

THE VOICE

MAGAZINE

Vol 23 Issue 39 2015-09-25

Minds We Meet

Interviewing Students Like You!

The "Go West" Relationship Test

And Miles to go before I Sleep

How Green is Your Coffee?

When a cup is a C.U.P.

Plus:

*I Hope You're Engaged
The Sleep Concert
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**Time Out****Karl Low**

I have to admit, it was gratifying to see how many of you started following *The Voice Magazine's* Facebook page last week. I keep forgetting that even though I know all of the stuff we do out in the wild internets, most of you don't, and you probably don't have the time or inclination to be searching around for it, which means I need to be a bit more forward about pointing these things out once in a while.

This week, things have been hectic. Not only did we recover from last week's hack, it seems our erstwhile hacker friends have come back for seconds. I almost wouldn't mind if the hacks seemed somewhat elegant, but, by the evidence left strewn around in the back-end of the website and the emails that alerted us to it happening, it's become fairly obvious that all we have here are some script-kiddies running brute-force attempts to find holes in *The Voice Magazine's* security. Of course, in fairness, it's our fault that they did, and I'm not proud of that.

Fortunately, this issue has some good content that will hopefully make up for any delays you've suffered in your weekly procrastination schedule. In particular, check out our feature interview with student Heather Elizabeth, and the first part of Barb Lehtiniemi's own travel adventure across Canada.

Also, Hazel Anaka in this week's "From Where I Sit" reminds us of the importance in participating in the political process, whether that's through something as all-consuming as running for office, to simply taking the time to cast an informed vote. After all, as she points out, remember that everybody you don't like, all the people with ideas you think are dumb or hateful or bigoted all get the vote, and it's up to us to counter theirs.

In other news, I'm supposed to take vacation a couple of weeks throughout the year. Usually a person does that during the summer so that they can enjoy the sun and good weather, but with all of the changes going on at AUSU over the summer, I really couldn't justify taking any week off in case something of importance happened. That means that now, with the year fast running out, I have to get those holidays in.

To that end, there won't be a new issue of *The Voice Magazine* next week. Instead, I'll be taking off some time to enjoy the autumn weather, get caught up on my course, and maybe even do some personal writing. That's the plan anyway. So the next issue of *The Voice Magazine* won't be out until October 9th. I'm hoping I'll be able to arrange a little surprise by the time it comes out, so if you aren't on our email reminder list yet, I'm just hinting that this would be a really good time to sign up.

Until then, enjoy the read!

MINDS WE MEET



Heather Elizabeth is an AU student from Toronto, Ontario. Originally from near St Jacob's , Ontario, Heather started two AU courses in September, after which she will be pursuing graduate studies.

Heather was recently interviewed by The Voice Magazine. *Here's what she had to say about school, Socrates, and sexuality.*

Has Toronto always been home?

I moved to Toronto about seven or eight years ago. I'm originally from the St Jacob's area. I have also lived in Brantford, where I studied at that city's campus of Wilfred Laurier University, and I lived in London before moving to Toronto.

Are you in a program at AU?

No. I'll be applying for grad school soon, in the hopes of becoming a registered psychotherapist. I needed a few courses for upgrading before going to grad school. I'm taking SOCI 301, *Social Statistics*, and SOSC 366, *Research Methods in the Social Sciences*.

You describe yourself as a "Sexuality Agitator, Educator, and Empowerment Coach." Can you explain what that means?

As an Empowerment Coach, I help adults work through any blocks that are preventing them from having a fulfilling sex life. For example, I might coach someone on how to feel comfortable enough to ask their partner for what they want or need. Or perhaps someone had a strict religious background and now they're an adult and don't feel they have the tools to engage in the dating process—I can help them work through it. As an Educator, I help teach people how to open up the dialogue around sexuality. And as an Agitator, I'm just getting it out there to make it easy for people to talk about.

Describe the path that led you to AU.

It was really the flexibility. With an unpredictable daytime schedule and my coaching practice, I like that I can take the courses online while I'm living and working in TO.

What do you like to do when you're not studying/working/coaching?

I love to read and, because of my coaching, I read a lot of books on sexuality and communication. I also like live theatre, and I like getting outdoors, whether it's hiking or just sitting on a beach.

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

Probably my father. Before he retired he was a university professor. I grew up in a household that valued education, both formal and informal. Dad was interested in best practices, and he would bring home books that described the best methods for just about everything, from communication to canoeing. My love of reading started early; we had lots of books around the house, including the classics.

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

Socrates, definitely. I really like his dialectical approach to learning, and that's stayed with me all my life. How do we know what we know? How do we know something to be true? How could this be false?

Have you had a time when you wavered about your education?

Absolutely. When I finished high school, I wondered "What next?" I contemplated perhaps taking a year off and then deciding what to do. My parents thought this idea was ridiculous. They lined up various testing for me, like the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, personality tests, and career testing. This was all designed to help me determine what I wanted to take in higher education.

Wilfred Laurier University (based in Waterloo) had just opened a satellite campus in Brantford. I went there and took my degree in Contemporary Studies—a perfect course of study for me because I've always been inquisitive about how the world works (the program is now known as Society, Culture, and Environment.) My father had suggested Laurier Brantford because they had created the program of contemporary studies specifically as an interdisciplinary program; meaning I didn't have to limit myself to history or politics or philosophy. It turned out to be a great experience; it's so much different on a small campus.

If you won \$20 million in a lottery, what would you do with it?

I would invest in opening my dream space. It would be like some kind of community space with a sex-positive store, a living library, and a café. Just a comfortable space where people can gather to shop and talk—where discussions about sexuality are normalized.

If you could wake up tomorrow with a "superpower", which one would it be?

Teleportation. I've been fortunate to have traveled, and teleportation would just make everything easier.

What is your most prized possession?

My mind. I like how it works, how it thinks and tackles things.

Please tell us something that few people know about you.

Most people would find this hard to believe, given what I do, but I struggle with anxiety, and I'm also very shy.

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

It's that we have agency. We can't always control what happens but we can control what we do about it. I often refer back to a Terence McKenna quotation: "Nature loves courage. You make the commitment and nature will respond to that commitment by removing impossible obstacles. Dream the impossible dream and the world will not grind you under, it will lift you up."

What do you think about e-texts?

One of my courses has an e-text, and I'm going to print it out. I'm very tech-aware, but given my druthers, I'd prefer a hard copy book so I can make proper notes.

How do you find communications with your course tutors?

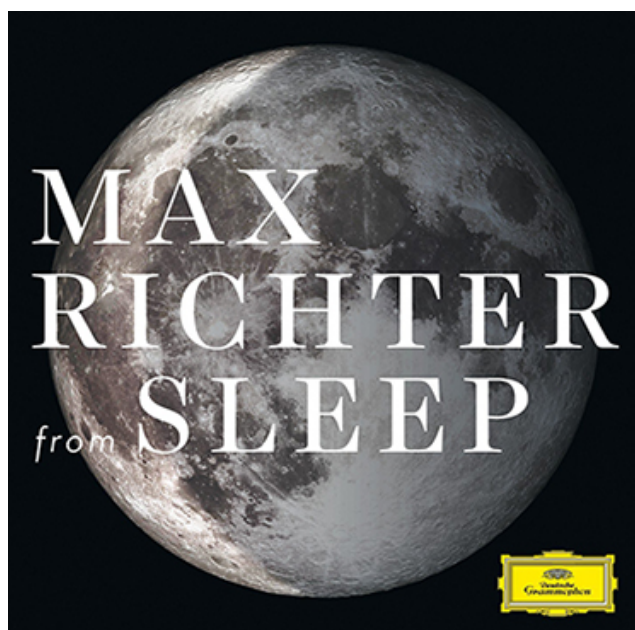
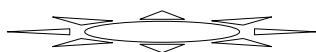
I haven't started my course yet, but I did need to contact the course coordinator when I was choosing my courses. One had a prerequisite and I sent an e-mail describing my experience and situation, hoping to avoid taking an extra course. I got a prompt response back, and I was able to skip the prerequisite course. I was really impressed by how quickly they got back to me.

Where has life taken you so far?

I've been to a few places. I've lived in Canada, England, and Australia. And I've travelled to Gambia, on the west coast of Africa, across Australia, to Malaysia, and most of the east coast of the United States as well as California.

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

I'm reading *Sex From Scratch*, by Sarah Mirk, and *Radical Ecstasy* by Dossie Easton and Janet Hardy.


The Mindful Bard
From Sleep

Wanda Waterman

**The World is a Child Screaming,
and Max Richter Wants to Lull it to Sleep**

Album: *From Sleep*

Composer and pianist: Max Richter

"O sleep, O gentle sleep, Nature's soft nurse, how have I frightened thee,
That thou no more will weigh my eyelids down, And steep my senses
in forgetfulness?"
- William Shakespeare, *Henry IV, Part 2*

You know when terms like "easy listening" have entered the parlance of the *de rigueur*, culture has taken a turn. Long gone are the days when we rolled our eyes at our parents' instrumental platters and blissed out to the Woodstock album's opening "Gimme an 'F!'" as if that were somehow more musically rigorous and significant than the Percy Faith Orchestra playing "Stardust."

But even "easy listening" is a misapplied term for this album. British composer Max Richter isn't just a serious neoclassical composer trained at the Royal Academy of Music, an exclusive artist to Deutsche Grammophon, and the creator of scores for numerous television shows and films including Martin Scorsese's *Shutter Island*; his deeply melodic music is also all the rage among fans of very different musical genres.

For example, a comment after one of these tracks on Let's Loop reads, "Well, that was a minute well spent, now off to seek out some headbanging stuff."

For head-bangers I recommend this short version, *From Sleep*. Regrettably I haven't yet had time to listen to the full eight-hour version, *Sleep*, in which Richter accompanies himself with a small selection of master stringsters and the

soul-stirring tones of Grace Davidson, whose wordless vocals carry all the intense and comforting beauty of the archetypal dam. The long version has been described as an eight-hour lullaby, but, if this short version is any indication, it's the kind of lullaby that soothes you all night and in the morning is still going, convincing you that all's well and a miraculous new day awaits you.

What does it mean that Richter wants to put us to sleep? Even more bizarre, why would such a hard-working composer create something which he explicitly wants us to sleep through? Is the artist expressing humanity's wish to take a break from the nightmare of our current waking lives, to turn away from the burnout, the refugee crisis, religious extremism, political polarisation, global warming, and all the personal horrors that await us each morning? Is he suggesting that burying our faces in our smartphones or drowning in consumer goods may be making things worse?

Richter isn't proposing an escape but rather a natural, restorative hiatus, both for the suffering and for those who empathise: "We are all in need of a pause button." Richter confesses that sleeping is one of his favourite activities, and he observes that the world doesn't get enough of it—with negative repercussions.

Sometime this fall he'll be providing that pause button live in Berlin, where the orchestra will surround 400 beds and the audience will be invited to sleep as the band plays on for the eight hours of Richter's score.

While writing the score he consulted with sleep specialist David Eagleman, a neuroscientist at Baylor college. But this isn't just a scientifically informed effort to calm you down; it's contemplative fodder for the unconscious. One reviewer, Jon Falcone, described his own experience of falling asleep to this music as follows: "Sleeping with *Sleep* as a subconscious companion cleared the canvas entirely; no images were retained merely deep dark sleep and moments of shock, awaking to ebbing strings or singular syllables. It felt like waking up in Lynch's 'Mulholland Drive', for the briefest of moments."

Yes, the tracks on *From Sleep* can free you from the mundane and set you down in a kind of weird twilight zone, but they also grant a deep sense of *assurance*—assurance that, somehow, you're loved, that your true self is solid and enduring, and that you can find your way out of the forest if you try.

A few high points: "Dream 13 (minus even)" is deeply healing, conjuring up tender feelings you didn't know you had. Listen to it while looking at old family photos and wait for that old lovin' feelin' to flood you in waves. "Path 5 (delta)" has incredibly stirring vocals, mastered for maximum heart-rending power. And in "Space 21 (petrichor)" the strings sound like digeridoos, granting a sense of access to a primal world.

From Sleep manifests five of The Mindful Bard's criteria for music well worth a listen.

- It's authentic, original, and delightful.
 - It provides respite from a cruel world, a respite enabling me to renew myself for a return to mindful artistic endeavor.
 - It's about attainment of the true self.
 - It inspires an awareness of the sanctity of creation.
 - It renews my enthusiasm for positive social action.
- complex and rare phenomena, making living a unique opportunity.

Many thanks for the research assistance of Bill Waterman.

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

The "Go West" Relationship Test - Part One

Barbara Lehtiniemi



One of the surest methods for testing a relationship's fortitude must be the act of traveling together. The ingredients for a relationship blow-up are all there. Start with tiredness from lack of sleep and time-zone shifts. Then toss in the anxiety of missed connections, lost luggage, and confusing cities. And top it off with the almost-guaranteed discomfort of unfamiliar beds and unpredictable mealtimes. Mix all these elements together, and one minor episode of conflicting expectations or differing tastes in museums can light the spark for an explosive meltdown.

When my husband proposed travelling by Greyhound bus to Vancouver BC from our home near Ottawa ON, I confess I didn't hold out much hope for either the trip or the relationship. I mean, come on, three days—and by days I mean the whole 24 hours of them—and almost 5000 kilometres on a bus? Sleep on a bus, eat on a bus, use the toilet on a bus? For three days? We're doomed.

Despite my utter lack of enthusiasm, accompanied by an occasional dose of open animosity, trip planning commenced. As a spousal sweetener, an overnight stay at a hotel in Winnipeg was thrown in. While that extended the journey to four days, it did mean that the middle night of the trip would involve a real bed, not to mention to opportunity to shower and change clothes.

While I couldn't generate a scrap of enthusiasm for our mode of travel, I tried to remain philosophical. I am a hardy traveler, and I can bear a certain degree of discomfort. I do like to travel by road. I love experiencing the beauty and vastness of Canada, and I had not traveled overland to the Canadian west for decades. Still, four days confined to a bus? I comforted myself that the return journey—by plane—would at least be quick (a blessing if we were no longer on speaking terms.)

Our friends, or at any rate the female ones, confirmed my misgivings. Upon hearing that we would travel from Ottawa to Vancouver by bus, the usual reaction was a look of utter horror, followed by the oh-so-comforting, "You have GOT to be kidding!" or, "Have you ever traveled by bus?" or even, "Oh, God, don't do it." Since my enthusiasm was already at rock bottom, these reactions only served to confirm my position.

To be fair, one friend declared that the bus plans sounded "So cool!" and opined that she would love to join us if only she could get the time off work. At the other end of the spectrum, my neighbour offered to pick me up at the airport if I decided to fly home from Winnipeg after two days—not to mention the intervening night—on the bus.

Winnipeg was the magical half-way point. After more than 31 hours on three buses (Ottawa to Sudbury, Sudbury to Thunder Bay, Thunder Bay to Winnipeg) we'd be ready for a break before facing the next 35 hours

on three more buses (Winnipeg to Regina, Regina to Calgary, Calgary to Vancouver.) Sixty-six hours and two overnights on the bus. How bad could it be?

On the appointed July morning, with divorce lawyers flying lazy circles in the sky and my tummy heaving with anxiety, we boarded the first Greyhound bus in Ottawa.

Does the relationship survive the Greyhound bus travel test? See part two in next week's The Voice Magazine.

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



The Fit Student

Marie Well

Practices for Coming to Peace with Yourself, Part III



The brain is a perplexing, fallible organ. One minute our wiring works great. No hitches. Our concentration intensifies. Our focus zeroes onto the task at hand. Our ability to excel at tasks seems inconsequential. That is, until anxiety overcomes us. When dreadful anxiety lands on our psyches, we can grow so debilitated that even the simplest of tasks become fret worthy chores. Just concentrating on counting to a hundred can seem like a challenge when thoughts are racing, palms are sweating, and thoughts are spacey. Nobody enjoys anxiety, especially me.

Rick Hanson delves into a jar of anxiety relieving exercises in his book *Just One Thing: Developing a Buddha Brain One Simple Practice at a Time*. His strategies will keep you on top of your game, devoid of anxiety, no matter what the challenge.

Dream without Attachment

I'm attached to the dream of getting a Ph.D. Yet the anxiety I experience when tackling courses overrides my ability to concentrate much of the time. I get spacey. My mind falls into a

pervasive fog. I fear potential failure from setting my horizons too high due to my fragile physiological tendency toward anxiety and stress. Don't we all have big dreams that we long to attain, but that are fraught with our inhibitions, our anxieties, our unsure natures?

So, what if I try to get a Ph.D. and fail? Is that truly a loss to humanity? What if you follow your dream and fail? Is that truly a loss to humanity?

Sometimes, the treasures grow from the trying, and the attainment is just the icing on the cake. Rick Hanson provides advice on how to dream without attachment. You don't want to be overwhelmed with feelings of failure at not achieving your goals, so set your goals at such a high, lofty level that if you fail them, you don't feel rocked. When you start craving that goal, be leery. Craving, a sign of attachment, should be avoided. More often than not, our outcomes, our goals, are directed by a lot of external forces that we don't have much control

over. So, don't feel down if you don't achieve your goal. Instead, work hard and smart, and let the results come, good or bad. Just as rain on a baseball day can throw the game, external events can influence your outcomes more than you can.

Let Your Dreams Grow

Why shouldn't you want to make a million dollars in the stock market? Win the lotto? Start a soon-to-be global business? Raise ten million for a business venture? While some of these ideas seem more farfetched, or should I say, more dependent on luck, others have been attained by a number of people. The rewards for making big plans have yielded fortunes for some, and these people do not necessarily come from backgrounds of lavish wealth or the proverbial silver spoon.

Lots of people start businesses that grow into successful enterprises. Lots of people build apps that make at least good money, if not a fortune. Lots of people write books that turn into bestsellers. While the share of millionaires may not surpass those in the middle to lower classes, these millionaires do exist, sometimes starting with the resources that you and I currently have available.

The more you open up to the mindset for thinking big dreams, the more you plan around them.

Rick Hanson says that although our dreams can be lofty or small, we should avoid the get rich and famous cliché and instead aim for experiencing our true inner callings. Imagine the dreams you've long to attained throughout your life, especially those from childhood. Each of these dreams brings new insight into your true calling. Imagine how those dreams can serve the benefit of both yourself and the greater humanity. Work a little toward your dream, day in and day out. Don't forget to journal your actions to reinforce them consistently.

Do All in Your Power

I always wondered what it meant to do your best. How do you know what your best represents? Is your best when you become so single-minded that nothing but the task at hand enraptures you, and you glue yourself to completing it with fervour, the occasional shout for joy, and a click of the heels? If so, I think I've fallen short of the best at many things in life.

When someone asks me if I did my best at something, if I didn't spend every waking hour perfecting it, then no, maybe I didn't do my best. But that points to the faulty mindset called "perfectionism".

Rick Hanson shows us that doing your best, or doing all in your power, is a matter of controlling what you focus on and what you have the power to control. Look at the intersection in your life between the things you can control and the things you feel passion toward doing or achieving. Set out to do good deeds at a volunteer center for a cause that hits home for you, for instance. Also, be sure to focus on your mindset. When you can't control external events, or feel powerless against the external, you can build a wall of resilience and fortitude in your own mind.

Embrace Your Disposition

I'm an anxious, affectionate person. In business, I often present myself as a bit of the "sweetheart of the office" or, in other words, "the cheerleader", where I would lavish compliments and assistance on anyone in the vicinity. One of my bosses asked why my personality wasn't more domineering, more confident, more leadership-oriented. She seemed to think that only one personality type fit the business persona. Those traits just weren't me. I truly long to lead a company, to become the boss of some endeavour, but the sugar in my cheerleading disposition makes me unlikely to fulfill the stereotype.

Wisely, Rick Hanson says not to fret your true nature. Instead, embrace it. In groups people with different temperaments achieve different goals more efficiently. It takes all kinds to cement a productive team. If you are prone to anxiety, or to bouts of anger, or to neutrality, whatever it may be, certain environments will bring out the best in you more than others. Sometimes environments can clash with our temperaments, and, to combat this, we need to be on the lookout for people and environments that draw out the best in us. At times we will experience very negative events, and these likely have more to do with the environment and people clashing with your nature. Don't fret, but forgive yourself and forgive the environment that derailed or harmed you.

Don't Shy Away from a Potentially Horrid Outcome

No pain? No gain? Risk-taking, academics, and careers all often come with struggle. There is nothing worth achieving in life that isn't gained from some sweat, from some heartache, from some inner restlessness or turmoil. When you keep with a task, keep on ploughing through the storm, you end up coming to a point of victory or change, but always of growth. By plunging into a challenging task and facing head-on the trials, we strengthen our mindset for additional challenges. We forge ahead into areas that would otherwise leave us limited. We extend our boundaries. We grow closer to our truest purpose. Don't shy away from pain and hardship when the goal is something you long to attain.

Rick Hanson says that a lot of our tendencies to avoid things that mean something to us stem from our childhood. Intrepidity is key: do things that you wouldn't normally do, by starting with smaller challenges and working to larger ones. Reinforce each step of the way with positive self-affirmations. If you get knocked back, learn from it. A certain level of pain is almost essential in realizing our goals. And don't forget to revel in the pride, the self-esteem, the feelings of achievement when you do arrive at that wonderful goal.

Express Love

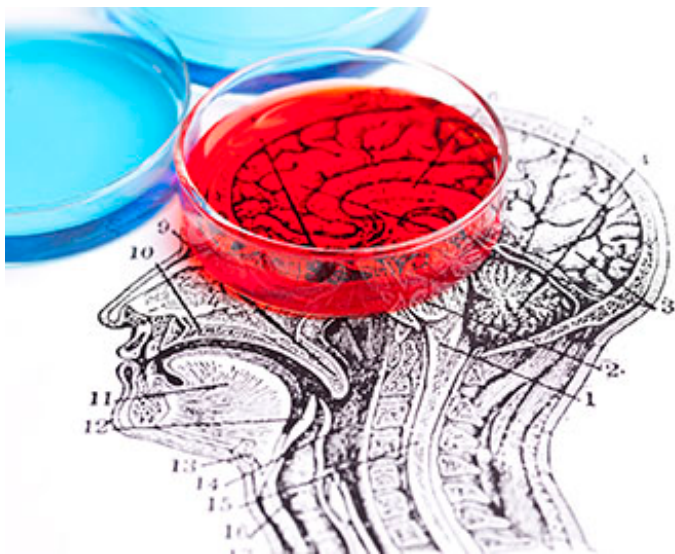
Finally we come to the ultimate of life: love. Doesn't just the word love make your heart grow tender, softer, less irritable? Everyone needs love, whether it arrives from another person or from God or from a pet or from the memory of a deceased loved one. Love truly fulfills the spirit like no other energy. In fact, all spiritualities profess the desirability of expressing love to one another. Yet, a world fraught with both loving and negative emotions is our present destiny, so make the most of the good feelings.

I once experienced extreme distress, and immediately encountered the simple smile and brief conversation from a lady in the washroom. Her kindness completely defused my distress and prevented me from acting irrationally. I will always savour that simple smile. It made for a positive outcome to an otherwise negative scenario. Just one simple, kind act rippled through my universe in ways that I will always be indebted for. That lady's one simple act impressed upon my memories, evoking a deep sense of gratitude, for the rest of my life.

The way to nurture love is to give love to others, says Rick Hanson. Just one kind, loving word can ripple throughout the universe in beautiful ways you never intended. Rick says that the people in your family and your friends need to experience the love you give. These people are in your life to experience your love. When you see love in someone's eyes, doesn't that person look beautiful? You look beautiful when you demonstrate love to others. So, love. After all, isn't love our sole reason for existence?

Primal Numbers A in Aerobics

S.D. Livingston



We all know the way to get better grades. Turn off the TV, put down the smartphone, and spend more time studying. It's good advice, but there's something else you should be doing to improve your memory and ability to focus. As the latest research shows, hitting the gym could be just as good for your grades as hitting the books.

It's not exactly news that exercise is good for us. But when we think of improving our brainpower, of flexing those little grey cells, we usually think of some sort of brain-training exercise like a Sudoku puzzle or an app with mazes. Those things will probably help, but

the one thing they have in common certainly won't.

That's because they all involve sitting—or at least not doing any exercise. And as the Harvard health blog [reports](#), "exercise changes the brain in ways that protect memory and thinking skills."

Not just any exercise, though. Aerobic exercise brought the most improvement to study participants, and the results are more than anecdotal. Indeed, they're measurable. In one study at the University of British Columbia regular aerobic exercise appeared to "boost the size of the hippocampus, the brain area involved in verbal memory and learning."

If you want to see for yourself, check out this [image](#) of brain scans at Boston.com. It shows the difference in brain activity between kids that exercised before taking a test versus those who sat quietly.

Which makes it all the more worrisome that so many school boards have reduced, or even eliminated, physical education as part of the curriculum.

In the US, *The New York Times* [reported](#) that, as of 2012, almost half of high school students across the country "said they had no physical education classes in an average week." In Canada, a 2014 [report](#) by Active Healthy Kids Canada notes that only 7 per cent of kids aged 5 to 11 are meeting the guidelines for basic physical activity every day. In the 12 to 17 age group, that number drops to 4 per cent.

But here's the interesting thing. In that same study, an overwhelming majority of schools reported having things like gyms, playgrounds, and playground equipment. The catch? Only about half of them, a mere 55 per cent, reported that they had "a fully implemented policy for daily PE for all students." In other words, they've got the tools, they just aren't applying them.

Now, it's true that parents can set an example and encourage their kids to be active. But it's also true that kids spend a large chunk of their day in school, a lot of which involves sitting. And, more and more, involves staring

at the screens on tablets and computers—the same kind of screens they stare at when they go home at the end of the day.

As adults, we can take this information and act on it. You might be someone going back to school to get a degree in your fifties, or an 18-year-old fresh off to college, or a senior who wants to reduce the risk of dementia. For kids, it will require a bit more direction. A parent or teacher, for instance, who makes sure that regular daily activity is a priority, not an afterthought.

The bottom line, though, is the same no matter what your age. Get moving, every day. Even if you're not worried about weight loss or muscle strength or endurance, do it for your brain. Do it whether you've got access to the best gym around or you have to dance around your living room because it's too darn cold and snowy to go anywhere.

Because getting that A in aerobics might just raise your mental game in everything else.

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.



How Green is Your Coffee?

Carla Knipe

University life is intertwined with coffee culture. Whether it's waking up early to study accompanied by a cup of something warm or going to a coffee shop with a laptop to get in some writing time, university students love their caffeine. Most coffee shop patrons do not stop to think about the garbage that their favourite brews create, but the waste generated by those lightweight cups is a becoming a big problem throughout North America. Calculating the amount of waste that our love affair with caffeine generates results in some staggering numbers. The environmental group Green Calgary estimates that, on average, one urban coffee chain location uses 3000 cups per day and, in Calgary alone, a total of 62 million cups are used each year. However, despite these estimates, nobody is prepared to offer solid solutions.

Disposable coffee cups are just one component of the growing trend of what Green Calgary calls C.U.P.s, or Completely Unnecessary Products, alongside bottled water, cheap fashion, and a growing number of gadgets that ultimately end up in the landfill after a single or limited use. A 2009 McMaster University

study that looked into the use and sustainability of disposable cups calculated that a paper cup becomes garbage within 15 minutes of use. If each coffee shop patron purchased one cup of coffee or tea in a disposable cup every day, approximately 23 lbs of waste would be created in one year.

The prevalence of disposable cups is relatively recent. In their earlier years of operation, both Starbucks and Tim Hortons used non-disposable mugs in-store and paper cups were only used for takeout orders. The growing environmental awareness of the dangers of CFC's led to Styrofoam beverage cups becoming virtually obsolete and paper cups were seen as the more environmentally friendly alternative. But the shift to coffee chains exclusively adopting disposable paper cups began when they realized that the energy and time required to wash the non-disposable mugs affected their operating costs and, ultimately, their profits.

Go into any coffee shop chain and you will notice that each sells its own range of branded, reusable mugs. In fact, most coffee aficionados own at least one travel mug. But the number of coffee purchases by those who take in their reusable mugs is miniscule compared with of the amount of coffee purchased in disposable cups. There are more people walking around with their paper coffee cup, logo prominently displayed as a kind of cachet, than there are who carry a travel mug. Most coffee shop patrons would probably say they just forgot to bring their own mug or that it wasn't worth the small discount given on the price of their coffee to haul around their mug all day. Quite simply, paper cups are just more convenient. And besides, they are made of paper and can be easily recycled, right?

Despite paper cups proclaiming they are made from a percentage of post-consumer recycled paper and are recyclable where facilities exist, the ability to recycle the cups is more myth than reality. They are not accepted in most municipal "blue bin" recycling schemes because of the type of paper used, which often contains waxes, and because the paper is stained after use. The technology for recycling paper cups exists, but the cost is currently prohibitive. There are also cups available that are compostable, but these are not ideal either because unless the cups have access to air and sunlight they are as non-biodegradable as regular paper cups. The McMaster study also noticed that, currently, cups are not separated out of normal garbage. So if mass recycling is to happen, it will require a conscious effort by coffee companies. The current situation of depositing them in landfills is definitely not ideal because the paper leads to leaching of the chemicals used for the paper's bleaching. In terms of volume, disposable cups take up a massive amount of landfill space because they are not crushed before disposing, and finding landfill space is becoming more difficult. And yet, countless disposable cups are being added daily to landfills. Unless there is realization about the environmental impact, the waste levels will eventually reach a crisis point.

Consumers are often oblivious to the economic and environmental costs from disposable cups because they just don't think about what happens to it after the beverage is drunk and the cup is trashed. Since the cost of the cup is embedded in the price of the beverage, people are not aware of what it takes to manufacture, ship, and dispose of the single-use containers. They are often more concerned with the quality of the product they are drinking, such as whether it is organic or fairly traded, but the receptacle it comes in is not given consideration. Organizations such as Green Calgary are urging corporations and provincial and local governments to discuss the waste problem created by disposable cups, but they know that they face a difficult battle. For now, the environmental issue of coffee cup waste remains a personal decision. If people began to equate disposable cups with wastefulness instead of convenience, then the true price our love of coffee might begin to be addressed. On the other hand, breaking our dependency on disposable cups might turn out to be just as difficult as trying to give up coffee altogether.

Carla is an AU student and a caffeinated beverage definitely keeps her going through her studies. However, her pet peeve is seeing people occupy the tables at Starbucks for long periods of time when she can't find a seat.



Study Tips from a Semi-Anonymous Friend

How to Turn a Paraphrase, Respond to Objections, and Organize Your Paper

There is nothing more that The Study Dude wants for you than to learn what exactly it means to start your paper with a scintillating quote.

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.

The book *The Craft of Research* by Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams gives rise to part four of the Study Dude article.

Presenting Charts, Graphs, and other Visual Goodies

In your results of your paper, it is a good idea to present visuals. I don't mean just one or two, I mean a lot of visuals. Visuals remain essential to the success of your thesis research. Yes, a thesis without visuals is like a grown adult missing a tooth right in the center of the mouth. The absence of visuals warns of amateurishness, incompleteness, and a lack of substance.

Now, you don't have to be an art aficionado to do well with graphics and visuals. Yes, a course on Microsoft software might do you well if you feel you lack the know-how with computer generated charts, graphs, and tables. To get that knowledge, a wonderful course exists called [Computers and Management Information Systems \(CMIS\) 245](#), offered by our very own Athabasca University.

PowerPoint offers a great deal of flexibility with making charts, too, including the ability to add shapes and arrows and certain types of structural charts. In PowerPoint, you can easily make Venn diagrams, for instance. Once you create your graphics in PowerPoint or Excel, you can take a screenshot or copy and paste it into Word or possibly export it directly into a word format. CMIS 245 covers a broad gamut of MS Word products, so go ahead and dig in.

- There are figures and then there are tables. Figures constitute anything visual that does not qualify as a table. For instance, charts, graphs, photographs, sketches, etcetera all count as figures.
- Charts and graphs prove ideal for capturing quantitative (numerical) data.
- Tables, bar charts, and line graphs suit neophyte academics best. These figures are simple to learn and easy to implement.
- Just use horizontal lines (and sparingly) in your tables. Don't have horizontal and vertical lines both present as they crowd the space and make the table confusing. Try to use your horizontal lines as underlines for your table labels only.
- Don't make your bar chart 3-dimensional. 3-dimensional bar charts scream of amateurishness.
- Put labels to each of your rows and columns in a table and put tallies at the bottom or right hand side as needed.
- In tables, try to round your numbers so that you don't have values such as 98.674 in a field.

- Try to arrange your bar charts so that they show a pattern (such as increasing or decreasing values).

Crafting Your Introduction and Conclusion with a Scintillating Quote

In the Communications Studies undergraduate program, I often wondered what was meant by the advice to start your paper with a catchy quote. I wondered if I should buy a reference book on famous quotes, look up the topic of my paper in the quote book index, and write-up the catchiest quote I could find. However, that approach would be stifling as there are only so many famous quotes to pick and choose from. Wouldn't recycling some famous quote get redundant after a while? The answer is yes.

Many fiction books start a chapter with a famous quote. That's the trend for fiction books, but for your paper, there is a better strategy not only for introducing your quote, but for concluding the paper with a quote as well. If you've ever been ensnared by the conundrum of not knowing how to tie your essay together, then the following advice will sit well with you.

While you should keep in mind that a famous quote at the start of your paper can sometimes be poignant, a basic formula for introductory quotations has been presented by Booth, Colomb, and Williams:

- Whatever you do, don't start your paper with a dictionary definition. Dictionary definitions don't provide adequate treatment to a concept complex enough to warrant a paper.
- Use a startling quotation at the beginning of your paper whenever the quotation reflects a lot of the keywords you use throughout your write-up.
- Take the startling or compelling quotation directly from one of your sources. Yes, take the quotation from the source that most poignantly highlights the main theme or question or argument of your paper.
- Try to have your final quotation in the conclusion reflect your introductory quotation, but have a slightly different spin or slightly different wording to it. Try to make your final quotation from the sources (most ideally from the same source as the introductory quote) more complex or more reliant on the argument in your paper.
- You can also use a fact or an anecdote to start your paper, but do again ensure that your concluding remark reflects this initial component in an illuminating way. Also, getting your startling facts from one of your most salient sources would serve you well.

What to Look for In Revisions

Revising a paper for a novice can prove challenging. I used to print out a copy of my paper and get my friend to read it. Typically, this friend would offer no solid advice, but instead circle one or two, at the most, spelling or grammatical errors and hand the paper back to me. I've come to learn that this type of advice just doesn't cut it in academics. You need people to engage with your ideas like they are your readers having a conversation with you. Authors Booth, Colomb, and Williams, along with authors Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein, know the value of engaging readers in a dialogue and ensuring you meet the reader's need to grow from what you write.

For the structural parts of your essay, however, the revision should be more finely tuned. You need to know what constitutes a strong sentence. In all of my undergraduate and graduate education, for instance, it never once dawned on me to avoid passive sentences. No one told me about the insidious nature of using passive sentences. In fact, my high school teacher told me to take delight in mixing passive and active sentences as the combination added interest. I took her literally and riddled my writing with passive sentences. Big mistake. You, however, should take the following advice of Booth, Colomb, and Williams on how to revise:

- Attend to sentence structure only after you organize your paper to your best ability and ensure your arguments are sound.
- Don't write your paper with what are called nominalizations. Nominalizations are nouns derived from verbs or adjectives. For instance, "to wonder" is the verb and "wonderment" is the noun. Too many of these stuffy nominalizations make for an unbecoming read. Try to keep the simpler adjective or verb form intact.
- Plus nominalizations, those pesky nouns, serve up lots of cluttering prepositions and articles. (Articles include the words, "the", "a", and "an".)
- Don't be too stuffy and complex in your writing, but don't be Simple Simon either.
- Aim for a simple subject that is the thing or idea you are discussing followed closely by a verb as this makes for clear easy to follow writing. Make the person or thing doing the action the simple subject. For instance "the purpose of the assignment ..." has "purpose" as the simple subject whereas "the assignment aimed ..." has "the assignment" as the simple subject (which is preferable as "the assignment" and not "the purpose" is the doer).
- Try not to use long subjects. Use short subjects wherever possible.
- Make the concept, person, or thing that appeared earlier the start of your subject wherever possible. In other words, use something familiar as the subject, and relegate the unfamiliar to the end of the sentence. Also, relegate the overly complex stuff to the end of your sentence.

So, there's nothing to fear. The Study Dude is determined to make right for you all the wrongs I made in grad school—one A+ at a time.

References

Booth, Wayne C., Colomb, Gregory G., & Williams, Joseph M. *The Craft of Research*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Student Sizzle AU's Hot Social Media Topics

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



AUSU Student Forums

In a post in the Ask AUSU forum, the AUSU office announced that the discussion forums would not be a part of the new website.

AthaU Facebook Group

JoAnne invites students to comment on their positive experiences at AU. Jenn wants to know if there is an RN program available through distance education.

Other posts include student ID cards, accessing myAU, Ivory Tower, and courses ADMN 232, CMIS 351, and TAXX 401.

Twitter

@AthabascaU tweets: "Huge congrats to Marvin Harder of @au_press for double whammy win at #AlbertaBookPublishingAwards for #FilmInTheCity <http://tinyurl.com/p9vrsh>."

@AthabascaUSU (AUSU) tweets: "Did you know #AthaU provides software discounts to students? <https://athabasca.onthehub.com> #elearning." and "We are going to be launching new ONLINE awards applications in time for the November AUSU awards cycle. Stay tuned!."

Music Review

Bri Ingram

Samantha Stevens



Artist: Bri Ingram

EP: *I Am*

Music has a way of taking some of the most difficult times in our lives and forcing us to see them in a new way. Lyrics about heartbreak and disappointment don't necessarily have to be put to dark or somber music. Instead, bravely pairing such lyrics with more upbeat tones tends to present such trying times in a hopeful and positive light. This not only gives listeners hope during their trying times, but it also demonstrates the personal persistence of the musician through their own down times. The songs on Bri Ingram's first EP, *I Am*, are so incredibly emotional and full of heartache that I can't help but love how courageously Bri combines her lyrics with such beautiful and awe-inspiring music.

Bri has been singing since she was a little girl, but only recently began writing her own music. Inspired

by blues, Bri also combines elements of pop, alt rock, and alt country, creating songs that are irresistible and truly memorable. With a voice that is easily comparable to songstress legends like Adele, Amy Winehouse, and Aretha Franklin, *I Am* is Bri's first EP and is named after her declaration to create the life that she wants, no matter what may happen. Each track is very different, drawing on particular circumstances and dilemmas in Bri's life.

The first track, "Can't Even Cry," is highly influenced by country, and almost deterred me from liking the remainder of the EP. As someone that doesn't like the twang of country music, I was disappointed by this song. Although Bri is a capable singer, country music is almost too flat for her powerful vocals. The result is a song that is dominated by her voice but has a lack of harmony with the instruments.

In the second track, "Belly of the Beast," Bri demonstrates her immense talent. This song saved the EP for me. The music is grand and elaborate, drawing on elements of swing, jazz, and blues with a slight country feel, creating one of the most complex and interesting songs that I have heard in a while. Bri's singing blends perfectly with this style, and I eagerly listened to the rest of the album.

"Save Me" stands out on *I Am* because of the slower tempo. Like the remaining songs on the EP, the music is majestic and equal to Bri's magnificent voice. Drawing on the popular elements of love ballads, the interplay between Bri's singing and the strong electric guitar remind me of love songs from the 90s. The intense femininity of Bri's vocals contrast with the very masculine guitar, somehow creating intense feelings of loneliness, as if in the wake of a major life changing event. There is also an underlying hopefulness to the song, suggesting the desire a person has to pick themselves up and move on.

Overall, apart from the first track, Bri's first EP *I Am* is a wonderful compilation of songs that showcase Bri's amazing talent as a singer and songwriter. I will definitely be looking forward to any future album releases. *Samantha Stevens is an aspiring writer who loves combining her love for literature with photography, painting, music, and all creative pursuits.*

Nature

Deanna Roney



In the last few days social media, at least mine, has been bombarded with protests against the BC wolf cull. Celebrities, like Miley Cyrus, are taking a stand against the decision, the effect of this is that, while they may not understand the situation, or what it means to live in BC, they are drawing attention to the issue at hand: the population of wolves.

I do not know enough about the wolf population, caribou, or elk populations to make an informed stand either for or against the wolf cull. But it is the comment section which I would like to comment on. It is no surprise that people are brave on social media, hiding behind a computer (or phone) makes people feel free to say what they like with no fear: this is old news. What I find shocking is the sheer number of people who want people to take a step back, and let "nature take its course." My question for these people is, since when are people not a part of nature?

It may be easy to see ourselves as separate from the natural world when we live in concrete jungles. Even living in a small town I have had more than one stand-off with a large buck or a herd of deer in my driveway. In my town it is not unusual for black bears to wander the streets. But even in this town we can segregate ourselves from what happens in the "natural world." We become focused on what we are doing day to day and see it as something that is entirely separate from what happens in the forest. The truth is that we are not separate from nature. We are dependent on nature, and we are members of the natural world. We are a part of the ecosystem and help to keep that system in balance. While mankind may have exploded in population compared to the rest of the animals, it does not mean we are not, at our core, an animal. We create regulations to prevent over-hunting, overfishing, and overuse of natural resources. To argue that people should take a step back and let nature takes its course is an ignorant comment: we are part of the natural order.

It is important for people to remember where we stand in relation to the world. Seeing ourselves as completely segregated from the animals we live with will only do them more harm in the long run. In my last article I commented on how going out into the wilderness for a week at a time reminds me that I am a part of this world, that, here, I am not on the top of the food chain, nor a ruler of the world. Out in the bush people are vulnerable. I think it is this vulnerability which reminds us of our humanity. So, regardless of your stance on the BC wolf cull, remember that people belong in nature; we are a part of this natural order. We may be overpopulating, but that does not change that we are crucial members of this world. To remove ourselves entirely from this world would be akin to removing wolves entirely: the populations of their prey would explode, meaning what they eat would die off, and eventually, their population itself would dwindle away.

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



I Hope You're Engaged

In 1993 I was convinced to run in a bye-election in our rural municipality. The vacancy was created when Ed Stelmach won a seat in the legislature. The good news is that I ran against three men and won the election. It began an incredible experience like no other. I highly recommend that everyone consider running for public office if only to understand how complex it is to govern.

From that time until now I've been a political watcher. I read Graham Thomson's column in the Edmonton Journal for the provincial take. I pay attention to cabinet shuffles and can usually name any particular minister. I even became involved at the executive level of the constituency and worked for the local PC candidate in the last provincial election. We all know how that turned out. I was supporting the incumbent, a person I believed was the strongest, most hard-working candidate, but I'd be the first to admit that the party needed a sharp smack upside the head. And it was delivered. Unequivocally.

It would be easy to be cynical and turned off. It would be easy to be discouraged and bitter. But politics is still a part of our lives. Roy is serving his second term in the very position I once held. I'm still a watcher. I observe, with interest, what is happening provincially as the new government tries to find its way and make its mark.

But I'm also watching the federal election with interest. I was one of the few Canadians who watched the debates. I was distressed by the rowdy and rude talking-over-each-other Globe and Mail debate on the economy. (I am horrified by the Donald Trump phenomenon but that is another story.) I've added watching CBC's At Issue panel and Global's The West Block to my regular viewing of CTV's Question Period. Of course, the topic du jour is the election. I read columns by John Ivison and Andrew Coyne and others as they dissect and look beyond the easy sound bytes and superficial one-liners.

And I vote. I can't remember missing an election—local, provincial, or federal—ever. Oops, that's not true. One time I stayed home during a local election when, in my opinion, there was no one on the ballot to vote for. I couldn't in good conscience endorse any one of those people.

I also work during elections, usually as a Deputy Returning Officer (DRO). It's my way of supporting an electoral process that is the envy of most in the world. I know from being on the inside, that there is no monkey business or impropriety. I was encouraged during the provincial election in May that there were many first-time voters. Hopefully this greater awareness and involvement is something that trends and continues. Carleton University says Racists, Sexists, Homophobes Vote, and, in a get-out-the-vote campaign, are suggesting you should too, if only to cancel out those repugnant ones. I, too hope you're engaged October 19th, 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

Humane Attention

Dear Barb:

Every Sunday morning my husband and I go to our local Humane Society and walk the dogs. Humane Societies across the country are full of unwanted dogs and it's very disturbing to walk through the pound and see these poor abandoned dogs begging for your love and attention. I have a friend who adopts dogs and, when they grow out of the puppy stage, finds a reason to get rid of them. Why do people do this? I have discussed this with my friend, even suggested they come to the Humane Society with me to see what happens to dogs after they are abandoned. It is an eye opening experience. Karyn

Hi Karyn:

I agree taking a walk through your local Humane Society will definitely provide a different perspective and perhaps cause a person to think twice before bringing home a puppy or kitten. I checked some statistics from the website of The Canadian Federation of Humane Societies and they're alarming. According to 2013 statistics, Canadian Shelters accepted 103,000 cats and 46,000 dogs and this is a significant decrease over the previous year. Often the dogs and cats are surrendered because they have behaviour problems. Rather than taking the time to fix the problem the owners get rid of the pet. The bad behaviour is then so ingrained in the animal by the time they are surrendered that there is no other option but to put them down. I agree with you, Karyn, people need to visit their local humane society and then carefully consider whether they really want to adopt a pet. Also spay and neuter your pets so this epidemic will not continue. Thanks Karyn for addressing this important issue.

Dear Barb:

I have friends on Facebook who like and share everything that comes across their page. Often items will conflict with each other. For example, recently individuals have been posting about the Syrian refugees, one post is sympathetic to their plight and another one says we don't want them coming to our country. I wish people would pay attention to what they are posting! Monica

Hey Monica:

Excellent point! I agree. Facebook users need to pay attention to what they are posting. Many of these posts are racist and since we all have friends of various cultural backgrounds, we need to be careful not to offend. Also Facebook users who are reading your page may form opinions about you from your posts. As well, if a potential employer decided to check out your page and it contains questionable or racy topics this could seriously impact your chances of obtaining a position within that company. A good rule is to not post anything about any race, minority, or political events. Also, personal information should be shared through private chat, not on your public Facebook page. If you want to avoid uncomfortable situations, keep your posts light and impersonal! Another great question, thanks for sharing Monica.

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.

CHAZZ BRAVADO!

THE SLEEP CONCERT



When I heard about Max Richter's special concert in Berlin, I was sold! I admit, the thought of listening to the longest piece of classical music EVER was enough to send The Chazzman to Lala Land . . .



But when he said he was going to set up 400 beds and invite the audience to sleep during the concert, I said, "Chazz, you'll be able to honestly say you slept with over two hundred babes at the same time. High class babes, too!" I had my plane ticket in two shakes of Jessica Rabbit's tail!



Gotta say I was disappointed. You'da thunk one of them classy babes would have asked to borrow my vibrating wristband alarm . . .

WRITTEN BY WANDA WATERMAN



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IMPORTANT DATES

- **Sept 31:** Deadline to apply for course extension for courses ending Oct 31
- **Oct 10:** Last day to register in courses starting Nov 1
- **Oct 14:** Council Meeting
- **Oct 15:** Deadline to complete degree requirements for graduation in November
- **Oct 19:** Federal Election – [GET OUT AND VOTE!](#)

AUSU is Still Looking for Volunteers!

AUSU Council has formed an ad hoc Committee to study the issue of a **forensic audit** as described in the members' motion from the 2015 AGM.

We are **seeking two current AUSU members** to sit on this committee.

If you are interested or would like more information, please email ausu@ausu.org to request a copy of the committee terms of reference and application form.



Online Awards Applications Launching Next Week!

AUSU is about to launch new online awards applications in time for our November awards cycle.

To review what awards are offered, please visit our website [here](#). *Note, applications are not accepted until October 1.*

For more information, please email ausu@ausu.org

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