

# THE VOICE

## MAGAZINE

Vol 24 Issue 10 2016-03-11

### Meeting the Minds

Talking to Dr. Shandip Saha

### Scholarship Finesse

Tips to Help you get your share

### Meeting the Minds

AU's Educators: Dr. Lorelei Hanson

*Plus:*

*Marketing AU: The Great Minds  
From Where I Sit: Not Ready  
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](mailto:voice@voicemagazine.org), and please indicate if we may publish your letter.**



**EDITORIAL****All Sorts of Acclaim****Karl Low**

You remember that Voice reader survey? The one that I was asking you people to do and was offering prizes to a few lucky people? Well those are all handled now, and the prizes are winging their way to the winners. So if I haven't contacted you about winning a prize already, then I'm afraid you're not one of our winners. But if you still really want some Voice swag, you should know that I like to hand it out to any student who is willing to sit down for one of our Minds We Meet interviews. Let me know at [voice@voicemagazine.org](mailto:voice@voicemagazine.org) and I'll hook you up.

As for the contest itself, the runners up, chosen by the high tech method of using <http://www.random.org/>, were one Lisa B. from Lively, Ontario, and one Debbie Y. from Edmonton, Alberta. They'll be receiving a package full of swag from *The Voice Magazine*, along with my heartfelt thanks for taking the time for the survey.

The big winner, however, of the 8" Samsung Galaxy Tab S2, is none other than Carolin V. from Yellowknife, in the North West Territories. So our congratulations go out to Carolin, as well. Personally I find it cool that our winners are from all over the country. It just goes to exemplify how widespread the readership of *The Voice Magazine* is. Advertisers, take note once again! And one last thank you to everybody who filled out the survey. Knowing what you people like, and don't like, is not only extremely interesting to me, but it also makes my job a lot easier. Along those lines, I welcome any comments you might have about any of the articles we publish, or anything you think we **should** be publishing. Feel free to write me at [voice@voicemagazine.org](mailto:voice@voicemagazine.org) with all of it.

This week, we've got our feature article interviewing Dr. Shandip Saha, as well as the second part of our interview with Dr. Lorelei Hanson. These are two very different interviews, but both serve to give some solid insight into these AU educators. Plus, scholarship time is rapidly approaching, and Barb Lehtiniemi has given us some tips to help us get our hands on some of that free money.

We also have a behind the scenes look at one of the more successful marketing campaigns that AU has run. If you haven't seen any of the "Great Minds" pictures and posters advertising AU, odds are that you haven't been looking. Carla Knipe interviews AU's social media and marketing manager, Erin Stevenson about what went into it and what the response has been. Plus, of course, a number of reviews, entertainment, and other advice to keep you busy while you take a break from studying.

This week is also election week for AUSU. To remain impartial, the Voice, as usual, has not published any candidate coverage, as some of the candidates have written for The Voice, or had other dealings with the magazine, and some we just have no easy way to contact. However, I urge all of you to do your own research. You can search for candidate names on the Voice website to see what's been reported about them, and make use of the [AUSU Election Forums](#) to ask questions of the candidates. An acclamation, after all, gives you, the students, the ability to decide which of these people should represent you on AUSU, so make sure to use it. Enjoy the read!

Handwritten signature of Karl Low.

# MEETING THE MINDS

## INTERVIEWS with AU's EDUCATORS



*The following interview features Dr. Shandip Saha, professor of Religious Studies courses in the Center for Humanities at Athabasca University. His research speciality is in the field of Hinduism with an emphasis upon tracing the religious culture of Medieval India (15<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> centuries)*

**Please fill us in on the range of course you have taught or designed at Athabasca.**

Dr. Saha: I'm the course coordinator for four courses at the university. These courses are Introduction to World Religions (RELS 204), The Islamic Tradition (RELS 206), Religion and Popular Culture (RELS 218), Death and Dying in World Religions (RELS 211), and Advanced Studies in the Hebrew Bible (RELS 380). All of these courses have under gone some form of revision to keep them up to date with the exception of RELS 211 which was opened in January 2016.

**What were some of your childhood passions?**

Dr. Saha: Goodness. That's difficult to answer. Being raised in a family where drama and music were a very big part of growing up, reading voraciously was a major hobby for me growing up as was listening to Indian classical and popular music through commercial recordings, public concerts, and the occasional private concerts that were held in our family home.

I also used to play soccer in an amateur league until I was 18 and I do remember watching an inordinate amount of television like the Little Rascals, Merrie Melodies, Spiderman, and this now-little remembered French-Canadian television kids' program called Bibi et Geneviève. I always found Bibi – the little green alien on the show – to be most amusing and I still love watching the episode clips on You Tube.

**If you could instantly learn one thing in its entirety with no obstacles and no time constraints, what would that one thing be?**

Dr. Saha: Now, that's a tough question. I would like to learn a few more languages. I want to learn Gujarati because it would be extremely useful for the research I do, but I really would love to learn Classical Persian instantaneously because it would give me access to a large body of sixteenth century material from Northern India that would help me to delve more deeply into my research area: the religious culture of Medieval Northern India.

**If you had omniscience, what book would you write?**

Dr. Saha: I think I would probably write the single-most definitive game-changing account of the history of religious communities in Medieval Northern India. In India right now, the Hindu right—with the quiet encouragement of the India's reigning government—has hijacked public and cultural discourse in India, in an incredibly shameful way, to marginalize and stigmatize religious minorities. This has come in the form of religious violence, literary censorship, and rewriting history textbooks to reflect the Hindu right's version of Indian history. This politicization of Indian history by both the right and left in India has somewhat distorted our understanding of the time period between the 15<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries when Northern India was undergoing some major socio-economic and cultural transformations that still shape the very nature of Indian culture today. There is a lot of fantastic specialized studies out there that are trying to take a more nuanced approach to India's medieval past, but I want to write one book, which, from an interdisciplinary perspective, brings out the complexity, and tensions that shaped Northern India's religious culture during the medieval period.

**What is your greatest purpose in life?**

Dr. Saha: Well, I really believe that we are all incomplete as human beings if we don't have a sense of compassion and humility. None of us are greater or lesser than the other and while we do have a responsibility to look after ourselves and our needs, it cannot come at the expense of others' physical, material, and emotional well-being. So, if you were to ask me about what the meaning or purpose of life is, it is to try to live a life of kindness, compassion, and humility by sharing in the happiness and sorrows of others and by trying to make their lives better and not worse. I am acutely aware that I have fallen very short of embodying those values, but trying to cultivate humility, compassion, and kindness in life is really important to me.

*None of us are greater or lesser than the other and while we do have a responsibility to look after ourselves and our needs, it cannot come at the expense of others' physical, material, and emotional well-being.*

**What is your favourite hobby?**

Dr. Saha: Music without a doubt. I love listening to Ella Fitzgerald, Frank Sinatra, and Billie Holiday but my life has been shaped by listening to genres of classical and semi-classical music from North India which I was raised with as a child. The texts that form the core repertoire of North Indian Classical music are grounded in genres of devotional and secular poetry that date back to the medieval period, and this music has given me a lot of happiness and spiritual support over the years. There isn't a day in my life when I don't listen to some of that music and think about the texts that make its repertoire. Now, I make a living studying this type of poetry as an academic.

**Tell us about one of the most memorable things that has ever happened.**

Dr. Saha: Oh! Goodness. I don't know why, but for some reason, what comes to mind is something that happened to me when I was fourteen and growing up in Ottawa. My music teacher then was of the Sikh faith and she wanted me to see this very well-known Sikh devotional singer named Professor Darshan Singh Ragi, who was giving a private concert at someone's house with his small entourage of musical accompanists. This artist has made his career singing the hymns from the Sikh holy book, the *Guru Granth Sahib*, which was compiled in the sixteenth century by the fourth of the ten Sikh holy teachers (*gurus*). I was familiar with the style of singing because my music teacher had taught me to sing some of these devotional compositions, but I really was not that enthusiastic about going. I did eventually go and when I sat down with my music teacher to listen to him sing, it was unlike anything I had ever heard. I—like everyone else in the room—was just mesmerized by the

intensity and beauty of the singing. It was really one of the defining spiritual moments for me and, as a music lover, it was the first great musical experience I ever had.

I knew this singer had made a commercial recording in 1980 of one of the devotional compositions he sang in that gathering I attended but it proved very difficult to find a copy of the original long play record. It was during my grad school years in the late nineties that I finally found that particular song on a compilation CD of the singer's early recordings. I was just over the moon and I now I have a digitized copy of the original 1980 long playing record. I will also say that it was this concert I attended as a teen that marked the beginning of my longstanding love for Sikh devotional singing known as *Gurmat Sangit*, or the performance of Sikh devotional hymns according to the rules of Indian Classical music.

### **Who is the one most influential person in your life?**

Dr. Saha: If you asked someone like a musician, artist, or writer in India that question, they would always say that their success is due not only to the blessings of whoever they believe to be absolute reality, but also to the blessings of their teachers and parents. I certainly share in that belief without hesitation, but I have to reserve that position of the most influential person in my life to my grandmother.

When my grandmother lived with my family in Ottawa where I grew up, she taught me about Indian history and Hinduism, and every morning she would teach me how to read Bengali before I left for school. She also read to me stories from different world mythological traditions, and she even read Bible stories to me. Her favorite story for some reason was the Abraham-Isaac story from the Hebrew Bible. I only came to know after she passed away that she did a course in comparative religion at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon where I was born.

My grandmother also taught to me the value of regular meditation. She would get up, without fail, every morning at 5:30 am and would meditate for an hour in front of her altar where she kept her images of various Hindu deities and saints. When she moved back to India permanently, I think around the late 80s, she wrote me a letter when I started university saying, "Your studies is your spiritual discipline." In other words, by studying and engaging with the diversity of the world, you can feel the presence of whatever one calls absolute reality. I take that very seriously when I am writing a new course or when I am writing an academic publication. Academics really is a kind of spiritual discipline for me so, my courses and scholarship always have to be solid, coherent, balanced, and grounded in intellectual integrity. There can never be any ifs or buts about that.

My grandmother passed away in 2000, but I still remember what she said to me about the nature of academics when I begin to write a new paper. She is also just a part of my everyday life in many different ways. I still listen to her favorite recordings of devotional poetry, a lot of her books in English and Bengali are still in my possession, and, most importantly, I have a watercolor of the Hindu god Krishna in front of which she did her morning mediation. It originally belonged to my great-grandmother, who then gave it to my grandmother, and now that picture is with me. I am extremely aware that whatever good I have achieved in my academic life so far is not only because of my own efforts. I have been extremely fortunate to have had the support and encouragement my family and university teachers over the years, but I have never forgotten that the person who really set me on this path has been my grandmother.



## Scholarship Finesse

Barbara Lehtiniemi



How can you ensure your scholarship application stands out from the rest? Last month, in [Swimming in Scholarships](#), we looked at the plethora of scholarships available to students through AU, AUSU, and external organizations. This week, we'll examine how to give your application its best shot at producing that oh-so-sweet scholarship cheque.

**Check your qualifications.** When researching scholarships, carefully check the conditions of eligibility. A scholarship could be restricted to students in a specific program, or who live in a specified province. Applicants may need

a minimum number of credits to be eligible, or to have achieved a certain GPA. Some scholarships are intended to assist students who face extra challenges like physical or mental disability. If you don't meet all the conditions of eligibility, there is no point in spending any further time.

**Give them what they want.** Many scholarships require the applicant to provide an essay describing how they exemplify the intent of the award. Just like in an academic essay, make sure you are answering the right question. If the question is how your volunteer efforts having benefited your community, for example, then your essay should describe specific examples of the impact your actions had, not how you've grown from the experience. Writing counts here: use your best composition skills, edit carefully to eliminate typos and grammar mistakes, and keep within the specified word count. Short answer questions should be answered with the same level of care. Unless the application specifies that point form can be used, answer in full sentences.

**Show, don't tell.** Any information you provide in your application should demonstrate how well you exemplify the purpose of the award, not just state that you do. And, no matter how wonderful you think you are, resist using exclamation marks to draw attention to it. If, on the other hand, you are uncomfortable expressing your positive attributes, enlist the help of a friend or family member for assistance with wording.

**Get your sh\*t together.** Before you send off your application, check and double check that you have completed the application fully, and that you are including any supplementary documents required. Make sure you are sending the application package in the manner specified: some scholarship applications can be submitted online, while others may specify regular mail, e-mail, or fax.

**Don't rush.** Scholarship awards are all-or-nothing affairs. There are no part-marks—you either get the award or you don't. Rushing to complete a merely adequate application is time well wasted. Check each scholarship's deadline, and plan ample time to gather needed documents, compose required information or essays, and complete the application form. If the application must go by mail, consider investing in guaranteed delivery service, such as Xpresspost, to make sure it arrives on time.



For more tips on completing a successful scholarship application, check out the 3P's (Plan, Prepare, and Prosper) at [www.young-scholar.com](http://www.young-scholar.com), as well as their Common Mistakes page. You'll also find a whole section devoted to Tips on finding and applying for scholarships at [ScholarshipsCanada.com](http://ScholarshipsCanada.com).

For scholarship advice and humour, pick up *More Money for Beer and Textbooks*, by Canadian authors Kyle Prevost and Justin Bouchard. For nine of their tips, check out this 2014 Maclean's article. Sadly, this book is not available at the AU Library.

Scholarships are out there waiting for you. Improve your chances of success with careful planning and superb writing. A little finesse can give your scholarship application the boost it needs to land in the awarded pile.

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



## **POLI 480 – The Politics of Cyberspace**

Dr. Jay Smith is a long-term AU faculty member, and the course author of Political Science 480 (also available at the graduate level as POLI 580). He recently took time to answer some questions about the course for *The Voice Magazine*.

### **First of all, what is your role with Athabasca University, and the course?**

I have been a professor at AU since October 1, 1981. I wrote the course about 15 years ago when it was becoming obvious that the Internet and digital media were disrupting traditional political practices and activities which normally occurred within a state and its territory. The course was also very much linked to my research on online politics.

### **When was the course last updated or revised?**

The last significant revision was in 2012 but... the course is another person's hands [now, so] other small changes may have been made since then.

### **What does the course cover? Could you summarize some of the major ideas or topics discussed?**

At the heart of the course is a core concern. Will these digital technologies serve as technologies of freedom and emancipation strengthening democratic processes? Or will they serve as instruments of control, by corporations ("Little Brothers") or governments ("Big Brothers") through, for example, mechanisms of surveillance? Does the latter mean that privacy has ended?

The first part of the course examines the capacity of digital technologies and social media to make it possible for anyone with Internet access to be a producer of knowledge and communicate across borders. This is, in effect, part of an information-technology revolution that is providing challenges to existing power structures. The new power that is arising is a form of networked power. The course discusses the rise of a globally networked information economy, an economy that many perceive as working for a few, concentrating economic wealth and creating economic crises (such the 2008 financial crisis which almost resulted in a depression.)

At the same time, the creation of a global informational economy has met with globally networked resistance by those who have been hurt by it. In sum, a theme of the course is the dialectic between domination and resistance.

The course also explores the effect of informational technologies on the democratic processes of the state, its political institutions, its administration, and civil society. In particular, it looks at web tools, including Web 2.0 and its components, such as political blogs, and their effects on the political process. Examined as well is the dark side of the Internet both in terms of surveillance and terrorism.

**The course syllabus notes that there are four assignments and one exam in this course. What can students expect, in terms of course structure? Can you talk briefly about the assignments and exam?**

Assignment one asks students to write a short essay based on course materials analyzing contradictory aspects (eg. control versus promoting freedom) of digital technologies and the internet.

Assignment two is a research essay proposal whereby the student identifies a topic, explains why this topic was selected, how it fits into the course, and identifies references and the methodology chosen for the essay.

Assignment three builds upon assignment two and the feedback from the tutor.

Assignment four [online discussion posts] is self-explanatory. The discussion posts are expected to relatively brief and come after Units 3 and 11.

The final examination is a mixture of short answers and essays covering the entire course in which there is choice.

**What about course materials? Are there hardcopy books, etexts, online readings, or a combination?**

Yes, there are 4 hardcopy books and online readings, the latter found in the course Digital Reading Room.

**About how many students take this course in an average year? Is there anything about this course that students tend to find particularly challenging?**

As a senior level course, [there are] about 20 [students] per year.

Two texts have a lot of detail but here the students are asked not to miss the forest for the trees. That is, the focus is on the big picture stuff not the micro details. Sometimes students (mistakenly) think they have to know everything.

**Why do you feel that this course is valuable for students? Are there parts they find particularly challenging? Why should they choose to enrol?**

I think if students want to know what to know about the huge changes that are occurring in the way we practice politics and organize politically, changes which may have profound effect on their lives and careers, then is a good course for them.

### Is there anything students know if they're thinking of taking this course?

If you mean that students have to have a certain prerequisite, then no. However, it is advised to have taken a senior political science, sociology, economics or communications course.

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



### Music Review Greg Laswell

**Samantha Stevens**



**Musician:** Greg Laswell

**Album:** *Everyone Thinks I Dodged A Bullet*

There is something ethereal about soft and emotional alternative music when mixed with a cello and various electronic effects. The music is tempestuous and seems to emanate from the very depths of the human soul. Yet the result is something far from melodramatic. Instead, your ears are treated to melodies and harmonies that will carry you on gentle waves of sound. Greg Laswell's latest album, *Everyone Thinks I Dodged A Bullet* is full of such musical mastery.

Originally from Long Beach, California, Greg is a musician, recording engineer, and producer who lives and works in New York. Greg began his music career in 1998 as the frontman of the band Shillglen. However, the band broke up a few years later, and, in 2003, Greg released his first solo album. Since then Greg has released several albums and his music has been featured on many television shows.

The sound of *Everyone Thinks I Dodged A Bullet* is similar to the band Elbow, but there are various tones and melodies that remind me of Fever Ray and The Delgados. However, Greg's music is incredibly unique and needs to be experienced to understand the complexity of his talent.

I love everything about this album, and, after previewing the tracks for only a couple minutes, I immediately opened my iTunes store and bought it. Music as complex and hauntingly beautiful as that found on this album is a rarity.

The album opens with "Dodged a Bullet," a track that has a cinematic feel to it because of the emphasis on the guitar and steady beat. Greg's vocals are soft and sensual, but there is also a great deal of emotion behind the lyrics.

"Lifetime Ago" is by far my favourite. The opening music is exotic and mysterious, but enticing as well. The rhythm, which could be considered harsh, is perfectly paired with the cello. Greg's singing expertly harmonizes

with the unusual pairing, and the result is an alluring and emotional sound that will strip you of any negative or harsh feelings and fill you with a transcendent sense of peace.

"Out of Line" is powerful and moving. The elevated emotion that oozes from the melodies is something difficult to capture, and many musicians fail to reach such a height of passion. Yet, Greg managed to pull it off, and he created a song that always brings tears.

"Watch You Burn" is the only song on this album that I don't love. While the music and lyrics are beautiful and as attractive as the rest of the music, the overuse of the reverb effect on the vocals is annoying. It is unfortunate that the vocals detract from such wonderful music.

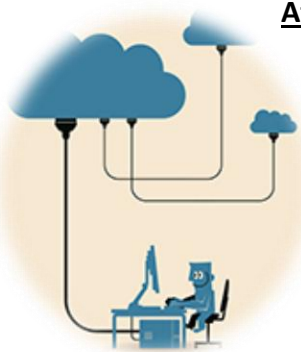
"Not Surprised" opens brilliantly with the cello that leads strong electronic effects. Greg chose to use an electronic echo effect with his vocals, but it fits much better than the reverb effect in "Watch You Burn." It is this song that reminds me of Fever Ray's music, but Greg is able to ingeniously incorporate his own unique spin. As it ends you are left with a longing for more music, a strange emptiness that also feels oddly serene.

Greg's music is difficult to put into words. It is like trying to describe the most powerful emotion that you have ever experienced. For that reason, I wouldn't recommend listening to *Everyone Thinks I Dodged A Bullet* while studying. Instead, save the incredible experience for when you have time to savour the intricate melodies and overwhelming feelings.

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

## Student Sizzle AU's Hot Social Media Topics

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



### AthaU Facebook Group

Stephanie is curious if she can enrol in the Masters of Counselling program with a BA in English. Grace shares her exam experience in which she showed up to write a midterm and was handed the final exam by mistake. Vicki seeks study tips for the ADMN 417 exam. Pierrick seeks feedback on ADMN 404.

Other posts include new course LBST 330 *Workers and the Economy*, putting a "rush" on grades, and courses ACCT 355, ANTH 278, BIOL 480, CMNS 233, CMIS 351, PSYC 289, and RELS 204.

### Twitter

@AthabascaU tweets: "AU Students! Be sure to enter the #AURollCall Contest! Details on the blog: <http://goo.gl/7dYP6a>."

@AthabascaUSU (AUSU) tweets: "Want to submit a motion for the AUSU AGM? Send it to AUSU by Mar 15. For info visit <http://bit.ly/1nuM1BC>."

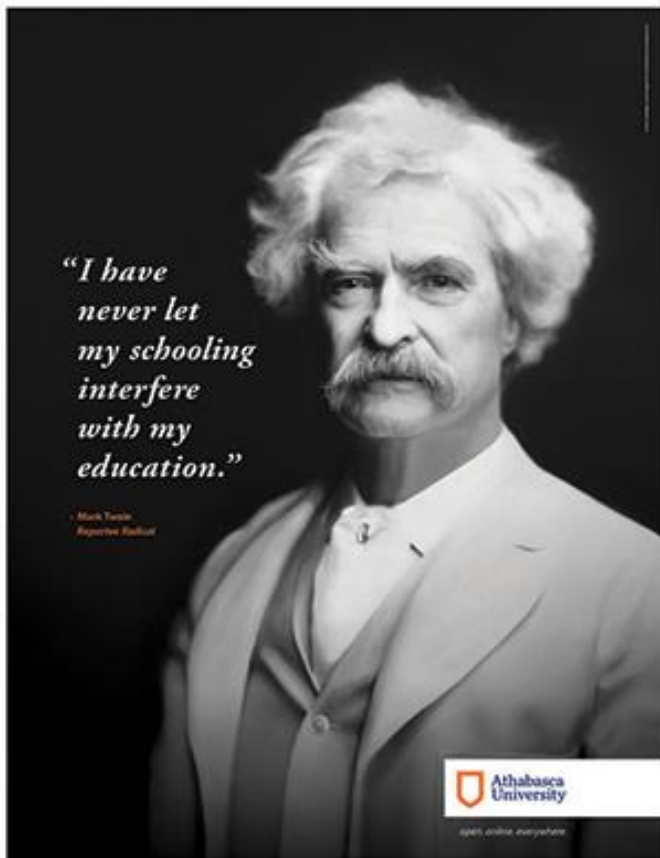
### Youtube

MLA Formatting: The Basics, from Purdue OWL.



## Marketing AU: The "Great Minds" Advertising Campaign

Carla Knipe



Perhaps you've seen posters advertising AU using quotations and images of famous learners such as Marie Curie and Mark Twain. *The Voice Magazine* spoke to Erin Stevenson, AU's Marketing and Social Media Manager, to give us some background and insight into the advertising campaign.

### How did the campaign come about? Was it a bright spark of an idea or did it evolve over time?

The campaign was months of research and working with our team including our graphic and writing teams from Office of Sarah and It Came from Mars. This campaign started in 2014 and AU had introduced the new brand in 2013 and it was time to capture the imagination of prospective students.

The creative process of any marketing campaign is quite exciting. All ideas are on the table. We do deep dives into market research and data, we analyze the competition's marketing efforts, we work with stakeholder groups to determine what our goals and objectives are with our campaigns and what we'd like to see AU accomplish.

As with any marketing campaign, you want to create an effective campaign that stands out amongst the rest. Because we advertise across the country, we have to look at what all the colleges and universities are doing across the country to gain a prospective student's attention and figure out how we position ourselves in those markets.

Through discussion and the creative ideas process, it was agreed that we market to our strengths, which in the past, were perceived as weaknesses. AU is a non-traditional path, and it was time to frame that message in a positive way! We are online, we are distance education, we are flexible, we are open and we have students doing amazing things because we are different from the "traditional" bricks and mortar institution.

The historical figures campaign showcases how the "non-traditional" path isn't a barrier or a negative thing but is an opportunity for those who refuse to be bound by traditional journeys. Some of our historical figures are women and by virtue of their gender and when they were born, were not allowed to attend university and had to find other means to pursue their education. Some of the men started out going to university but found it limiting and pursued other avenues to learn. Other historical figures we highlighted started their own institutions, allowing others who would have been denied access to an education a place to go.

Our 2014-2015 campaign was the first year of the historical figures campaign. In all, 15 historical figures were featured. Famous quotes from each person regarding education or the desire to pursue a dream was featured. This year (2015-2016), was a continuation of our campaign but with tweaks. The quotes were gone, and we incorporated not only new figures (six more), but we removed the quotes and delivered the message to

prospective students that really sets us apart: "You don't have to sit in school to stand among greatness." This was a great evolution to our campaign and we've had really positive feedback with this campaign.

**How long has the campaign been running, and is there an end date or will it keep going for a while?**

We're not sure if there is a year three (or more) for this campaign. We are working with our teams over the next couple of months to determine this. We have to evaluate the effectiveness of this campaign and see if we accomplished our goals and objectives that we set out to do.

Online education is exploding and more and more universities are offering online courses at their own institutions. Whereas [online education] was a space that AU "owned", it is the space that offers opportunity for other universities to expand their offerings to their current and prospective students. The challenge for us is to continue to be the leader in online and distance education so our marketing efforts have to reflect our position and where we'd like to be.

**When did the ads first run? What magazines etc. have they appeared in?**

The first ads ran in the summer of 2014 and they appear in numerous places across the country. We ran targeted campaigns in Vancouver, Toronto, Edmonton, and Calgary with heavy emphasis on transit users (LRT, Skytrain, etc). We also ran newspaper and digital ads in most of the universities and colleges in Alberta and Ontario (where we were allowed to advertise, some universities don't allow us to advertise on their campus).

There are many education features that we also run ads in throughout the year. Those are evaluated on a case-by-case basis to ensure that we are advertising in a feature that our prospective students will actually read.

**Are there plans to turn them into more than just print ads i.e. television commercials, or is print a more effective platform?**

Television commercials are expensive and would basically wipe out our marketing budget for the year. We are very strategic in how we do our marketing spend. We do a lot of research into our target markets and learn how those in our target markets find us. We have to go to them; we have to be advertising in the space they're hanging out in if we have any chance of getting the right eyeballs on our ads.

For example, in the fall, we ran a series of radio ads in Edmonton and Calgary targeting "visiting" students to AU. Many of you are visiting students, taking one or two courses with us to fulfill or fill a gap in your program at your home institution. The ads were great and we had lots of positive feedback on them. However, our results were mixed. While we saw an uptick in the number of visits to our website during that time from Calgary, in Edmonton we actually saw a decrease. We chose not to run further ads. But this is marketing. Sometimes your effort goes very well and sometimes you don't get the result you want. External factors are a consideration and we always have to be cognizant of what other factors could be contributing to a person's decision to go back to school. Calgary has been hit harder with the drop in oil prices than Edmonton has (with job losses). How is this contributing to an increase in enrolments for us? Generally, a downturn in the economy means an increase in enrolments at post-secondary institutions so we anticipate and look for that increase in cities or provinces experiencing a downturn.

We have a robust marketing strategy and we actually spend most of our marketing dollars on digital. Our students are online and those looking for online courses are likely going to go online to look for it. Most of our "good" traffic comes from search marketing so we put a fair amount of money into search and we've recently been fine-tuning our website to make it as optimized as we can for the web.

In addition to online advertising, we work with our partners (such as the CFL and CFLPA) to reach their fans whose demographic lines up with our demographic. And of course, social media is a great way to reach an audience at an affordable price point. Analytics for social media sites is rich in information that we can use to create really targeted marketing campaigns, so that we're making the most of our spending, reaching only those that are likely to be interested in what AU has to offer. I don't have a big marketing budget overall so we are very strategic on how we spend and we're constantly evaluating how the campaign is working so we can engage with prospective students.

**What markets have the ads run in? Is it Canada-wide or more local?**

We do advertise across the country as we have students (and prospective students) in every province and territory. We have hundreds if not thousands of transfer agreements with colleges and universities across the country so it's important that we try to reach as many of those prospective students as we can.

We also do some international advertising, in particular in the United States. As you can imagine, our university education is (typically) more affordable than a US university education. With our dollar being as low as it is right now, the cost for a US student to attend AU is an incredible value for them as an international student.

**What has been the response to it? Has it got people thinking or inspired them personally, and what has the result been for AU as a university? Has its profile been raised as a result of the ads?**

We've had a very positive response to this campaign. It's different. It stands out. It's very striking—the old historical images catch your attention amongst all of the other university ads.

But what's most important are the stories these historical figures tell. People relate to them. People are inspired by those that forged their own path; by those that didn't allow a system to dictate to them how they should learn; how these women and men went on to do incredible things and contributed to the very society that challenged them to learn and create "outside of the box." Our students can relate. Many of us (and I include myself here as an AU grad, not once, but twice!) have been to university and college before and are not prepared nor able to go back to a bricks and mortar institution for various reasons. Many of us are years into our career and don't want to take time off from our career, instead finding a way to continue working and going to school. Others have families and other obligations that fits better with the flexibility and opportunity that AU affords them. Being able to pay for one course at a time makes a university education affordable and attainable for many of our students. Being able to take a break from studies (whether to have a child, travel, move, new job etc.) and be able to return to it when they're ready to go again is an attractive feature for our students. There are many reasons that an online and distance education works for so many people and our marketing campaign reflects those reasons.

**Any specific anecdotes/good news stories you would like to share of how the ads have affected people who have seen it?**

We had a high school in Toronto contact us looking for copies of the posters to put up around their high school. The quotes and the historical figures were going over extremely well with their students so they wanted them for their classrooms. We hadn't made copies of the posters at the time but we did a small run and got them copies. They recently just contacted me again asking about our new ones- we'll have to get them some more posters!

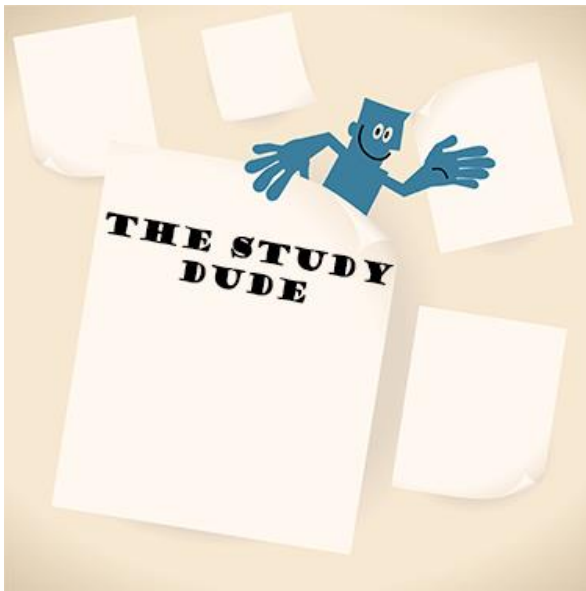
We've heard a lot of stories of people sharing our posts, liking our images on social media and to us, that's meaningful. Our students and prospective students are connecting on an emotional level to the stories of

Einstein and Curie and Lovelace and Parlbay. Their accomplishments are a reflection of a journey our students relate to and we're happy to continue to share the amazing stories of our students too!

### If AU students wanted copies of their own prints, how could they obtain them?

We have a limited run of posters currently in stock but often times, it's the cost of shipping that makes sending a poster across the country cost-prohibitive. We do have all of the posters available for download (they're high res) on our Pinterest page- <https://www.pinterest.com/athabascau/> for anyone to print out and frame.

*Carla loves paper. She has far too many books, compulsively buys craft supplies, has several boxes of cards and letters from years back years that she just cannot throw out, but feel free to say hi to her on Twitter @LunchBuster*



## Study Tips from a Semi-Anonymous Friend

### Academic Writing Stinks, Part I

*There is nothing more that The Study Dude wants for you than to write essays that don't reek of the academics' diseases: puff and jargon.*

*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 Study Dude helps you flaunt your sense of style. Steven Pinker's bestseller *Sense of Style* will ensure you don't write like a professor on metaphorical depressants. Instead,

write like you care about your audience. So, make your writing fun, memorable, and, most importantly, understandable.

### Make Your Words Twist and Pop

Clichés. Nobody likes them. Clichés prompt professors to pooh-pooh your papers.

But, I read in another book that clichés can refresh your writing if you give them a twist. Take a cliché and change a word or two. Or give the cliché a whole new spin. For instance, you can say, "Unlike the gossip he was rumoured to be, my date wasn't all ears; he was all hands."

Steven Pinker has oodles of advice to give on how to make words twist, pop, and delight:

- To cultivate your writing style, read anything and everything. Go further and mimic the style of writers you admire: "writers acquire their technique by spotting, savouring, and reverse-engineering examples of good prose" (p. 12).
- Learn as many idioms as you can. Idioms are those peculiar phrases we use that don't translate easily into other languages, such as "It's raining cats and dogs" or "Bite the bullet." With a stockpile of idioms at your disposal, you can twist and shape them into clever new expressions (you can even buy dictionaries of idioms.)
- Don't listen to Strunk and White and other linguists from the ancient times. Instead, dare yourself to add some lively figures of speech into your writing. Insert a tongue-twister, if you've got the guts.



- Use parallel constructions. Say, "I saw. I went. I found." Don't say, "I perceived the object. Toward it I trailed. Then I found it." This helps lend clarity to your writing, and clear writing is good writing.
- If your parallel constructions get too repetitive, however, flip around some of the words for flavour. For instance, do say, "He claimed himself to be both a *more talented performer* than Christian Bale and a *singer more shocking* than Lady Gaga." Rely on your ear.
- You have permission to add fancy or surprising words, especially ones that slip and slide on your tongue like a chocolate covered strawberry. For instance, use the word "titillating" or "fleshed out" when talking about romantic subjects.

### Write Like You Speak to a Friend: Skip the Meta-discourse, Blot Out the Zombie Nouns

In a future Study Dude article, I will examine a book called *Reason & Rigor: How Conceptual Frameworks Guide Research*. The *Reason & Rigor* book cost me a small fortune. I eyed the book for half a year before finally breaking down and buying it. When the book arrived in the mail, I tore open the Amazon packaging, spread the book open to a random page, and read a paragraph of gobbledygook.

Now, I'm certain something was said in that paragraph, maybe something like "ideas are good for building theory," but it took tens and tens of puffed up nouns to say it. When I realized that the authors said very little in a lot of text, I shuffled the book to the bottom of my to-read pile, noting that I will likely have to reduce every hundred words the authors say to five just to get the drift.

Dr. Helen Sword, author of *Stylish Academic Writing* calls these puffed up nouns "zombie nouns". In other Study Dude articles, I talk about how these nouns, called nominalizations, change verbs and adjectives into long, stuffy nouns. One example of a nominalization—take the verb *confront* and turn it into the stuffy *confrontation*. Stuff lots of those zombie nouns together into one paragraph, and you end up with a confused reader.

A fan of Helen Sword's himself, Steven Pinker shows you how to make your writing intelligible by avoiding both zombie nouns and signposts:

- You need to write clearly and simply.
- "Bad writing sounds makes the reader feel like a dunce" (p. 36).
- Don't write with lots of abstractions. Use concrete, physical words that you can see, feel, touch, taste, or smell.
- Don't try to sound like your professor and announce what you plan to say. Don't say, "I am going to discuss..." (which is an example of signposting). Who cares? Just say it.
- Don't use your conclusion to repeat what you've already said in your essay. That's boring. Try to reword what you said and link your sentences in a way that creates a whole new self-contained story: your ending.
- Don't say your topic is complicated, complex, controversial, difficult. We know that already.
- Don't use words such as *sort of*, *relatively*, *somewhat*, *kind of*. Get to the point. If you must qualify what you say, use an actual number. Say *80% likely* instead of *highly likely*, if you have access to supporting statistics.
- Use verbs instead of nominalizations. In other words, say, "define" instead of "the definition of..."

### The Foul-Breath of Jargon

What is jargon? Words hardly anyone understands. Steven Pinker explains the meaning of jargon best when he takes the sentence, "There is significant positive correlation between measures of food intake and body mass index," and translates it to, "The more you eat, the fatter you get" (p. 74).

Recently, I beefed up my writing by sprinkling in big words. Big words means denser prose, which means better writing, right? Wrong.

My writing changed for the better only after my managing editor told me that the key purpose of writing was to clearly share thoughts and ideas: to share meaning. He said, the less the reader has to struggle to understand what you are saying, the better. His words marked a turning point for me. Since then, I delete my pompous, ego-inflating words and replace them with simpler English. I now try to write as if you, the reader, once served as my best friend in kindergarten and stuck with me ever since; in other words, "Write like you are writing to a friend."

I also now try to buy academic books that use down-to-earth English. A good example of an easy-to-read book is *Theory Building in Applied Disciplines* by Swanson and Chermack. Theory building as a topic *sounds* scary, and some authors make theory building seem harder than getting an A in film theory, but Swanson and Chermack make theory-building seem easy, useful, and fun.

But back to Steven Pinker. He knows that academic writing doesn't benefit from jargon:

- Writers sometimes deliberately use hard-to-understand words to "hide the fact that they have nothing to say" (p. 58). Big words puff the writer's ego but deflate the reader's ability to get the drift.
- Explain what the jargon you use means.
- Sometimes we forget that our readers know less about the subject than we do. Ensure you spell out your technical definitions and write out your acronyms.
- When you use a technical term, generously use more than one example to define the word.
- Use words that can be visualized. For instance, call something by its more specific name: "a 1970s ham radio" instead of "an audio device". As another example, call something "a 2016 black Lamborghini" instead of "a sports vehicle." And last of all, call yourself, "a straight A student on the fast-track to a PhD" rather than "a good student." After all, the tag fits.

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

Pinker, Steven. 2014. *The Sense of Style: The Thinking Person's Guide to Writing in the 21st Century*. New York, NY: Penguin Books.

### Women Of Interest

**Mary "Bonnie" Baker**, (1918-2003) was born in Regina, Saskatchewan. Bonnie Baker was an all star catcher in the All-American Girls Professional Baseball league from 1943 to 1952. In 1950 she was the only woman in league history to become a player-manager with the Kalamazoo Lassies, however, the next year the league passed a law prohibiting female managers. Baker continued to play 930 games during her career and her fielding average was .953. The press referred to her as "Pretty Bonnie Baker" as she was a former model in Life magazine. She also appeared on the trendy television show "What's My Line?" In addition, from 1964-65 Baker became the first female sports broadcaster at CKRM in Regina, Saskatchewan. Some of Baker's honors and achievements include being a member of the Saskatchewan Sports Hall of Fame, a member of the Saskatchewan Baseball Hall of Fame, and a special exhibit on the AAGPBL in the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York.

On August 8, 2015 Mary "Bonnie" Baker was honored with the unveiling of a mural at Central Park, Regina, Saskatchewan, as this was a park where, she often played her favorite game. More information can be found at:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bonnie\\_Baker](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bonnie_Baker)

<http://www.regina.ca/residents/heritage-history/historical-biographies/biography-baker/>

<http://sasksportshalloffame.com/inductees/mary-baker/>

compiled by Barb Godin

## Then and Now

Deanna Roney



As my degree is slowly coming to its conclusion, I find myself reminiscing about how I view AU now, as opposed to the early days (some may call this procrastination). I can see a difference in myself and in how I view the world around myself. But how does AU appear?

As other students beginning this journey I was nervous to start, unsure where to find things, and the rumours of the school closing had me questioning my choice in schools. I learned my way around the course pages, became comfortable with contacting tutors, and the process became easier. I knew where to find information and how to best use it. My concerns about the rumour of AU closing were amplified by the intense feeling of isolation: sometimes it felt like I was the only one in a course. Part way through I discovered various social media platforms that made me feel like I was part of a vibrant community.

I recall posing a question early on about the validity and sustainability of AU. I was shocked by some of the answers. It seemed that a few had seen this question one too many times and their patience had run out. I try to remember this as I see questions about AU's sustainability. Since starting my program four years ago I have heard the same "impending doom" rumour each year, and each year with a new, frightening, twist.

I think the fear this rumour generates is a testament to AU. If AU became unsustainable it would leave many students without a way to finish their degree. AU offers a unique learning experience with flexibility that we all need. I have spoken with several students of other universities and everyone I talk to has either a) used AU themselves to add a course to their degree, or b) know someone who has. Everyone I talk to who attends large and small universities alike know of AU and are appreciative of the service it offers.

Since beginning my degree with AU, the nervousness of the worth of the degree and the sustainability of AU has vanished. I am incredibly proud to have completed, on my own terms, my degree with AU. I was able to take my time and select courses that most interested me without worrying if the classroom was at capacity. As I have grown with AU I have made connections with others—students and professors alike—that I will take with me beyond this university. I didn't expect connections like these from AU; I would expect them from a bricks and mortar university, but not AU.

As I look back on my early days with AU, I can understand that my nervousness was simply because it was something new; it was something unknown. While other universities such as UBC or UNBC are well known outside of academic circles, AU is not. Yet, within academic circles, AU is well known. And, to quote a distance education commercial that has been playing "a degree is a degree".

I suggest that anyone who is nervous about AU's sustainability and validity to connect with fellow students, make a point to connect verbally with your tutor. AU offers so much, and yet without making these connections we can feel alone in our venture.

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



## Not Ready

About a year ago the CRTC (Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission) announced big changes to the way satellite and cable providers operate. Apparently this was in response to consumer complaints about the manner in which channels are bundled.

Over the years I've certainly cursed our provider for not giving me the power to select what I want as opposed to what they think I should have. But I'm not naïve. Selling is the goal of any company wishing to succeed. What they've miscalculated is how much the marketplace, or indeed customers themselves, have changed.

Many people have turned their backs on traditional TV programming just as they've fled landline telephones. With options like Netflix, Shomi, Crave, Apple TV, streaming media, and the ability to watch network TV on smart phones, tablets, and laptops, the playing field has changed. They don't see the value in traditional delivery methods. Nor do they feel any loyalty to the company.

So, today I spent a lot of time reviewing our provider's website to see how they were complying with the ruling to provide a "skinny basic" package costing no more than \$25 month. Companies were also instructed to offer 'pick-and-pay' options, give self-identified people with disabilities a thirty-day trial option, provide easy to understand billing that identifies prices, channel lists or bundles, and clarity around service calls. While enforcement begins September 2017, the basic cable package had to be in place March 1, 2016.

After studying the site and making a list of questions I called the 800 number. Ryan from Customer Service was the lucky guy to get my call. Son-of-a-gun if the listed packages weren't in fact promotions exclusively for new sign-ups. But what about us—reliable, loyal billing-paying customers for fifteen years—I asked. You should talk to our Loyalty Department, I'm sure they can do something for you, he said.

Lucky Alexandra got the transferred call. It's a little sad that in each case I had to direct them to pages on their websites so they could see what I was seeing. Before long Alexandra was trying to end the call and have me agree to what she was offering because they "didn't want to take up anymore of my time."

"I've got time," I said.

Long, long story short, an hour and half later I was offered and accepted an eight dollar a month credit for two years plus a hundred dollar credit on a second HD receiver. I would pay the five dollars in tax, they'd cover the unit and provide free shipping. They'd also be willing to recommend a cheaper package that includes the type of channels we actually use if and when I call back with a list of our favourite channels. I'm not holding my breath on that, frankly, but will do it to see what happens. Or I can go with Netflix and the seven channels (not counting the French ones or the duplicates) in the skinny basic and call it a day. It's not likely though. I'm not ready to cut the cord yet, from where I sit.

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



## In Conversation

with Darryl Klassen of J.D. Miner

Wanda Waterman



British Columbia-based J.D. Miner is one of my long-time favourite folk acts. I first encountered their music in 2008 on their album Ain't No Ordinary Hillbilly, and went on to interview them (see [here](#)). I featured them again in 2011 regarding their album Coal Train.

Well, the time has rolled around again for another great folky CD, Waltz with the Wind, a theme album based on sailing, from what is now mostly a duo—multi-instrumentalists Darryl Klassen and Chad Joiner—whose original songs and covers are based on old-time banjo, fiddle tunes, and a vision of life informed by a spiritual simplicity and acknowledgement of the

good. They're often joined by other maestros from the same artistic pages (for a complete list look [here](#)).

Darryl Klassen, has thankfully taken the time to answer my questions about his "water songs," his creative journey, and his insightful views on life and spirituality.

### What was the best experience in the making of *Waltz With the Wind*?

Playing with musicians who are very good, way better than me. They always put their stamp on music in ways that take it in different and creative directions. It was also an opportunity to record some songs I'd had in my back pocket for a long time, and to focus on "water songs" (the second choice for an album title).

I really am a water person. It was an opportunity to experiment with both larger and minimalist arrangements. Both are fun, but I keep being drawn towards minimalism.

### Tell us about your favourite instruments and why they're so fun to play.

Guitar was my first instrument, and still my go-to one most of the time. Then banjo, which I really have come to love. It's an incredibly expressive instrument. I spend more time on the banjo than on other instruments. And, truth be told, the banjo has gotten me far more gigs than the guitar ever would have. Why? Guitar players, very, very good ones, are a dime a dozen. Not so with banjo players. We're still a rare and quaint commodity.

### Did anything funny or weird happen in the making of this album?

Just the fun incorporating the tuba. Probably the most cool of all basses. I also learned to play a U-bass (ukulele bass) for this CD. I picked it up at a clearance sale and am having a ball with it. It's on "Sailor Song" and "Frosty Morning Zen."

Ron and I laughed our heads off when he did the drumming for "A Lot More." He went nuts, as you can hear. He was having so much fun he was just beaming during this session.

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**Why did you decide to do theme albums (e.g. coal-mining and boating)?**

Don't know. It just sort of happened. Most of my songs are experience based, and sailing has been a big part of my life.

**What's the story behind "Steam Ship Clallum?"**

On a number of occasions, I've sailed close to the spot where the Clallum eventually sank. There is so much more to this story that I could not fit in without making the song, like, 15 minutes long. The real tragedy of this story is that it was "women and children into the lifeboats first," with the men remaining on board to do as best they could. But the lifeboats all capsized and the women and children died while the men were eventually rescued. Such horrible irony. Wiki has the entire story.

The first verse has the line, "There were rumours about an Indian girl and the ensign shroud and the bell sheep missing." The Indian girl, from a nearby reservation, was to christen the ship, but when she swung the bottle of Champaign, she missed and the ship went in without being christened. Bad omen.

When the ship hit the water coming off the waves the ensign was hoisted upside down. Distress signal. Bad omen.

The bell sheep was the ship's sheep that was used to lead other sheep onto the ship, into the lower hold. In Seattle she refused to get on, so on that tragic morning she was left behind. Bad omen.

**What kind of local following do you have there in B.C.?**

We have many very good fans who support us faithfully. But we've also been limited in our geographic and time frames. Chad, the other main Miner, teaches music at a large private school, travels with his bands all over the place, and has a young family of four children. So hitting the road is pretty much impossible.

I love playing, but am also not sure I'd want the lifestyle of a road musician, always away from home, sleeping in friendly, but sometimes burdensome, billets or cheap motel rooms (I hate hotel rooms, even good ones), never a home cooked meal, huge amounts of downtime between towns or gigs, etc.

I rely on my shop now for variety. I build little wooden sailboats and rowboats, some rustic furniture, etc. None of this on the road. And frankly, the folk music world is a pretty small pond. Even a big fish in this little pond won't be living the life of the rich and famous. And who would want it, anyway?

**Why, on your website, do you ask if anyone has the number for an intergalactic tow truck?**

I have this image in my mind of the Voyager 1, launched in 1977, now into interstellar space, truckin' along out there. Imagine a 1977 Chevy, a big old heavy clunker, 8-track player still spuming Bob Seeger, shuffling off into the universe. Hey, universe, this is us! How do you like us so far?

**If you had an artistic mission statement, what would it be?**

Make people feel like the woman at 2:08 and 5:02 on this [YouTube clip](#). Just wish I was ¼ this good . . . Oops, there I go violating my rule.

**What's next for you?**

Can't really say. Songwriting isn't coming these days. We'll see. Have thought of a book of reflections. Something like meditations from the margin.

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

*Last week's interview with Fable Cry contained an error: Joshua Dent's name was included among those of the band members while in fact he's no longer in the group. Our sincere apologies to Fable Cry.*

# MEETING THE MINDS

## INTERVIEWS with AU's EDUCATORS



*Dr. Lorelei Hanson has authored two environmental studies courses and two geography courses at AU. She currently tutors her courses ENVS 200 and ENVS 435, and coordinates those as well ENVS 361 and GLST 243. She took some time to speak with Scott Jacobsen about her work with AU and general outlook in a two-part interview.*

**At the World Economic Forum, Prime Minister Trudeau discussed transitioning from Canadian resources to Canadian resourcefulness; in other words, going from things such as hydrocarbons to things such as human capital, (ie. education, skills, expertise, and so on.)**

**How do you think Canada will need to diversify, whether it be the economy or the environment?**

It is very clear from us losing a sort of social license that we need to pay more attention to our environmental performance. For a long time, environmentalists felt like their voices weren't being heard but I think recent developments show that their role in scrutinizing our energy system has had an impact. I think it's also a number of different things converging at once. People are recognizing more and more the

impacts of climate change and saying, "You know what, climate scientists are telling us we don't have very long and we've got to do something different soon." Those factors are converging and drawing attention to Alberta. One result of this is Alberta having been given the label of producing "dirty oil," and people saying "no" to Alberta's current system of oil and gas development. But we've got this valuable resource and there's no way we will have a completely decarbonized economy in the next couple of decades, so the value of that resource will exist for some time. There's just no way we can transition over night from our current dependence on oil and gas to another energy system. But we still need to critically look at that energy system, be innovative, and envision something different for the future. We've got to move forward. We can't rely on our old way of doing things.

With respect to Justin Trudeau I'd want to see him back up his words with some concrete policies and programs that will make a difference. We haven't seen that yet. It sounds good, but let's see how he's going to move forward and do something about improving our environmental performance in Canada. At the same time, we have an economy in Alberta, and within Canada, absolutely dependent upon natural resource extraction, and so you have to somehow find a way to transition that economy so that you're not having people's lives be devastated in the meantime. You can't have a province like Alberta lose 10,000 jobs every month. That's not sustainable; if we're going to talk about sustainability we have to include in that analysis social sustainability. Also, there's no one person that has the answer to how to build a more sustainable energy system in Canada, and so the federal government needs to put in place a process to harness and nurture innovation on and good

ideas of how to transition Canada's energy system to be more sustainable. It is only when we work collaboratively that we will come up with some solutions that work in many contexts.

**What are the relevant experts' recommendations or timelines for implementation of the recommendations to solve these challenges?**

Right, as I said before, when we talk about an energy system, you're necessarily talking about, what we're calling in some academic and professional circles, "wicked issues." These are issues that are so complex, cross so many different sectors, and are characterized by indeterminacy in time and scale, uncertainty and interdependency, that they necessarily require collaborative discussion. These are also emergent issues, so the solutions that we develop for the next couple of years are not the solutions we can apply in the next 15 years. This means that we can't approach our energy and climate change problems using traditional approaches. It won't work to have a small group of experts getting together, framing the issue, and putting forth what they think is the solution. We also can't apply a cost-benefit analysis to wicked problems.

The conditions we need to examine with respect to energy and climate are continually in flux, and we have to learn to become much more adaptive and collaborative in how we resolve these issues, and that's why the Energy Futures Lab is set up how it is, as a social learning lab. It is also why the EFL Support Team purposefully chose 40 individuals from across Alberta that represent diverse sectors. You not only have my environmental and academic voice, but you have voices from the oil and gas sector, renewable energy, indigenous communities, government and community groups. The EFL conveners purposefully put together this diverse group because they know that we have to learn to find ways to find common values and work together to identify solutions that achieve those values. We can no longer work in siloes. It is not that we don't need expert knowledge, we certainly need expert knowledge, but it has to play a role within a much broader collaboration of reaching out and looking at how are these energy and climate change are impacting people and the non-human world differently across time and space. It also means asking questions such as what are people willing to trade off in order to move forward and what kind of education do we need?

If people start to really recognize and accept a different way doing things, a lot of innovation will arise. But we have such entrenched bureaucracies, processes, and timelines that it will not be easy. It means going against all of those things that we use as our standard measurement tools. At the same time, we have never faced a situation like this, where we're in such dire need of doing something different. So I think the Energy Futures Lab, the people who put that together fundamentally believe that we can dramatically change the way we orient ourselves and go about our business of daily living. We'll see, right? It is an experiment for sure and it will be interesting to see what will happen in the next 18 months.

**What is the direction of this research with respect to AU, and its initiatives relevant to it, for 2016?**

I'm a professor at AU and a citizen of Alberta, and energy is an issue of fundamental importance to me, Alberta, and the world. The results that come out of the Energy Futures Lab I hope will include innovations that have an impact. Of course, that is always the kind of research my colleagues at Athabasca University and at any other university are trying to do. We want to make a difference in the world.

That is why we're teachers and researchers. And this is one of the most fundamental issues facing our times, and we desperately need to find new ways to address it.

*For more information*

Alberta Climate Dialogue. <http://www.albertaclimatedialogue.ca/>.

Dr. Lorelei Hanson. Athabasca University, <http://envs.athabascau.ca/faculty/lhanson/>.

B.C.-Alberts Social Economy Research Alliance: <http://www.socialeconomy-bcalberta.ca/>.

Energy Futures Lab <http://energyfutureslab.com>

"Environmental research at Athabasca University will help create a new energy future for Alberta" Athabasca University News. <http://news.athabascau.ca/news/environmental-research-at-athabasca-university-will-help-create-a-new-energy-future-for-alberta/>.





Dear  
Barb

Barbara Godin

## Dinner Dilemmas

**Dear Barb:**

*Hi, I have a really good friend whose brother opened a new restaurant. A bunch of us went there one evening for dinner and we didn't like it. The service was slow and the food was not good at all. I know Carol is going to ask me what I thought and I don't know what to say to her. Most of my friends didn't like it and said they would never go back. Should I be honest with her and risk ruining our friendship, or should I lie and say I loved it? Carol and I have been friends since high school and I would not want to lose her as a friend. Looking for some direction. Thanks Jodi*

Hi Jodi:

Great question, but not an easy answer. I don't think you should come right out and say you hated it, nor should you lie and say you loved it. Perhaps you could find something positive to say about the restaurant, for example, the decor is great, or the menu offers quite a variety, or the prices are good. This way you are sidestepping actually saying the food and service were bad. If the food and service are bad, it will come out and at least you will not have been the one to say it. Hope this helps.

**Dear Barb:**

*My wife and I were out for dinner last Saturday night. We went to a restaurant that we had been to many times and the food was always great, but not this time. I ordered liver and onions and was very disappointed. The liver was gristly and tough and the bacon was barely cooked. I wanted to send it back, but my wife didn't*

*want me to. She didn't want to scene and the cook would get angry and spit in my food. I didn't agree with her and decided to complain to the waitress. She was very accommodating and told me they would take it off the bill and asked if I wanted a different meal. I chose not to order something else because my wife was angry and she had put the thought in my head that the cook may spit in my meal. I wasn't sure what I should have done in that situation. What is your opinion? Thanks James.*

Hey James:

I agree with you. If you order a meal at a restaurant, you should be able to get the best meal available. If it had been me I also would have sent it back and ordered something else. Whether the cook or server would spit in your meal is debatable. If you treat your server with respect and explain why you don't feel the meal is what you ordered, chances are there will be no problem. In a decent restaurant I believe the owner/manager will do their best to avoid hiring immature, resentful people who would stoop to the level of spitting in someone's meal. Becoming a chef is a very prestigious profession and I believe, for the most part, a good chef takes pride in the dishes they prepare. Good question James.

Email your questions to [voice@voicemagazine.org](mailto: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.

# AGITATIN' IN: BUNNY REFUGEE PHOTO OP

HEY, CAPTAIN UNDERGROUND, GUESS WHAT?

I'M GOING TO LIBYA TO RESCUE REFUGEES AND CARRY THEM TO CAMPS IN GERMANY! WON'T THAT BE SPECTACULAR?

I'LL SAY!

BUT WOULDN'T IT BE BETTER IF YOU HELPED DELIVER AID TO THE REFUGEES WHO ARE ALREADY THERE?

NAW, THE GERMANS CAN TAKE CARE OF THEM. HEY, I NEED TO BORROW SOME O' YER TEA TREE OIL . . .

I HEARD THEY REALLY NEED HELP DELIVERING GRAINS!

YEAH, I KNOW!

BUT BETWEEN YOU AND ME, PHOTOS OF ME FLYING THROUGH THE AIR CARRYING BAGS OF GRAIN WILL NEVER MAKE IT INTO BBC WORLD!

WRITTEN BY WANDA WATERMAN





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

## Vote in the Election!

Polls opened today for the 2016 AUSU General Election!

**Your voice matters.** This is your chance to vote for the council that will represent AU undergraduate students for the next two years, so it is important that you have a say! Make sure to **CAST YOUR VOTE by March 14** at midnight MDT.

All current AUSU members were emailed the confidential ballot today. If you have any questions, contact the Chief Returning Officer, Jacqueline Keena, at [cro@ausu.org](mailto:cro@ausu.org).

Visit our website [here](#) or join our [Election Forum](#) to learn about the election candidates!

The results will be announced at a special meeting of council on **March 16 at 4:30pm MDT**. All members are welcome! Drop a line to [admin@ausu.org](mailto:admin@ausu.org) if you would like the teleconference info and/or the agenda!

The results will also be circulated by email and on our website following the meeting.



## IMPORTANT DATES

- **Mar 11:** AUSU General Election Polls open
- **Mar 14:** AUSU General Election Polls close
- **Mar 15:** April degree requirements deadline
- **Mar 16:** AUSU Election Results Announced (4:30pm MT)
- **Mar 31:** April course extension deadline
- **April 7:** AUSU Annual General Meeting
- **April 10:** Deadline to register in a course starting May 1

## AGM – Invitation for Submissions

The Annual General Meeting is coming up on **April 7 at 4:30pm MST**.

AUSU bylaws require either 21 days' notice, or acceptance by everyone at the meeting itself, to put any motions forward at the annual general meeting. Council will be circulating an agenda with notice of motions on March 16th to fulfill this requirement.

AUSU members are invited to submit any motion they would like to put forward at the annual meeting to be included in that notice. **Simply email your proposed motion to [ausu@ausu.org](mailto:ausu@ausu.org) by March 15th.**

There are certain requirements for a motion, so if you would like information of how to put a motion together, feel free to email or phone the AUSU office.



## AUSU Bylaw Revisions

The first reading of the proposed [changes to the AUSU bylaws](#) was conducted during the March 10 council meeting. AUSU also held 2 membership consultations and has an online [Bylaw Forum](#) that all members are welcome to post in.

The second reading of the bylaw changes will be held during the April council meeting on **April 14, 2016 at 4:30pm MST**. Drop a line to [admin@ausu.org](mailto:admin@ausu.org) if you would like the teleconference info or meeting agenda!

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# CLASSIFIEDS

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Classifieds are free for AU students! Contact [voice@voicemagazine.org](mailto:voice@voicemagazine.org) for more information.

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## THE VOICE

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