skin. The fragility of the bones and weak little neck.

The parents make sure all the shots are up-to-date and the medical appointments measuring percentiles for everything—height, weight, head circumference, and more—are kept. Vitamins, supplements, and the purest, most healthy diet are what this new life needs to thrive.

We all become aware of potential hazards and threats to the wellbeing of this helpless being. Is someone smoking within a mile of this precious child? Is this the right car seat, stroller, soother, approved toy for baby? Are little Johnny and Julie wearing bike helmets and protective gear for every sport?

Our fascination with this young life grows as they do. First words, walking, learning to read, making a slap shot, building something with Lego are all big deals. We're amazed and proud of every milestone.

Then somewhere along the way a sibling is born. Again the family dynamic changes, as everything shifts. The second and subsequent kids are lucky if anyone bothers to pull out a camera. They live with hand-me-downs and forever share the spotlight with others. Comparisons are made, if not audibly then certainly silently. Didn't baby one crawl sooner, speak clearer, smile more? In our own family, we have proof positive that a second baby can grow up just fine even if you have used equipment. You learn with the first baby which stuff is useless (but expensive) non-essential crap.

Of course, none of this is fair or right. But neither is it malicious. It just is. Families get busier and have more responsibilities; they're juggling more balls. The new additions are loved. They will grow into their own unique little selves.

For all these reasons we love when Carrie texts us a picture of Kade. The latest was a photo of this nearly four month old propped up in the corner of the sofa just chilling. He's smiling and clutching a toy. He's now more able to control his hands and tries to position his pacifier in the right orifice.

And while the comparisons to big brother Grady are inevitable we are enjoying this little boy for who he is. We can't wait to see how he grows and thrives and who he becomes. We're proud of how Grady loves and protects this little guy and wonder when the first brotherly fight will happen.

Maybe the best we can do is single out these second and subsequent children for special outings and one on one time. Documenting it with a photo wouldn't hurt either, from where I sit.

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



Dear
Barb

Barbara Godin

Relationship Death

Dear Barb:

Hi, I recently attended a funeral of a family friend and, while there, was appalled to hear one of the family members talking negatively about the person. And she was speaking this way about other family members as well. She actually cornered me and began criticizing some of the family members. For example, she said this person is bipolar, that one is overweight etc. She even trash talked the man who had passed away, saying he would be spending 25 years in purgatory for what he did. I was very uncomfortable and found it difficult to get away from her. Why would someone do that at a funeral? I just listened to her, not really knowing what to say. What would be the right thing to do in that situation? Darin

Hi Darin:

That would definitely be uncomfortable and not appropriate behaviour for a funeral, of all places. She obviously has issues with her family members and chose to air her grievances at the funeral. Perhaps she felt she had a captive audience. I don't know if there is a right or wrong way to handle this behaviour. Attempting to distance yourself was an appropriate approach, as you don't want to make a scene by saying anything to her. This person definitely has some deep-seated issues related to her family, and especially the deceased, for which she may need counseling. Unfortunately there is nothing you can do, as these are her issues to work out. Thanks for writing, Darin.

Dear Barb:

My adult daughter and I have had a tumultuous relationship through the years and every time she gets mad at me she decides not to speak to me. Sometimes for months at a time. She says I can see my grandchildren any time I want, but we all know how that works. If your mom doesn't want you to see someone, she doesn't have to say anything, but most times it won't happen. I am so frustrated with this situation, I have reached out to my daughter on a couple of occasions and she says we need some space. I really feel that there is nothing more I can do to heal my relationship with her and I have accepted that, but I do want to maintain contact with my grandchildren. My daughter and I have been to counseling a few times and nothing seems to work. She just expects something from me that I am not able to give her. Not sure how to work my way through this situation while maintaining a relationship with my grandchildren. Thanks, Donna

Hi Donna:

It is so sad and unfair when people choose to expose their children to this anger and resentment. I suspect your daughter has problems with other intimate relationships in her life and probably would benefit from counseling to help her learn to work through these issues rather than just running away. I can understand your frustration, as she is deciding how things will progress. She has the control and you are expected to wait until she decides to allow you to see her and the children again. Unfortunately there is nothing you can do, except try to maintain contact with your grandchildren by sending text messages or phone calls and trying to arrange meetings with them when possible. I would suggest you seek counseling as well in order to accept and manage this unfortunate situation. Good Luck!

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

CRIME COMICS CRIMINAL IN CANADA

In Chapter C-46, 163(7) of Canada's Criminal Code, a comic book is banned if it "exclusively or substantially comprises matter depicting pictorially (a) the commission of crimes, real or fictitious; or (b) events connected with the commission of crimes, real or fictitious, whether occurring before or after the commission of the crime."

TRUE CASES FROM POLICE FILES!

THERE! THAT'LL LEARN
YIZ! YOU WON'T BE
SMUGGLING CRIME
COMICS INTO HEARTS
CONTENT AGAIN ANYTIME
SOON!



WRITTEN BY WANDA WATERMAN



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April 24, 2015

Dear AUSU Members,

I am writing today in regards to recent circumstances surrounding AUSU and The Voice. In the absence of both an Executive Director and President, I am currently (Acting) Editor in Chief of The Voice and (Acting) President of AUSU.

After the release of the April 17, 2015 issue of The Voice, our office received a legal complaint regarding the content in one of the articles. As (Acting) AUSU President, per Bylaw 6.5 (d), I am responsible to protect AUSU and The Voice from legal and reputational threats. At the same time, I fully realize and respect that per AUSU Bylaw 7.5.3, The Voice is an autonomous publication and is to operate without interference from Councilors or Executives. Due to these conflicting interests, I made the decision to temporarily suspend the issue of the magazine while I sought legal advice on how to proceed.

AUSU's legal counsel contacted The Voice Editor directly, with a list of recommended corrections. She also advised me not to re-publish the article until the facts in question were substantiated. It is very important to understand that I have not personally, nor on behalf of AUSU, requested any corrections or changes be made to any article in The Voice. Any and all changes were requested by our legal team in an effort to protect both AUSU and The Voice from liability.

I am also aware that there are questions surrounding the recent Executive pay increase. In the fall of 2014, a group of non-executive councilors and AUSU's then-current Executive Director initiated a discussion and investigation into Executive compensation. With data provided by our Executive Director regarding salaries and benefits of other Alberta student union Executives, that same group put forth a recommendation for an Executive salary increase. The motion was brought forward and passed through an email vote in an effort to pass it prior to the start of the new Executive term on April 1. None of the current Executive team voted in the motion; it passed 5-0 with the 3 Executive members abstaining from the vote.

AUSU continues to work towards representing the best interests of our Members. After a period of restructuring in our office, we are in the final stages of hiring a New Executive Director, and we plan to set the date for AUSU's AGM within the week. As always, we welcome any correspondence via telephone at 1-855-497-7003 or you may contact me directly via email to vpex@ausu.org.

Kindest Regards,

Shawna Wasylyshyn
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CLASSIFIEDS

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

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