

THE VOICE

MAGAZINE

Vol 23 Issue 26 2015-06-26

Meeting the Minds

Dr. Vive Kumar, Part III

AUSU's Bright Future

Interviewing the AUSU President

Keep Calm and Study On

Dealing with the AU Report

Plus:

AUSU Hiring CRO

Ironic Timing

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**Ironic Timing****Karl Low**

The theme this week, as it turns out, is self-analysis.

We start with our interview with Dr. "Vive" Kumar, proponent of learning analytics, and analytics in general, where actions are consciously reviewed and analyzed to ascertain more meaning from them. He even applies this to himself when he's marking the assignments of his students. It's an interesting idea, recording yourself working and then using that recording to see how you work.

This conscious analysis of our behavior is also explored through the idea of cognitive behavior therapy, something that Jason Sullivan gives us a brief overview of in his Fly On The Wall column. But where analytics is applied to actions, cognitive behavior therapy is applied to motivations and beliefs.

We also have an interview with AUSU President Shawna Wasylyshyn, conducted before the recent announcements by three Councillors that they would be leaving the organization. This means that, according to policy, a by-election must be called, and AUSU is already advertising for a CRO to assist them with the coming election. With

VPFA Corrina Green's resignation not taking effect until August 31, however, there are a number of questions that AUSU Council must deal with. Do they hold the by-elections immediately, fill the currently vacant seats, only to have one more become vacant at the end of August? Do they, or even can they, delay holding the by-elections until Ms. Green's resignation is official, and then fill all the seats for the last 8 months of this council's term? Or do they somehow operate with one extra councillor for a brief period before her resignation takes effect?

At this point, in my opinion, it would seem to be a more responsible choice for the remaining three members to also choose to resign their seats and simply call a general election early. Otherwise, they will be responsible for AUSU having to run two general election procedures, with the associated costs, in under a year, as well as having to train a new set of councillors over the next few months only to have them face a general election call immediately after. By calling a general election now, those remaining councillors would demonstrate their willingness to do what is best for AUSU and their commitment to the organization over themselves.

I speak from experience in this matter, as I had to make a similar choice when I served on the executive of AUSU myself. At the time, executives served for the full two years, not just one, but circumstances arose where my fellow two executives no longer wanted to be in those roles, and so I chose to step down as well, and thus began the tradition, later made policy, of AUSU electing its Executives every year. Of course, the choice was easier for me, as Executives were only paid \$1,800/month at the time, not close to \$4,000 as they get now. I wonder if AUSU would be in this situation had it kept the Executive pay that low. It's food for thought.

And speaking of food for thought, make sure to check out Primal Numbers this week. Your brain (and stomach) might thank you. Now, as I'm already late getting this issue out, enjoy the read!

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karl'.

MEETING THE MINDS

INTERVIEWS with AU's EDUCATORS



The Voice Magazine *previously interviewed Dr. Kumar in **April of 2014**. That interview looked more at his background, while this time, Marie Well interviews him about some of his theories and accomplishments. You can read the **first** and **second** parts of this interview in our archives.*

Marie: What is your particular philosophy on student evaluation?

Dr. Kumar: Ooh! I use the word evaluation even though I tend not to like that word too much. If we choose to use evaluation, it should be continuous. Imagine a student studying a course. Let's say, at best, 10% of the time is spent evaluating the student's understanding of the material. So, what we emphasize is the 10% of the time. Of course it is important to see formatively how the student has progressed. What we need to do is look at the big picture. 90% of the time, is it possible for us to observe, with the student's permission, of course, how students study and translate that into part of my assessment? So, I would go for the 100% continual mechanism for assessment than the 10% assessment mechanism that we seem to be currently using, predominantly.

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

Dr. Kumar: What I preach to students about analytics, basically what I'm saying is "Students, this is what you are studying. Continually record what you study, reflect on it, regulate on it, so you can see where you are heading. The same thing applies to me as a teacher. What I need to do while teaching analytics. I need to continually record how I teach. Whatever I have said in the last five years to my students, I should have a recording of it, analyze it, find out what was effective, what was not effective, and make changes to my teaching habits. That is something I really strive to do—what I call teaching analytics. I think that's what every teacher should do, given that information.

Marie: What technological shifts would you like to see online education take in the future?

Dr. Kumar: Well, my core research is about learning analytics. As a by-product, I expect to produce what is called a causal model. To give you an example, let's say that we are able to observe every study-related activity that the student had performed for one full month in any given course. At the end of my thirty-day observation, first of all, is it possible for me to list all of the skills exhibited by students, or by this particular student with respect to the study processes? Is it possible for me to understand all the competencies that the student had gained in the last thirty days? I would confidently say yes. Now, we have the technology. In fact, we now have the ability to say, yes, it is possible.

Now, we are applying the same technique in at least eight different institutions in India because they all heard about this possibility and they all want to be part of it. India, Taiwan, China, and of course Athabasca University. So, learning analytics is going to take on the future of allowing students to see for themselves what happened to me when it comes to learning in the last any number of days. Just imagine the same information available to, say, teachers. This is my class of eight hundred students, twenty students, whatever, and I have information about what had happened in their study life in the last so many days. That's a beautiful piece of information to have. As a committed teacher, I would be glad to have that information to make changes to how I would go about teaching the next month of my instruction.

So, technology is shifting more and more toward analytics, and we are pioneering that direction, I would say, at Athabasca University.

Marie: Can you tell us a little bit more about analytics, Doctor Kumar?

Dr. Kumar: Analytics is a way of collecting raw data about student's study activities. Let's say the student reads something today, assuming it is an e textbook. I can look at the speed with which the student read. I can look at the eye movement and the facial expressions to figure out what has been understood and what's not comprehensible for my student. I can make reasonable guesswork on that. That is with reading. What about writing? What about conceptualizing? Critical thinking? Communicating, for example, solving math problems, or counting problems. I have a course on storytelling where students actually draw to create the story. I can capture that. Visualizing, creating things, with visual analysis, I can create a table that makes sense to others. Narrating, comparing, so, students are engaging a whole pile of activities.

We do have this technology now that allows students (please note the word "students") to track their activities at the finest granular level. With their permission, they can share this raw data with researchers such as myself. We compile this raw data into meaningful pieces, such as "well, these type of learning outcomes you are supposed to have, and these are the outcomes you have targeted, and these are the levels of achievement in each of these outcomes, and this is how you can go about finishing the rest." So, we can forward that kind of advice, not just during assessment, but also on a daily basis—even an hourly basis—to our students. So, that's what analytics can do—continually observe what students undergo in their studies and translate those activities into measures such as competence or confidence and even match those activities and compile them into meaningful chunks for administrators, politicians, or, say, parents. My grandparents, if they were alive, would be glad to see what I'm doing today, right? Just imagine my grandmother now being able to see on a daily basis what my grandson achieved. What did he do? What made him tick? What made him happy today? Just imagine if that is available to them. That is now possible with analytics.

Just imagine my grandmother now being able to see on a daily basis what my grandson achieved. What did he do? ... What made him happy today? ... That is now possible with analytics.

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

Dr. Kumar: I believe it is an essential part of the learning environment, mostly because it aids, going back to the mandate I mentioned before, in the knowledge creation process. Universities have knowledge creators. They ask the public, "Give us some money," and social media helps us reach that goal. In that sense, I would like to have or explore the social media to push our students toward knowledge creation.

I did use it in one of my courses, COMPS 683, Learning and Knowledge Analytics because the course is designed with student contributions to media. What I want to do next is use social media in my research methods courses. This allows our students, for example, to connect with or explore research methods from around the world in other universities, so that is what I'm trying to see happen in advanced research methods courses. We do have a COMP 494, research methods course in computing for undergraduate students, and we also have a course 695 for graduate students, and I would like to bring media in there so that students are exposed to what else is happening around the world on research methods.

I have a caution here. This is just one more media, one more outlet, one more communication channel. I don't want students to see this as there one only chance of exploration. Did you read the news today, this morning, that Future Shop is closing most of its stores in Canada? Do you know the reason they give?

Marie: Amazon?

Dr. Kumar: That's competition, but they say people go to stores to have a firsthand touchy feely of the technology, so they can see for themselves and feel comfortable with it before they buy it, right? That's what drove technology companies to have stores. But, now, they say that the same feel can be had by looking into the social media. So, I don't really need to touch a machine to see how well it is going to work for me; instead, I go to a website and look at all the commentaries of people who had purchased that machine before and, based on their user experiences, would put some commentary in the media; that, I believe, is much more valuable. That is what is revolutionizing social media in the sense that once we have the necessary amount of feedback from the common public, we are in a position to powerfully challenge common notions.

So, the same thing can be said about traditional universities. Why would I say that traditional classrooms are good for me? [laughs] Anyway, I've taken it way off. The point is, social media is really becoming a powerful tool.

Marie: How do you hone your teaching practices?

Dr. Kumar: Teaching always confused me because, when you go to a conference about teaching, they always talk about, well, this is what happened in my classroom and this is how you can apply the same technique I used in your classroom. I am really kind of worried about this notion of generalizing teaching techniques. If someone says, *This is what I did in my classroom, and these are the kind of students I had, and these are all the constraints they face, and this is what they are able to achieve because of these teaching practices*, I think we need to use the case study as it is. I don't want people to generalize it. That's how I would like to see the world transfer its knowledge--exactly how it happened. When it comes to teaching, and I'm not talking about other domains, generalization is not helping much. We need precise information. That's my feeling, and in that sense, that's what I try to collect. I try to keep a really rich set of data about how the teaching worked or why it didn't work.

Marie: If you could wave a magic wand and improve one thing about online education, what would it be?

Dr. Kumar: That challenge is this, which I talked about before: in learning analytics there is only so much we can do to estimate the mindsets of my students. Their capacity to learn, their study constraints, their levels of motivation, what are the triggers that would help them become better motivated students? What is their cultural background and how does that influence their study habits and capacities.

Is it possible for me, as a teacher, to get that holistic mindset, so that I can customize my teaching to suit the mindset of individual learners? If I had a magic wand, that's what I'd wish for: the mindset of my students.

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

Dr. Kumar: Again, I have to go back to my favourite research goal. I want students to continually analyze their learning experience. Continually, on a daily basis, on an hourly basis, they should analyze it for their own benefit. It's almost like doing your exercises or eating your apple every day. This is something you should inculcate, build into, our study culture. They go back, take time out, and analyze "this is what I studied today, this is my experience. What did we learn from it? Where do we go from here?" That is what I would advise to my students.

Marie: So, how can I start analyzing my learning experiences?

Dr. Kumar: Do you have enough data, first of all, to analyze? Many students don't. When I study, to be honest, what I do is record my video. I spend ten minutes reviewing a paper, and I record it with my video camera. I want to see how many times I lift my head out of the reading to think about it—how many times I take notes. Eventually, I want to see what I wrote as my comments as a review of this paper.

I spend ten minutes reviewing a paper, and I record it with my video camera. I want to see how many times I lift my head out of the reading to think about it—how many times I take notes.

By doing this, it really helped me to understand my level of commitment. At times I see that I know this contributor from this journal, and it brings me down. I know the quality I would normally expect. The same level of commitment I would give to a top level journal article, I would do the same for anyone else. This kind of analysis helps me to keep my judgement keen, straightforward. I would really want my students to take this approach. You are not losing privacy, unless you do lose your data. Try to collect data about your study habits, thinking processes. Then, analyze it based on evidence that you have, not just based on some vague memory.

Marie: So, I could record audio, video, or maybe a statistical software package?

Dr. Kumar: Not only record, because recording gives you raw data.

You have to translate that into your piece of information. Then move that information into, say, I'm good at this and I'm not good at that. So, you need to translate the information into competences. Say, these are the competences I don't seem to have, but my goal, four years down the road, I want to be there. You should do the GAP analysis. This is something students should build as a day-to-day routine. By the time they finish their first year, they should have absolute confidence as to that.

These are things I already know because I've done analysis, not because of what I see in the transcript. We are not trying to sell the transcript here. We are trying to sell your own ability to analyze yourself. I think that's what we should promote with our students. With online learning, this is very possible and very easy. Basically, we are asking students to be researchers of their own, right?

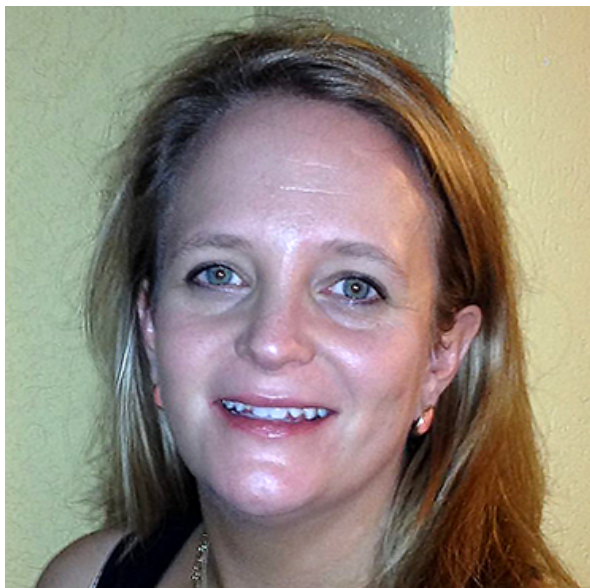
Marie: If you could confer one piece of wisdom on an upcoming student in computer science, what would it be?

Dr. Kumar: This is the easiest question. This I normally do on day one with my master's students and grad students. I typically ask them, "What would be your one contribution to humanity five years from now?" Then, the follow-up is, "What do you think humanity will think of your single contribution five years from now?" We need to see things from an external perspective as well. Then, I want them to compare, match these two viewpoints, and then work toward the goal.

The Future of AUSU is Bright!

Bethany Tynes

AUSU President Shawna Wasylyshyn speaks to The Voice Magazine



Have you read articles in The Voice lately that made you wonder what the blazes is going on at AUSU these days? I have.

When I went up to AU's Convocation ceremonies this year, I had the chance to meet AUSU President, Shawna Wasylyshyn, in person, and was so fascinated by what she had to say that I asked if she would be willing to be interviewed for The Voice. She agreed, and answered a number of questions for me by email.

Here's what Shawna had to say about what she sees as *actually* going on at AUSU these days.

Shawna, thank you for taking the time to speak to me! I'm sure students will be really interested to read about your perspective on AUSU and how you'd like to move forward. But

for starters, how long have you been an AU student, and what are you taking?

I transferred to AU from the University of Saskatchewan in 2011, and enrolled in the Bachelor of Management program.

What made you first want to get involved in AUSU council?

I had been looking for a way to get involved at AU for a while. I spent a lot of time clicking around on the AU website and trying to find local student groups to network or connect with, without much luck. I wanted to get involved because I was sure there were more students like me, who wanted to make those connections, and I felt that AUSU could play a key role in that. What better way than to run for Council and do it myself?!

How did you come to be interested in serving as President?

Funny you should ask! I never thought I would be President of AUSU! A month or so after I became VPEx, AUSU's President resigned and per our bylaws, I took over the role. Now that I've settled into the role, I have found that it suits my personality and skill set well.

What are your hopes and goals for Council over the coming year?

When I was first elected, I wanted to increase awareness in the services offered by AUSU, and offer opportunities for students to connect with each other, and I still do! We have so many new services to roll out, it promises to be an exciting year! I would like Council to continue to increase interest in our services, advocate for the best interests of students, and work as a cohesive team to accomplish our goals.

Do you feel council will be able to achieve these aims? How?

I hope so! Council has recently voted to implement some great new services, such as a free app and a new website that will allow for more awareness and interaction with AUSU and other members. Now we need to ensure they are rolled out seamlessly and promoted like crazy! AUSU has some awesome services, and our work isn't done until every member knows about them. On the advocacy side, we also have passed a motion to join the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA). I am so excited about the opportunities this partnership will bring for AUSU to advocate for online/distance education.

So what is advocacy, and why is it important? How will joining CASA help AUSU?

Advocacy is publicly supporting a cause or policy, and it's a big part of what a Students' Union does. Joining an advocacy group, specifically CASA, will help because as a group of over 20 Students' Unions from across Canada; they have a larger voice. CASA advocates on the national level on topics that benefit students, such as accessibility to financial aid and youth employment.

AUSU has had a lot of staff turnover lately, with the departure of an executive director that had been with the organization more than a decade, and the recent resignation of the new executive director, who had served as AUSU's office coordinator for many years. How do these changes impact AUSU moving forward?

Staff turnover has a huge impact on an organization, and even more so when there is a small staff. We are working hard to implement procedures to try to retain as much institutional knowledge as we can.

What about the motions (to recommend the expulsion of AUSU executive members and recommend a forensic audit of AUSU's books) passed at the AGM last month: when can students expect to hear more about how council intends to deal with these recommendations?

Following the AGM, we consulted with our lawyer as well as with Alberta Innovations and Advanced Education, to determine what we should do about the bylaw infraction recommendations. We received verbal advice from both agencies, and are now waiting for a formal legal opinion in order to prepare an official press release on the topic.

In regards to the forensic audit recommendation, I would like to create an ad-hoc committee, comprised of councillors, members and staff to review the recommendation for a forensic audit, the findings of our recent annual financial audit and at least two RFP's from auditors. I would like that group to report to council on the necessity and cost of the audit, and if they find it necessary I would definitely support it. However, AUSU bylaws don't allow for the President alone to create a committee and so far, I don't have the support of council to create one. So for now the Member Engagement and Communications Committee is working on putting together some ideas on how to get the opinions of more members on the audit recommendation.

Staff turnover has a huge impact on an organization, and even more so when there is a small staff. We are working hard to implement procedures to try to retain as much institutional knowledge as we can.

What about involving AUSU's Finance Committee in discussions about the need for a more in-depth audit - have they been consulted as well?

All of Council has been involved in [discussing] how we will address the forensic audit recommendation.

Council recently discussed whether the Voice continues to be of value to AUSU members. What do you think? Is a student newspaper a worthwhile service for students?

What a hot topic! I know that there has been a lot of discussion surrounding the cost, readership and content of the Voice, most of which took place before I was an executive councillor. I'm not someone who gives up on something easily, and when I became VPEX, my first instinct was to ask "how can I help?" In a meeting with the Voice editor, I asked him what I could do to help The Voice, and AUSU has made good on our pledge to follow through on his request to continue promoting the magazine.

I don't know of a students' union in Alberta that doesn't have a weekly newspaper or magazine. I think that a newspaper IS a worthwhile service for students. Maybe there are ways we can make our service better or maybe we could promote it differently. The results from our recent survey on services show the Voice as being

under-utilized, along with a few of our other services as well. I think we could do a lot better at promoting ALL of our services.

Is a Writer in Residence program still being considered? What can you tell us about it at this point? What would the implementation of the Writer in Residence program mean for the future of The Voice?

Some research has been done about implementing a Writer in Residence. Council is currently finalizing the 2015 goals list, which will set our direction for the rest of the term. In my view, the WIR implementation is a trial. I don't see a problem with exploring options and trying new things, and a WIR is a neat idea.

We've also seen a lot of articles recently about AUSU spending and salaries. Are you able to comment on the recent executive wage increases? How did the idea to raise wages originate, and why did you believe it was the best course of action?

Last fall, at the request of council an email discussion thread was started by our former Executive Director. [This thread] included staff and non-executive councillors. The ED provided those councillors with a spreadsheet containing the salaries and benefits of other student's union executives across Alberta. Upon reviewing the

spreadsheet, it was discovered that while AUSU Executive salary was similar to other SU's, AUSU executives work full time 12 months per year, but according to the information given, others worked only 8. The executive salary increase was approved unanimously by non-executive council, to pay the same salary per month worked, on average, across Alberta.

Our council is a very passionate group of students who care deeply about AUSU, distance education, and the future of AU. I have learned a lot from this group in the last year and a half! The future of AUSU is bright! I encourage all members to get involved!

Were any other Alberta SU's contacted directly and asked how many months they work?

I personally did not contact any other Students' Unions, and I am not aware of how the information for the spreadsheet was collected.

What else should readers of The Voice know about you, your council, and the future of AUSU?

What I would like people to know about me is that I am a student, just like they are! I am an AUSU member, councillor, and President because I am trying to finish my degree. I got involved with AUSU to contribute to a better post-secondary experience for other distance learners! I am also a Mom, a wife and an avid volunteer in my

community. I love to connect with other students and welcome anyone to contact me at president@ausu.org or tweet me @ausu_president

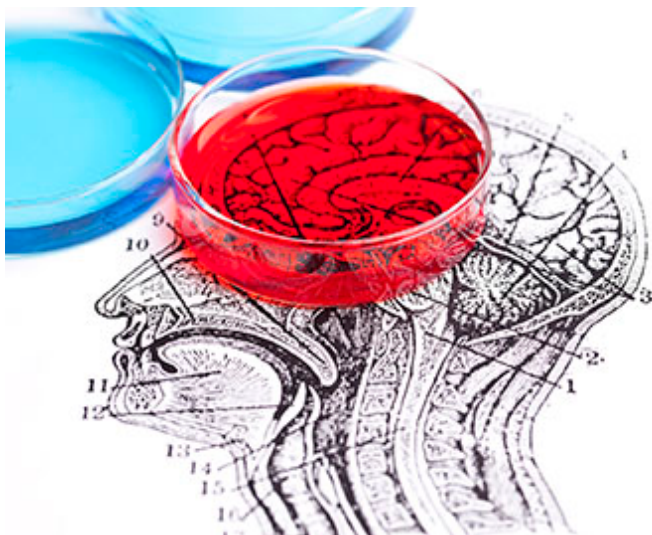
Our council is a very passionate group of students who care deeply about AUSU, distance education, and the future of AU. I have learned a lot from this group in the last year and a half! The future of AUSU is bright! I encourage all members to get involved! Check out our services! Run for council! Read the Voice! AUSU is only as good as its members make it!

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

Primal Numbers

Brains and Bacteria

S.D. Livingston



You are what you eat. They're wise words, and it's not hard to see the connection between what we eat and the way we feel. But did you also know that your diet has a direct effect on your memory? Whether you're studying for an exam or trying to remember your passwords, the bacteria in your gut might just make or break your brainpower.

The latest link between brains and bacteria comes from a study at Oregon State University. As SciTechDaily [reports](#), diets that are high in certain kinds of food can "cause changes in gut bacteria that appear related to a significant loss of 'cognitive flexibility'." In other words, your

brain's ability to adapt when faced with new or changing situations.

The dietary culprits should come as no surprise—high-fat and high-sugar diets. Compared to healthier choices, the high-sugar diet showed the greatest effect on memory. The decline doesn't take long to happen, either. In studies using mice, all it took was four weeks of a high-fat or high-sugar diet to cause a drop in the animals' brain power.

That may be because the changes come straight from your gut, almost as soon as you've finished chewing that double-cheese pizza or drinking that can of pop. High levels of fat and sugar alter the microbiome in your gut. They're just one part of the more than 100 trillion microorganisms that affect our health. And researchers now know that those bacteria send signals to and from the human brain. Garbage in, as they say, makes for garbage out.

And here's the biggest quandary. Our diets are usually poorest at a time when we're using our brains the most—as students.

The stereotype of students cramming over ramen noodles, pizza, and Kraft Dinner has become a cliché for good reason. Plenty of post-secondary students are short on both time and money, and quick, easy meals hit the spot. Running late on an assignment, or trying to grab a meal between lectures and a part-time job? Nutrition labels are great, but speed and convenience will trump them when you're crunched for time.

That time squeeze can be even greater for mature students with families and full-time jobs. A bowl of sugar-coated cereal is just the thing when you're still hitting the textbooks at midnight and the alarm is set for five a.m.

Still, the news about brains and bacteria should be seen as a good thing. It's a reminder that the foods we eat today don't have some vague, years-in-the-future effect on our health. They alter us now, often within hours or minutes of eating them. They can change our brains, our memories, and our odds of succeeding at our goals, whether that's becoming a whiz at CSS or Shakespeare's sonnets.

So whether you need to memorize Plato or passwords, spare a thought for those millions of bacteria in your gut. And feed them well, because they're fuelling your brain.

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.



Keep Calm and Study On

Barbara Lehtiniemi



As an AU student who hopes one day to make the journey to Athabasca to collect her degree, I'm concerned with recent reports regarding AU's long-term viability. Media reports predicting the demise of AU, or a merge with another institution, seem to crop up annually, followed by some water-on-the-fire response by the university. This year's crop of doom-and-gloom seems more virulent than usual, causing me to pause and ponder: Is my AU degree safe?

Bethany Tyne's article in the June 19, 2015 issue of *The Voice Magazine*, "[Insolvency, Incompetence, and Other Indiscretions](#)", went a long way toward explaining how AU arrived at its current state, and outlined some of the ways forward currently under consideration. I'm in Ontario, and somewhat disadvantaged when it comes to knowing what's going on in Alberta. (Truly, I wouldn't have known there was an election in Alberta this year except for the coverage in *The Voice*; Ontario media didn't pick up the story until the final days when an NDP victory seemed imminent.)

Am I worried? Sure. Will the situation at AU change what I'm doing? Not likely. I'm about half-way through a degree program at AU. Given my pace of study, I've got at least another three years to go. If I bail out now, my time and money already invested won't count for much. What's more, if I bail out now, I'm becoming part of the problem. While it's natural for students to be concerned and mull over their options, each student who withdraws from AU reduces AU's revenue and increases AU's problems. I think a reality check is needed here: it seems doubtful that AU will close down.

University closures in Canada are a rare occurrence. The post-secondary education landscape is continuously adjusting to current needs. Over the past 150 years in Canada, a number of colleges have closed or merged to become universities. Universities, however, tend to grow rather than wither and I could only find one instance of a university closing down (after a bumpy history) and a handful of mergers.

The province of Alberta is unlikely to let one of its universities close. A provincial government that allows a university to founder would be committing political suicide. The current NDP government in Alberta seems more education-friendly than the previous government. If the NDP wishes to have a chance of a second term

in Alberta, they really can't afford to put a foot wrong. Losing a world-renowned institution, one which is best-placed to ride the wave of online education technology, would be an epic misstep.

Merging AU with another university has been suggested (or threatened) as a potential course of action. While the merger option is unpalatable, it wouldn't be the end of my world. I'd like to get my degree from AU. Call it loyalty or stubbornness, but I began my journey with AU and I'd like to finish my journey with—and hopefully at—Athabasca. However, if the oft-rumoured merger of AU with the University of Alberta ever happened, at least my degree would be safe.

I don't have the answers to AU's problems. It seems the solutions most likely reside in the political arena. AU receives provincial funding based only on its Alberta students, and it's clear that the current funding model is not a good fit for a university that draws its large student base from across Canada and around the world. A non-traditional funding model seems more appropriate for a non-traditional university.

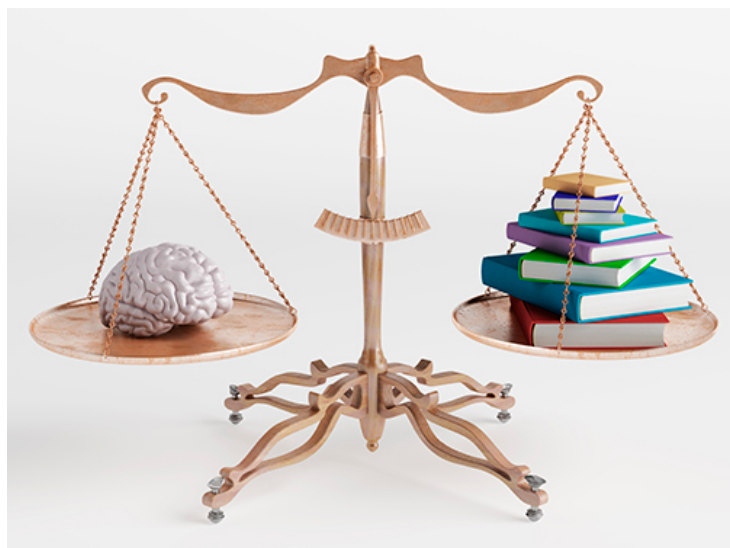
Through the turmoil, my plan is to Keep Calm and Study On. Not just because I think it's worth the risk, but also because I don't have much choice. I need the flexibility and convenience of online study. I live in a rural area and the nearest university is more than an hour's drive away. Right now, AU is my best option for completing my degree. I'm sticking with you, AU. Don't let me down.

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



Informal Course Evals

Deanna Roney



I often see questions about course recommendations. Thankfully, I have been told that the course evaluations should be back up and running by September. Until then I thought I would share some insights into courses that I have loved, struggled through, and bumped my GPA.

The course that I wish I had taken earlier in my program is English 353: *Intermediate Composition*. I initially hesitated because I needed a high mark as a prerequisite for my future courses. I found this course to be extremely enjoyable. It let me refine my writing without worrying too much about essay content. This course was not only a big GPA booster, but also a

confidence booster. And I would highly recommend it to anyone who is going to be writing a lot of essays.

I took English 395: *Nineteenth Century Literature* at, probably, the worst time. I enjoyed the course immensely and found a new love of Nineteenth Century literature, but trying to read *Vanity Fair* in the summer with so many other activities proved to be difficult. The course itself was enjoyable, and I thoroughly enjoyed most of the readings, however I wish I had taken it in the winter rather than the summer months. Summer activities made it take much longer to complete this course than I had intended.

Most of the courses I have enrolled in I would take again, each taught be something about myself outside of the actual course material. I took EDUC 201: *Profession of Teaching* to test the waters of what teaching would be like. In my gut I knew teaching was not in my nature. However, I took this course to see if, perhaps, I was wrong. I was not. The course itself was a great introduction to what teaching would be like, I would recommend it to anyone considering teaching, or who is unsure of their path: it unwaveringly answered any doubt I had. But I did enjoy the readings and most the assignments, and it was a relatively easy course.

If you were to pose a question about course recommendations on the Athabasca University Facebook page I guarantee you someone will answer with Women and Gender Studies 333: *Goddess Mythology*, this will be followed by several people agreeing with the recommendations or exclaiming that they were "beat to recommending it." I took this course and loved it. It is a great introduction to Women's Studies and takes a unique look at history. I learned lots about the origins of religion and certain traditions. I thoroughly enjoyed all the readings and assignments. If I could I would take this course again and again.

As an English major, those six required science credits loomed over me. Luckily I had transferred in with three credits, and only needed one more course. I waited, hoping I would discover a course that would fit into my degree. Or perhaps I was just really hoping for a science credit without having to consider molecules, elements, or math. My English major prayers were answered with Computer Science 230: *Storyboard Design/Development*. This course was fantastic. It was a bonus that it fulfilled my science credit void. I was able to use my Fine Arts background to sketch out storyboards, I learned about telling an effective story, and did not have to do any math! This course also proved to be a great GPA booster.

There is one course, Philosophy 231: *East Meets West*, that I have a love/hate relationship with. The readings, while interesting, tormented me. It proved to increase my caffeine dependency as I would brew pots of coffee to keep my eyes open while reading the material. This worked fine until the excess caffeine made me jittery and I could no longer hold the book still—or maybe it was my eyes vibrating in my head? Either way, I enjoyed the assignments for the course, and found them thought provoking. I was proud of the work I wrote in this course and I do recommend it to others, though I warn that the readings can be dry. Despite the caffeine jitters and subsequent addiction, it did inspire me to seek further Philosophy courses and I am currently taking Philosophy 333: *Professional Ethics*.

It can be hard to recommend a course to someone when you do not know what they enjoy. An easy course for some may not be for others; it all depends on what you excel at. For a quick GPA boost I would recommend some of the junior level courses mentioned here. For a senior level course one that was recommended to me is Women and Gender Studies 422: *Violence against Women*. This course comes with a disclaimer to seek professional help if needed in dealing with some of the information presented. I found this course to be educational, but both disturbing and inspiring. I found myself entranced by the material, but at the end of some readings I would feel numb, even sick, and have to walk away for a while. However, it was incredibly inspiring, and I plan to continue research along these lines in some future studies. This course was also a great GPA boost—though it may have been my intense interest in it.

A course I thought I would enjoy, and struggled through, was English 433: *Post-Colonial Literature*. I thoroughly enjoyed all the assigned readings, it was one of the best reading lists I have had so far. But I struggled with some of the key concepts early in the course. My tutor was fantastic and pushed me to gain a better understanding. While I wanted to pull my hair out in the beginning, I ended the course on a high note.

Each person's experience with a course is unique. Whether it is the subject matter someone loves or struggles with will affect the enjoyment. A course can have a great reading list and frustrating assignments, or great assignments and a reading list that leaves you with a caffeine addiction. Regardless, each course teaches us something, something about what we like, or what we don't like; something we excel in that, perhaps, is unexpected, or something we thought we would breeze through and instead struggle from start to finish.

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



Study Tips from a Semi-Anonymous Friend

How to Write Like a Top Student

There is nothing more that The Study Dude wants for you than to arm-wrestle your way into the main authorship role in your next group paper.

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 article examines another book by Paul J. Silvia, PhD, called *Write It Up: Practical Strategies for Writing and Publishing*

Journal Articles. To put it bluntly, Paul Silvia is hilarious. His books make me erupt in laughter every second page; his writing shines. He writes about professorial activities, such as publishing journal articles, but sometimes even the undergraduates and certainly the graduate students find themselves either vexed or blessed, depending on the student, with a paper to co-author.

How to Pick the Right Journal

I once submitted an abstract in a field completely separate from my own discipline. I was in the Arts program, and I actually dared to submit a proposal in the sciences—physics to be precise. I had no background knowledge in physics outside of high school, just a burning curiosity that I couldn't quash. I noted some physical phenomena that fascinated me in my everyday travels, and I wanted to ground this knowledge in some actual research.

More funnily, however, I received notification of acceptance for my bright-eyed proposal for a poster. Without any physics knowledge, I now prepared for a daunting task of getting the information together for the poster I intended to design. The idea centered on the grandiose, so grandiose, I can't even remember it today. As I recall, the proposal had something to do with Einstein and motion parallax.

One of the proposal organizers phoned me, asked in a timid voice if I had any background in physics, to which I reassured him that my acceptance letter trumped any qualms they may have with my lack of knowledge. We bantered back and forth, and finally he retreated, defeated.

Yet, I faced an insurmountable challenge with getting together the research I needed to make my point. The task proved so daunting that I withdrew my submission, much to the organizers' relief.

Regrettably, after receiving the top grades in almost all of my math classes, I almost went into the discipline of physics. Yet, I loved the environment in the more social arts program, so I took that route. Have you ever felt like you took the wrong degree path? I did.

If you want to publish in a journal (or make a poster submission), the person to take advice from is not me, by any means, but rather, Paul Silvia:

- You long to publish in the top journals, don't you? One of the best ways to determine journal status involves peering at the number of citations the journal articles receive.
- A database exists called *Web of Science* that offers scores for various journals, thereby ranking them.
- You can also go to eigenfactor.org to find what Silvia refers to as the "article influence scores". The eigenfactor reveals "the proportion of time someone would spend reading articles from the journal when researching the field" (p. 19).
- Other values exist for determining a journal's viability, such as (1) impact factor: the average number of citations per year, (2) H-index: "the value at which the number of papers equals the minimum number of citations for those papers" (p. 18), and (3) the article influence score: a reflection of how frequently a journal is cited by using a mean of one, where anything higher than one means the journal gets cited a lot.
- Avoid most open access journals as they will almost cite even your grandmother's laundry list if your grandma decides to submit one.
- Pick your journal prior to writing the paper. When writing, have a second backup journal in mind with similar requirements so that you are not rewriting and editing just to fit other radically different journal standards.
- Identify which journals are cited most in your bibliography: you should plan to submit to one of these journals.

How to Manage Tone and Style in Your Writing

On that same note, a paper proposal of mine passed the first round of review for a journal. When I wrote the proposal, the universe lined up, and the proposal read beautifully. Again, unfortunately, the area was an interest in which I had no background knowledge.

After submitting the first draft of that paper, my paper sent the committee into an uproar. The committee organizer said that my paper inspired a lot of commentary, although mostly negative and critical. The organizer praised me for at least making a stir, but rejected the submission.

The reason for my ambivalence with topics surely arose from my inability to find a good supervisor at that time. I pitched random ideas, ones that stirred passion in me, but often ones outside of my discipline. Nothing within my discipline particularly spoke to me. Such restrictions surely are one of the downfalls with disciplinary education: disciplines can pigeonhole you into writing about things not top on your list of passions. I ended up writing about Suncor's environmental position. (Yawn!)

Yes, graduate studies can be trying.

However, if I had first listened to Paul Silvia, perhaps auspicious events would have taken place with my papers and proposals:

- Start amassing and reading books on how to write. You can't read enough. Collect as many as you can, and reread them annually. At a minimum, read one book per year on how to write.
- Don't be both combative and confident in your writing—a boorish writer is one who demonstrates both traits.
- Change your tone according to your audience's needs and your writing objective.
- Use semi-colons for parallel ideas. Remember to only use a semicolon where a period would also work.
- Use colons to substitute for phrases such as "in the sense that" or "which means" or "which are" or "which is to say that". Just keeping this simple advice in mind will really tighten up your writing. A variety of punctuation enriches the reader experience and tightens up the writing.
- Use dashes to insert or append a word, phrase, or even a sentence (in cases where you have quotation marks around the insert, you can even insert multiple sentences). Try to avoid more than one insert or appended part in a single sentence. The multiplicity confuses the reader.
- Use the slash (/) only in technical documents, and avoid writing *and/or* or *he/she*.
- Try to keep your paragraphs to four to six sentences.
- It truly warrants well to say "The book discusses" instead of "The author of the book discusses" if you justify your actions by referring to the use of metonymy. Metonymy is the substitution of a whole (the author of the book) with a part (the book).

How to Collaborate with Others

When all the graduate students flocked together in the lounge, I headed straight for the gym. Needless to say, my idea of collaboration involved a more collegiate environment. The lounge lizards, the gossip, the banter, all didn't appeal to me. I wanted to start a volleyball league, a graduate student journal, or host a conference. That type of collaboration formed the crux of my dream team, which didn't come to fruition at the physical university.

Interestingly, I've found more collaborative fulfillment writing for Athabasca's The Voice Magazine than I ever felt in the graduate program. Getting to know the other writers presented meaningful relations that I will never forget and will always cherish. I also contacted the President of the Graduate Student's Association to work on their journal. These interactions at Athabasca University provide me with a great sense of belonging, or being part of something. I wouldn't trade it for the world. That collegiate collaboration at Athabasca surpasses any I ever experienced at a physical university, and I highly recommend getting involved in the online environment.

When collaborating with others on papers, Paul Silvia presents some strategic advice:

- Avoid writing papers with people who constantly complain about how they are overloaded with work. Don't collaborate on a paper with someone who desperately needs your assistance.
- Work with people with track records in publishing.
- Set up a system where one person completes the first draft and others either add comments or add specialized sections, such as complex statistics or a new methodology.
- Don't email your file to collaborators for edits; use a file sharing program instead. This prevents the lead author from editing from five different files, which equates to increased pressure. Using something like the Cloud or Drop Box can help the group edit a single file.
- Put a deadline on edits (unless the edits are vital to finalizing the paper). If the collaborate misses the deadline for edits, they don't receive co-authorship status.

- Do not fear collaborating with many people. Citations usually involve the overseer cited last, the main author cited first, and collaborators cited in order of extent of contribution.
- Learn skills that make you stand out as a prime collaborator: "fancy statistics, uncommon research methods, grant expertise, or good grammar" (p. 81).

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.

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Student Sizzle AU's Hot Social Media Topics

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



Activity on AUSU's Forums has picked up since *The Voice Magazine's* June 12, 2015 article, "[Dismantling the AUSU Forum](#)". Elsewhere, many students seem to be wrapping up courses before the summer.

AUSU Student Forums

In the Course Discussions forum, user KALinton seeks information on the format of POLI 277 assignments.

Other topics include student e-mail addresses, curling, online exams, and courses ECON 401 and PHIL 252.

AthaU Facebook Group

Marcy wants to know if numeric grades are rounded up or down to the nearest whole number when determining the final letter grade on a course. Kevin posts links to some online resources students can use to reduce eye-strain when reading from computer screens. Carla seeks input on whether Arts majors feel disadvantaged at university and in the workplace.

Other posts include exam-day glitches, waiting for final grades to be posted, the future of AU, and courses ADMN 404, EDUC 406, ENGL 255, HSRV 420, and PSYC 289.

Twitter

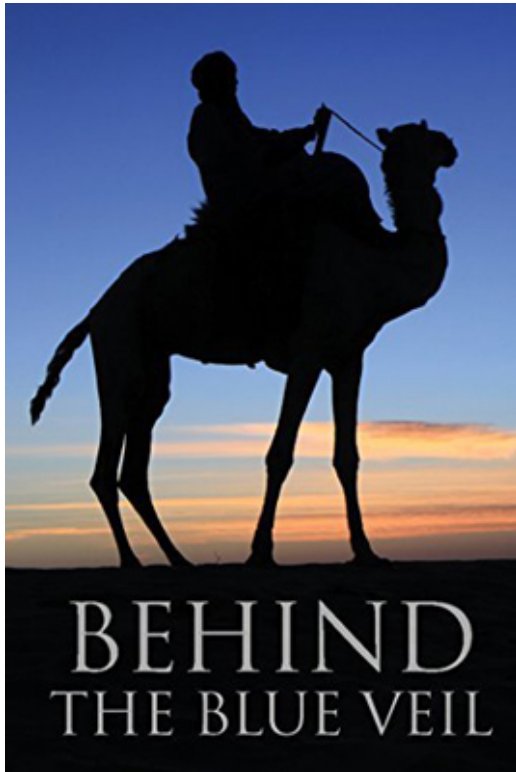
[@AthabascaU](#) tweets: "Another happy day for AU as it receives pair of [#NSERC](#) [#research](#) grants <http://ow.ly/ODUfP> Congratulations!"

[@AthabascaUSU](#) (AUSU) tweets: "Result are in from our AUSU Services Survey! We heard you, AUSU members! Stay tuned for exciting new developments! <http://bit.ly/1GENLxU>"

The Mindful Bard

Behind the Blue Veil

Wanda Waterman



The Unbearable Beauty of a Fading Civilisation,
the Unbearable Ugliness of its Oppressors

Film: *Behind the Blue Veil*

Director: Robyn Symon

"They were the men and the women of the sand, of the wind, of the light, of the night. They appeared as in a dream, at the crest of a dune, as if they were born of the cloudless sky."

~Jean-Marie G. Le Clézio

The opening scene of *Behind the Blue Veil*, a documentary drawing attention to the plight of the Tuareg peoples of the Sahara desert, is a universal picture of raw human existence set to haunting Tuareg music; two girls are carrying loads through a desert settlement, walking slowly past sand and dead trees, intense sunlight burning through the golden dust. You sense that somehow this isn't just about them.

Long under attack from colonisers, governments, and the advances of technology, the Tuareg are now also facing the threat of drug lords and Islamic extremists moving into their territory. Although they too are under attack, this film suggests that the Tuareg are a huge untapped resource for stopping the rise of terrorism in the Middle East.

Today there are more than three and a half million Tuareg in northern Africa, divided across five Saharan countries. They're an indigenous people of the Sahara, a Berber tribe related to the Berbers of Tunisia, Morocco, and Algeria. Though Muslim, their society is matrilineal, and the men are veiled while the women are not. They travel by camel, and these days by truck and jeep as well, and are dependent on the natural world for their sustenance. As is common for highly specialised cultures, the progress of industry has violently upset the very delicate balance of their existence, and countless conflicts within and among the nation states in which they live have threatened their safety as well.

The Tuareg tend to be tall, slim, and beautiful, with haunting facial features. Skin colour varies; there are many as pale-skinned as Northern Europeans and others who look like sub-Saharan Africans. They make gorgeous jewelry, music, and clothing, and have a rich storytelling heritage, with *griots* playing a major role in passing on communal wisdom. Even every day activities are enhanced by a joyful sense of play and artistry that you can see in action as girls rhythmically pound grain, singing happily together.

For lovers of roots music, the Tuareg have a profound significance. There is much evidence that early blues music descended from their music, having crossed the Atlantic in slave ships and somehow managing to blossom into a new, but still mesmerising, musical genre in America. Their music has also influenced African genres such as *gnawa* and *rai*.

Why such a broad influence? For more than 2000 years it was the Tuareg, the herdsman, artisans, musicians, warriors, and travelling salesmen of the desert, who controlled trade in the Sahara. (For more on this topic check out my series of articles "The Travelling Desert Blues Show," [Parts I, II, and III](#), and this review of an album by the Tuareg group [Terakaft](#).)

The main Tuareg voice in this film is that of 33 year-old Mamatal Ag Dahmane, a music promoter and the son of a Tuareg Chief. Mamatal's family camps in Timbuktu, Mali, but they don't identify as Malians, which is easier to understand once you learn that the Malian government, through severe neglect as well as open persecution, appears to want to wipe them out, a situation that has grown more obvious since the military takeover of Mali in 2012.

The Tuareg have sought refuge from persecution for decades, forced to accept the agenda of the countries in which they reside as refugees, with, sometimes, disastrous long-term results. The French colonisers exploited them, and then, when Mali gained independence from France 50 years ago, the process of annihilation simply changed hands.

The Tuareg being a nomadic society, with no solid network and no infrastructure, means that governments tend to feel free to ignore agreements, promises, and obligations. In the case of the Malian government, the neglect has long comprised what looks like a slow but deliberate genocide. To make matters worse, the world helps the Mali government—which kills Tuaregs—to fight terrorists, but does nothing to protect the Tuaregs from terrorists.

In recent years Islamic extremists have been infiltrating the Sahara, bringing with them violence and the drug trade. The extremists also have an agenda. (I wish I had some of their zeal to get myself out of bed some mornings, because their mission to take over the world seems to be a singular one and they never seem to grow tired of it.) But their agenda doesn't appear to make room for the creative and deeply spiritual Tuareg—Muslims of an entirely different order.

The documentary loses points for not showcasing more of Tuareg music, but gains for being such a feast of intense external and internal beauty; there is a mysterious shining from within every scene and, amid the despair, there's the sense that here is something so incredible that it just can't die.

Kudos to Robyn Symon for her use of documentary film to bring awareness to the plight of cultures in crisis and for creating FACES—the Foundation Advancing Cultural and Economic Survival, Inc., an organization for preserving endangered cultures.

Behind the Blue Veil manifests six of the Mindful Bard's [criteria](#) for films well worth seeing.

- 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 inspires an awareness of the sanctity of creation.
- It displays an engagement with and compassionate response to suffering.
- It renews my enthusiasm for positive social action.
- It makes me appreciate that life is a complex and rare phenomena, making living a unique opportunity.

Wanda also writes the blog *The Mindful Bard: [The Care and Feeding of the Creative Self](#)*.

Fly on the Wall: Cognitive Lightning

Jason Sullivan



A pitter-patter of raindrops becomes a torrential deluge as the mountainous vista of my forestry job is invaded by meteorological reality. Lightning sheets across the sky, followed instantly by a tremendous crash of thunder. Amazingly, though not surprisingly given the nature of our 21st century, I simultaneously hear the much-quieter sound of my cell phone in its waterproof plastic bag heralding the arrival of a text message. Historically, I'd have taken this text to bear mighty meaning. As I retreat, MASH-style, off of the freshly planted clear-cut, it occurs to me that a change has transpired in my mind over the past few years. I no longer follow my

traditional belief that every coincidence has cosmic significance. From there I begin to ponder causes and consequences that arise when aphorisms are taken at face value.

When it comes to questioning the validity of belief systems, Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) springs to mind. The essence of CBT is that if we don't ask ourselves whether our core beliefs are functional or dysfunctional for the accomplishment of happiness in our lives, we may be victimized by "a specific bias (that) affects how the person incorporates new information" (Corsini & Wedding, 2014, P. 264). The mystificatory consequences of believing the letter of a phrase is perfectly illustrated by an internet meme quoting the science fiction author Philip K. Dick. Dick's line was:

"There exists, for everyone, a sentence - a series of words - that has the power to destroy you. Another sentence exists, another series of words, that could heal you. If you're lucky you will get the second, but you can be certain of getting the first."

When I first read this as an internet meme I laughingly paused and inhaled sharply, imagining myself susceptible to a revered author's power of suggestion. Was this some magic spell? Could the trauma inflicted by painful words be cured by the invocation of other, more powerful, words? Of course not. Wounds are part of life. And while some folks bear incredibly debilitating scars, on no far off planet does there exist a formula or 'series of words' capable of healing traumatic experiences. As the adage goes, 'sticks and stones may break my bones but words will never hurt me.' Yet I do think of Albert Camus, who suggests that all-too-often the immediate (rather than general) cause of suicide and self-harm is a mere phrase or sentence: "Newspapers often speak of 'personal sorrows' or of 'incurable illness.' These explanations are plausible. But one would have to know whether a friend of the desperate man had not that very day addressed him indifferently," (Camus, 1955, P.4). That's the thing about adages and aphorisms: they contain wisps of truth and layers of lies; words can be incredibly hurtful such that people can, metaphorically and even physiologically, die of a broken heart (Burnett, online).

The film world provides many examples of beliefs leading to glorious or tragic consequences. I think of the 2013 remake of *The Great Gatsby* where Leonardo Dicaprio's title character claims that past circumstances may, for all intents and purposes, be recreated in the present (Luhrman & Pearce, online). Dicaprio as the title character states:

"No... You see you were there all along, in every idea, in every decision... Of course, if anything is not to your liking, we can change it..."

A CBT analyst would ask, 'what are the beliefs underlying this assumption?' Gatsby's believes that he can have his cake and eat it too. Gatsby desires his longing for the girl of his dreams to be combined with her actual occurrence in his life. Longing and fulfillment are separate feelings, after all. And not only that, he is convinced that it is possible for him to recreate a past existence with her in the present tense (Luhrman & Pearce, online). He next argues that a person can change the past:

"Why of course you can. Of course you can. You'll see. I am going to fix things just the way there were before. Everything's been so... so confused since then..."

In an important way, Dicaprio's character believes that the impossible is attainable. Though this might be a functional belief in an instance where optimism leads to practical results, his core approach to life comes to bear tragic consequences.

CBT begins and ends with the belief that to act rationally requires constant self-evaluation. This contrasts sharply with another theory of personal actions, Rational Choice Theory (RTC). Rational Choice theories are based on an unverified core belief that behaviour embodies calculated expressions aimed at maximizing desire (University of Regina, online). For RTC, people and their decisions are rational by nature. Shopping is an example. When making a purchase people are assumed to have calculated the costs and benefits of their decision. If a person enjoys their experience at the mall and the products they bring home with them, then they will repeat it. As the old mantra goes, the customer is always right. Capitalism assumes that we, the masses of potential consumers, are ready and capable of deciding what forms of happiness to pursue. What forms, that is, available on the consumer market and, more presciently, the ones which provide enough profit to warrant our continued employment in the labour force. This system assumes that we are giving it a glowing endorsement by our purchases. However, as Noam Chomsky aptly states in his acceptance of the 'Philosophy Now' award for the 'Fight against stupidity' "It's the purest example of a tyranny you can imagine: power resides at the top, orders are sent down stage by stage, and at the very bottom, you have the option of purchasing what it produces." (Chomsky, 2014, P. 37).

In a sense, our instinctual desires for fulfillment in the external world, desires that begin with the objective fact that, as infants, we require sustenance and nurturing to survive, may in fact be callously manipulated. To test the validity of this possibility we must, after returning home from a trip to the mall or from a perusal of possible future course syllabii, ask ourselves whether we really are getting what we wanted. In this final sense, cognitive behaviour therapy begs us to consider the practical outcomes of our core belief for our personal happiness and for the happiness of those around us. After all, in life, as in education, things can always be otherwise.

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The Writer's Toolbox

A Company Affair, Part III

Christina M. Frey



In the last installments of the Toolbox—a few weeks back, thanks to intervening obligations and a speaking engagement—we looked at how to handle capitalization, punctuation, and similar issues when using brand names, company names, and trademarks in your writing. The one-line recap: Wherever possible and/or reasonable, go with the company's preferred spelling and punctuation.

But even if you spell it right, are you *using* the word right? In the two final installments we'll look at situations where you might want to reconsider your use of real-life brand names and trademarks.

Going generic

When you blow your nose, do you reach for Kleenex—as in Kleenex Brand Tissue? Or do you grab a piece of generic facial tissue when you sneeze? If you're like most people, odds are you call it Kleenex and think nothing of it.

Kleenex's trademark holder, though, thinks plenty about it, and they're not too happy. In fact, the company has appealed to journalists to stop genericizing their name and diluting their brand. The problem is that it's already been genericized. It's become so common to call generic facial tissue Kleenex (even my unabridged *Merriam-Webster*, while acknowledging the trademark, has a bland, general definition) that they're fighting a losing battle.

To use or not to use

How can you tell whether a trademark is being used properly or improperly, and whether genericization has taken place? What criteria take a brand name out of the realm of protected use? The specifics get into trademark law, which is beyond the scope of this column; just be aware that as trademarks are absorbed into the common lexicon, their treatment changes.

They may get turned into verbs ("to Google," anyone?) or nouns ("Saltines" instead of "Saltine crackers"). They may have unusual spelling or punctuation changed or even capitalization altered.

When in doubt, consult your favourite dictionary, as these resources (particularly the online versions) have a pulse on language usage trends. For example, *Merriam-Webster* lists both the trademarked spelling of "Xerox" (with its accompanying definition) and the lowercased, genericized verb "to xerox"—which is reflective of both the status of the trademark and common usage, much to Xerox's chagrin. Another good resource is Google's Ngram Viewer, which compares usage trends over the years. While it won't instruct on whether a brand name has been genericized, it is helpful for noting changes in capitalization and (if you pair it with the right search terms) even usage.

A note about dictionaries: while the much-loved *CanOx* is valuable for its unique Canadian treatment of words, especially compounds, it has not been updated in a decade (and now that Oxford has closed its Canadian arm,

a future update seems unlikely). For current spelling and usage of brand names and trademarks, you'd be better off looking at US sources.

Next week we'll extend our discussion of brand names and trademarks into the fiction writer's realm. Can your characters grab a Frappuccino at Starbucks, or do they need to choose a whipped iced coffee from the local cafe? Come back next week and find out.

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 Fit Student

Marie Well

How to Motivate Yourself and Others Around You



As a student, are you in a home that demands you clean up after others? Or do you find it difficult to motivate yourself to delve into studies after hours of menial tasks around the house? Or do you have children who you're trying to teach the household chores? If so, I read the perfect book for you to consider: *How to Get People to Do Stuff* by Susan M. Weinschenk, Ph.D. This book employs all the greatest and latest psychological strategies for getting people to do your bidding, like a sunglasses donning rooster ruling the roost. Your morning crow will surely awaken the household to your agenda after a read of Weinschenk and keep all your chicks in the proper pecking order.

Learn How to Gain Mastery of Any Task, Any Coursework

Don't you love the sound of the flow of a river with the waves pounded gently against the rocks, tickling your eardrums with that heavenly sound of nature at its finest? Well, imagine entering the zone similar to that sensation, a zone called flow, where your absorption in a task peaks, where time no longer shifts in second increments but breaks into new rhythms. Doesn't that seem like a good place to begin gaining mastery of a course, a hobby, or an activity?

Weinschenk presents the bottom-line on the flow state: time speeds up for some and slows down for others; our identities must not be threatened as a result of the flow task; the particular activities that generate flow depend on the individual person; flow states stimulate enjoyment. Also, the flow task needs to be somewhat challenging, but not so challenging it seems impossible. The individual needs to self-direct the flow task without interruptions, yet with helpful feedback. With our persistent and never ignoble friend, flow, we eventually gain mastery of the task at hand.

Learn How to Let Your Mind Wander for Greater Creativity

When my mind wanders, an internal alarm sounds, like a blaring siren alerting me to pull-over and claim a ticket for my violation. I am absolute loathe of those moments when my mind veers off course and enters that surreal

dimension called the imagination. To prevent my mind from wandering, I like to read consistently, letting the words direct my focus and attention. When my focus strengthens, my mind calms.

When I read Weinschenk's book, I was taken aback. Mind wandering leads to creativity. In fact, some of the most ingenious findings in fields such as science come from moments of mind wandering. The more your mind wanders off like a dropped ball of yarn, the more likely your creativity is sky high. So, unlike me, don't fear that wandering beast, but recognize it as your creative gift.

Learn How to Refresh the Brain with Regular Breaks

While doing high school upgrading, an instructor informed me that I should study for thirty minutes and then take a fifteen minute break. Following her instructions, my performance skyrocketed. Psychological research points to the benefits of taking regular breaks throughout any day of tasks, including staring blankly but, oh, so focused, at a computer screen for eight hours straight, barring a half hour break midday. Weinschenk points out that after twenty minutes of concerted thought (in other words, studying time), the brain exhausts itself of its glucose supply necessary for deep thought. Taking a break every twenty minutes will refresh your resources and set you afoot for the next leg of studies.

Learn How to Agree and Then Promptly Disagree

Nice people agree with what you say, don't they? Don't we love someone who validates our views, making us feel like the schoolmarm in a room of brownnosers? But who truly wants to be the person to cave into other people's views, never expressing her own positions for fear of being jabbed with a ballpoint pen in the one remaining patch free eye? Well, according to Weinschenk's overview of psychological research, you can give in to other people's views and then fire back with your own, claiming your pristine image of the agreeable one while converting your contender's viewpoint to yours. Wienschenk shows that the way to agree and then disagree is to agree with your opponent's view, then produce statistics or evidence to the contrary, and finally, bridge the gap by providing a solution to the evidence to the contrary. That sure beats raising the voice and beating the chest, doesn't it?

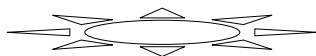
Learn How to Sound Smart with Rhymes

Always anticipate entering the flow state. Does that sound brilliant to you? Well, it should if you wear a white lab coat and fix electrodes on people's heads. Psychological research suggests that when we say things, like maxims or just plain old statements, that rhyme, we sound smarter than we truly are. Enough said, Fred.

Learn How to Keep Other's Attention During Your Presentation

Did you remember to change your underwear this morning? Ah, what just happened there? I woke you up from your half-awake slumber from reading through this article. Now that I've got you where I want you, I can continue with my rant about Weinschenk's listing of psychological research. By doing what I just did, adding some surprise, unexpected element, you can keep the attention of your audience during presentations. You don't have to delve into the underwear or nudity cliches nor slip an amphetamine in your audience's coffees, but something out of the ordinary will perk up your lulled listeners.

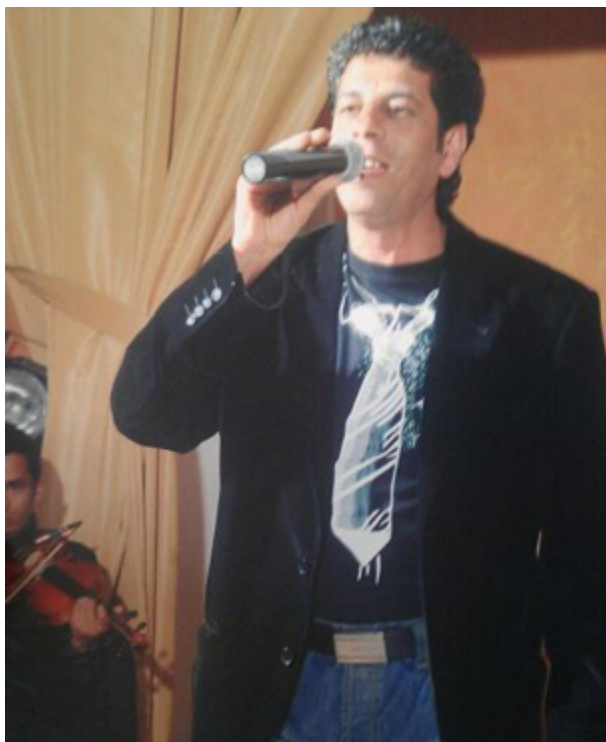
So, that's how you get people to do stuff like emptying the garbage: by ensuring they identify as master garbage disposers, you'll get them hooked. No-one takes out a garbage with finesse better than mine, however, so read Susan M. Weinschenk's *How to Get People to Do Stuff*, and you too can earn your wings.



Maghreb Voices

The Magical Mezwed Tour, Part II

Wanda Waterman



(Read the first part of this article [here](#).)

"The more you understand the music, the easier you can dance."

- Orlando Gutinez

Mezwed is a highly sensual—and danceable—musical genre. One of my earliest encounters with it was at a wedding in Gafsa; this having been my first visit to Tunisia, I was not at all prepared for the sight of women my grandmother's age, heads properly swathed in hijabs and sporting traditional desert garb, smiling joyfully while swinging their ample hips with shameless abandon to the sounds of the *mezwed*, *bindir*, and *dharbouka*.

My assumption that Arab Muslims were prudes went out the window that night.

Gaddour during a rare vocal performance

The Mezwed Performance

In a typical performance, the group plays for a long time before the singer arrives, building the level of excitement with increasingly faster rhythms and louder, more intense playing. (If you watch the mezwed player start to blow you'll see what look like two horns rising up on either side of the instrument; these are part of the mezwed's hide construction and point up when the instrument fills with air.) When the singer arrives he or she and the audience are thoroughly geared up for an impassioned vocal performance.

Gaddour has played his *bindir* with Golden Mezwed at many traditional Tunisian festivities, including, he sheepishly admits, the celebration of the circumcision of the son of Ben Ali, the autocrat ousted in the Jasmine Revolution in early 2011.

The Songs

Golden Mezwed doesn't have songs of their own per se, because their role is to provide accompaniment, in the studio and on the stage, for iconic male and female Tunisian singers.

Each singer has a particular repertoire and subject matter; some focus on songs of love, some of loss, some of political struggles, some of poverty, and some of joyful festivity. Gaddour and his musical colleagues must know all of these repertoires by heart, both music and words, because they never know when they'll be called on to accompany this or that singer musically, or even be asked to join in on the singing.

One evening, Gaddour arrives at the café in the company of another band member—Faycel Chaebaane who plays *darbouka*. When I ask them if it's possible to make a living at this, they say that yes it is; although Faycel admits to having a day job, Gaddour earns his living and supports his family with *mezwed* alone.

Why Canada?

So what were they doing in Canada? Bringing a slice of home to homesick Tunisians living in the Great White North. In Tunisia *mezwed* music is ubiquitous, but there's no Canadian street where one can overhear *mezwed* wafting from a wedding or a New Year's party, and that can create a bit of a cultural void for the Tunisian immigrant.

As Faycel points out, Tunisians living in Europe can fly home often, but Canada is so far away that trips home are far more expensive—and far less frequent. This means bringing the music to Canada.

Apparently, the Tunisian immigrants had been waiting for the music to come to them; as we see in a Youtube video of the performance, the concert hall was packed to the rafters.

Keeping it Together

The technical aspects of *mezwed* (the genre) are easy to explain in words, but, in practice, difficult to master. The rhythms are a combination of double beats and triplets that become more rapid and enmeshed as the music goes on. It's intoxicating to listen to a *mezwed* song start off slowly and then build in speed and intensity until you wonder if the musicians will be able to control the music long enough to keep it from flying off into outer space. But they always somehow manage to stay in sync.

Don't take my word for it. To hear Golden Mezwed for yourself, just type their name into Youtube. And don't be scared to dance.



Golden Mezwed in its earlier years, the *mezwed* player in the middle, Gaddour the second from the left and Faycel Chaebaane on the far right

Wanda also writes the blog *The Mindful Bard: The Care and Feeding of the Creative Self*.

A Convocation Uncommon

Donette Kingyens



It does not take more than a few minutes attending the Athabasca University Convocation to see just what sets AU apart from other universities.

One of the first things I noticed was how many graduates had travelled from all over the world to be there, many more than at brick-and-mortar university ceremonies. Since AU is a distance learning institution, very few students ever visit a campus, and most of the graduates that make the journey to convocation are seeing the AU campus and meeting the staff in person for the first time. I spoke to students who had come from all over Canada, from the Yukon Territories to the Maritimes. I spoke to students who had come from various places in the United States, a student living in Asia, and one from South Africa. Most of the graduates had traveled hundreds of miles to walk across the stage, and many with families or friends that traveled to see them graduate as well.

There is excitement and pride in the air as the graduates and their families tour the grounds, taking pictures in front of some of the campus landmarks like the fountains in front of the main building. Everyone who visits marvels at how beautiful the campus is, embedded amidst the spruce, pine, and aspen trees of the Athabasca River Valley. Many of them did not even realize the campus existed until now, and a few students told me that being here made their degree with AU seem all the more "real".

Wandering around the booths set up in the arena, visitors could buy AU clothes, merchandise, and fresh cut flowers; they could visit with various Faculties and Alumni Affairs at their booths and (most importantly, of course!), they could visit with the staff and council presidents of AUSU and AUGSA at the union booths, which were located right inside the entrance. Most of the graduates were just excited to talk to the staff and faculty in person for the first time. In return, the staff, professors, and faculty were just as elated to see the students, the one time of year they get to meet them in person and truly celebrate their students' success.

Working at the AUSU booth, many of the graduates and even AU staff thanked us for just being present. Numerous students told us about how a scholarship we granted them was the only reason they were able to get their degree, or how much our student planner had helped them keep themselves organized. It was enlightening to hear!

What is also amazing about meeting the graduates is the incredible range in demographics and backgrounds. At brick-and-mortar universities, undergrad graduates tend to be primarily in their mid-20's, having achieved their degrees right out of high school. Certainly, that demographic is well represented with young graduates proudly facing their first taste of life free from school, but there is also a huge range of other demographics graduating, far more than you typically find with other universities. Here you meet 30, 40, and 50 year old moms and dads who worked on their degree from home while juggling full time jobs and kids. Here you meet army recruits who worked on their classes while they were overseas. Here you meet senior citizens who completed their first degree when they retired to reach a new milestone in their lives. Here you meet people

who live in such a remote region or town that they could not attend a local University. Here you meet people from every age, gender, and culture that were able to complete their degree amidst busy lives, careers, personal struggles, and, in some cases, immense obstacles.

Here there are just as many proud children coming to see their parents graduate as there were proud parents coming to see their kids graduate.

Here students are grateful beyond words that Athabasca University's distance learning gave them the flexibility and opportunity to get a degree they otherwise would not have been able to achieve.

The next thing that sets the AU convocation apart from that of other Universities is how intimate and personal the ceremony is. At most universities, graduates are called across the stage with a simple recitation of their name and degree. At AU, however, they embrace the fact that each graduate has a story to tell. When graduates are called across the stage, the audience is told their story, so that everyone watching can truly see how amazing each of these students are. You get to hear the stories of triumphs they achieved, how their family or friends supported them, publications and awards they won, or how their work is already helping people or changing the world. In some cases, you also get to hear stories of perseverance over incredible hardship—such as the story of a graduate who struggled to overcome homelessness to achieve his degree. Each students' story is told, and each one is an inspiration.

Good for you, graduates. Each one of you is a testament to AU and the benefits of distance learning. More importantly, each one of you is a testament to personal achievement and perseverance. You are our future, and we could not be more proud.

Donette Kingyens is a writer, animal lover, and advocacy junkie in Edmonton, Alberta. She is the office coordinator for AUSU.

Click of the Wrist

It's summer, and thunderstorms are rolling across the fields and darkening the skies over cities. How to stay safe from these awe-inspiring displays of nature's power? Click through this week's links for before, during, and post-storm safety.

Boom, Crack

Out in the Wild

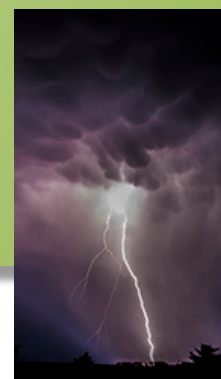
Of course you're supposed to be indoors during a storm, but what if you're caught unprepared outdoors—or worse, out on the water? NOAA's tips could save your life.

Struck

If someone is struck by lightning, what should you do? First, it *is* safe to touch them—don't fear to approach the victim. Second, this is an emergency situation, so call 911. This guide tells you what to do while waiting for first responders to arrive.

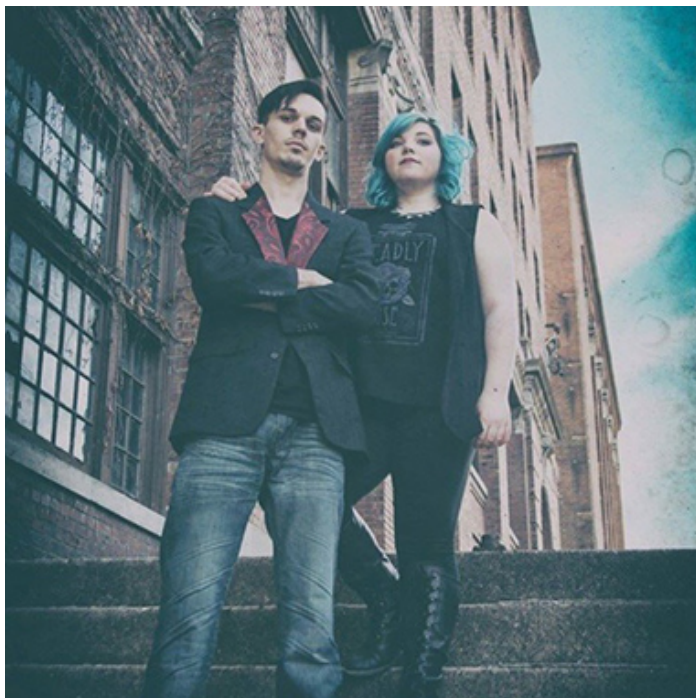
Unplugged

The storm passed over, but you lost power. When the electricity's finally restored, will the contents of the fridge and freezer be safe to eat? Check out the USDA's cheat sheet to figure out what to keep, what to pitch, and how to tell if it's been sitting around dangerously long.



Music Review Into the Night

Samantha Stevens



EP: *Into the Night*

Band: London Has Fallen

Alternative music has always been one of my favourite genres. The music that falls into this category often pushes the boundaries, integrating a variety of musical elements and incorporating lyrics that draw on raw emotion for inspiration. With the release of their EP, *Into the Night*, London Has Fallen has demonstrated their music's ability to harness the essential elements of the alternative music genre and twist these sounds into something that defies the genre, creating a melody all their own.

London Has Fallen is comprised of a magical duo from Illinois. Alecia Gates, whose voice brings an angelic feeling to the darkest emotion, and Cameron Gorham, whose ability to harness the entire spectrum of human

emotion into music is anything short of genius, have created a sound that I have fallen completely in love with. The duo released their first album, *Fracture*, last year, and the tracks on *Into the Night* will be included on their second album set to be released this fall.

London Has Fallen reminds me of bands like Within Temptation and Evanescence. There is a grandness to their music, and after listening to their first album I am happy to hear that they are continuing to polish that sound. The four tracks on *Into the Night* demonstrate the duo's ability to incorporate electronic sound with traditional instruments and soft but powerful vocals, something that not many alternative bands are able to accomplish successfully. Attempts at creating this type of complex harmony often results in music that sounds disorganized.

Although I absolutely loved every song on this EP, "Leave Me Broken" was by far my favourite. The song is inspired by images of war and the devastation that war brings, but it's not gloomy. Instead, it speaks of those who stand upright in the face of adversity, and no matter the hardships they endure, they hold their head up high and their courage and spirit never waivers. The music is simple but effective. The song begins with simple guitar and piano and vocals that seem to come from somewhere far away, almost hidden, perhaps in the recesses of someone's mind. The music slowly grows to an epic crescendo as the song progresses, with drums becoming the dominant instrument. The lyrics are dark but with a strength that often can not be conveyed in words. The song left me in tears, not because of the inspiration behind the song, but because of the overall message of defiance and strength of spirit.

Each track on the EP is driven by complex issues and emotions, perhaps adding to the overall allure of London Has Fallen. *Into the Night* is now available on iTunes and other music sites, and if you find yourself in Illinois this summer maybe you'll get the chance to check them out [live](#).

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



The Challenge

Despite having all sorts of (better?) ways of making notes, I persist with using scraps of paper and a pen. It may not have served me particularly well as technology has advanced, but old habits die hard. I am trying. Among the notations on my phone at this moment are the combination to our floor safe, where I've hidden my mom's safety deposit box key, the name of a favourite MAC lipstick, the Venza license plate number, and the contribution room on my TFSA. There are others that might as well be written in Greek for all they mean to me now.

(Over the years I've flirted with the technique most writers use: carrying a small notebook at all times to capture flashes of insight and observation before they vaporize. Maybe it's time to start again.)

The inability to decode what, when, and why I scribbled a specific note extends to my paper ones as well. Sometimes I can't even read my own writing. And so it is with one that's been floating around my desk for the last few weeks.

I read an interview with Taylor Schilling (*Orange is the New Black*) in one of the magazines I receive. I copied a line that grabbed me: "That bone-deep acceptance of your life—whatever it looks like—is when doors start to open and an opportunity presents itself."

It's a good line. One that has meaning even as it stands alone. How much better would my understanding be if I had ripped out the whole article and had the context for her remarks? Lesson learned.

I saved the line because it spoke to me. We can probably count on one hand those who have fully (and easily) come to self-acceptance. But for most of us it's a lifelong struggle. It begins at puberty and persists, unabated, well into one's twilight years. We all know those feisty old broads who shoot from the lip and say all those things the rest of us are filtering. They've grabbed life with both hands.

Critics and self-doubt be damned.

In my own case, I've come to accept that I live in the country near a village of fewer than four hundred people and that isn't likely to change as long as we farm. I have learned that I don't do well for long in the nine to five 'working for the man' scenario. I've accepted that I don't have the resume showing long, uninterrupted chunks of devotion to specific employers. I do best when I'm working on specific projects in which I assume the responsibility and the reward of its outcome.

That bone-deep acceptance of my life led me to propose and then implement Babas & Borshch Ukrainian Festival, now entering its third year. Work that is challenging but satisfying. An opportunity to do something for my greater community. A chance to draw on *all* my skills and talents. Recognizing the open door and having the courage to walk through it is the challenge, 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

The Gift of Time

Dear Barb:

My boyfriend and I have been invited to a birthday party/open house for a friend who is turning thirty. The invitation says no gifts, just your presence required. I believe people just say that, but they really want a gift, my boyfriend doesn't agree with me. He doesn't want to bring a gift but I do. What do you think? Michelle.

Hi Michelle:

Great question! If someone says no gifts then you can safely assume that you have no obligation to bring a gift. There may be a reason why they do not want gifts. For example they already have enough "stuff." Therefore if you really would like to bring a gift, perhaps a gift card is a good choice. However if the birthday or celebration is for a family member, or someone you have a particularly close relationship with you may want to bring a gift. So really it is up to you. Thanks for your question Michelle.

Dear Barb:

My girlfriend and I are in our mid-twenties. We have been dating six months and this is the first serious relationship for both of us. We get along great and are having a lot of fun together. My girlfriend is in her last year of university and I just graduated this year and will be starting a job next month. Everything seems to be falling into place for us, except that we do have a bit of tension as a result of her wanting us to move in together. I'm having some doubts, not because of anything in our relationship, but I think we should wait a little while longer. She says there is no reason to wait since everything is going so well and we should move forward. I'm afraid if I insist she'll misinterpret it, and think that I'm not happy with her and ultimately end the relationship. I'm not sure how to tell her I'm just not ready. Looking forward to your reply, Jacob.

Hey Jacob:

It sounds like you are on a good path to your future. All the available dating advice suggests you date someone for a year before you move in together or make any other serious commitment, as it is a good idea to see how well a person functions under a variety of situations and stressors. You need to be honest and straightforward with your girlfriend and tell her you are not ready and that it has nothing to do with her or your relationship. If she cannot respect your feelings and chooses to end the relationship, then it probably wasn't meant to be. Take your time and follow your intuition. Thanks Jacob.

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.

Weird Canada

Embalming Fluid Palace

The Glass House on the East Shore Kootenay Lake in British Columbia was constructed from embalming fluid bottles.

It was built in the fifties by David H. Brown, a retired funeral home director looking for a way to put the discarded bottles to good use. Collecting 500,000 bottles from friends in the funeral business, he built what looks like a small castle and is now a major tourist attraction.



HEY, THIS GIVES ME AN IDEA! WHAT IF WE
COULD BUILD A HOUSE FROM ALL THOSE
SPECULUMS OUR HOSPITAL'S BEEN
THROWING AWAY?



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

Chief Returning Officer (CRO) required for upcoming AUSU Election

The Athabasca University Students' Union is currently accepting applications to fill the role of its CRO for an upcoming summer 2015 election.

The CRO, working with AUSU staff, is responsible for monitoring all aspects of the election process, including but not limited to:

- a) accepting nominations;
- b) verifying the eligibility of nominees;
- c) informing candidates of campaign policy;
- d) enforcing campaign policy;
- e) accepting votes;
- f) confirming voter eligibility;
- g) counting ballots, including for any recounts;
- h) reporting election results to Council; and
- i) conducting any controverted election appeals, unless the CRO is alleged to be responsible for the claimed error or fraud.

This role will last approximately 8 weeks, with a projected amount of total hours around 40-60 within the 6 week period. At this time, we are forecasting an election to occur in mid-August. The successful candidate will receive a \$1000 honorarium at the completion of the role. The CRO position can be performed from any location, but requires email and internet capability throughout this period.

If you are interested in this position, please email your resume or any questions to election@ausu.org. Previous experience is a definite asset, but not required.

The deadline for applications is Thursday, July 2, 2015.

For further information on this role, and the AUSU Election process, please refer to our AUSU Election Conduct Policy 3.01 found here: http://www.ausu.org/downloads/policies/AUSU_Policy_3_01.pdf



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New Services for AUSU Members!

At AUSU's most recent Council meeting on June 10th, Council voted in favor of three motions:

- Becoming a member of the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations,
- Partnering with Ceridian to provide our members with free mental health services,
- And accepting the project of redesigning AUSU's website, www.ausu.org, complete with online awards applications, AU course evaluations, and much more!

After several months of prep work, we're happy to be officially putting these projects into motion. We are very excited about what the next few months will bring for AUSU and its members!

Monthly Council Meetings

We would love for you to attend one of AUSU's monthly Council meetings! Our next Council meeting is being held by teleconference on July 8th at 5:30 MST.

Members can observe Council's discussion and votes during the formal meeting and participate in an informal discussion with councillors afterwards.

Please e-mail admin@ausu.org for call-in information and details. Hope to "see" you there!!

IMPORTANT DATES

- July 8: AUSU Council Meeting
- July 10: Last day to register for courses starting Aug 1
- August 1: Estimated launch of mental health services
- August 5: AUSU Council Meeting
- August 10: Last day to register for courses starting Sept 1

AUSU Services Survey Results

The results are in! Thank you to all the AUSU members who responded; your feedback will be very helpful to Council in moving forward.

The survey results can be viewed on our website: <http://www.ausu.org/members/memberinfo.php>



NOW AVAILABLE! Athabasca University Students' Union
Student Health & Dental Plan

For the Benefit of those that Depend on Us

What's Covered?

Ambulance • Prescription Drugs • Health Practitioners • Dental
Accident • Medical Equipment & Supplies • Dental • Tutorial
For further details please visit mystudentplan.ca/athabasca

Am I Eligible?

Students become eligible once they have reached their second course (or 6 credits) in a year. Coverage will start on the 1st of the month following your enrolment if you register before the 10th of the month.
If you register later in the month, coverage will start the 1st of the second month.
If you opt out of the plan it will not be offered again for 11 months, should you continue to qualify.

Note: Students must reside in Canada and be under the age of 70 to be eligible.

How do I Access the Plan?

Use your myBenefits Cards to submit claims at the Pharmacy, Dental Office and Health Practitioners. Download your card today at mystudentplan.ca

Submit your claims online or via mobile app with Great-West Life GroupNet available for free for Android, iPhone and Blackberry.

mystudentplan.ca • 1.877.746.5566 ext. 249 • athabascaplan@mystudentplan.ca

Press Releases

Did you know that AUSU posts press releases on its website with important details of the latest goings-on at AUSU?

Check out our press releases page here:

<http://www.ausu.org/council/press.php>

CLASSIFIEDS

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

Views and articles presented here are those of the contributors and do not represent the views of AUSU Student Council

THE VOICE

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