

# THE VOICE

## MAGAZINE

Vol 24 Issue 13 2016-04-01

### Minds We Meet

Interviewing Students Like You!

### Who's Fooling Whom?

Unintended Consequences

### Better Reality TV

Insight on CBC's Canada Reads

*Plus:*

*The Fit Student: Managing Your Mind  
The New Federal Budget  
and much more!*



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# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



As part of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences Ad Hoc Committee for finalizing the structure of an FHSS-appropriate instructional model emphasizing increased presence for students and instructors, the Committee knew it was very important for students to give their input on this topic. We scheduled this input session for March 30th and it was put on social media well over one week before the meeting was to be held.

During the scheduled meeting, out of the thousands of members of AUSU and students of AU, the attendance was truly dismal. Aside from the members of the Faculty, including Dean Veronica Thompson who chaired the meeting, and some members of the Ad Hoc Committee including myself; the only other people on the call were: Scott Jacobsen (Scott is also a newly elected AUSU Councillor who is extremely engaged with AUSU and AU), and a BComm Student that is an actual employee of AU. That's it, that's all. Two people outside of the committee that called in.

This is terribly disappointing, but not surprising. Member engagement is seriously low. Students NEED to understand that it's up to them to be engaged with AU and AUSU, and provide their extremely valuable input. Students need to know that it's up to them to make their university the best online university anywhere and they need to be part of the university's plan going forward. They need to participate!

Why aren't students more engaged with AU? Or AUSU for that matter? Is it because it's an online institution and they don't feel the need to be more involved because it's a different structural model than traditional universities? That it will simply take care of itself? I'd like to know. I'm hoping that AUSU members will be more engaged with AU and AUSU. After all, students pay good money for their education and have the right to have their say about AU's future.

Food for thought for the new council going forward and an opinion from the outgoing VPEx.

Thanks,

Colleen M. Doucette  
Vice President, External and Student Affairs

*(Ed: Lots of students have exams at the end of the month)*

**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

### Paradox of Fools

Karl Low



I dislike April Fools day. I realize saying that paints me as a grump with no sense of humor, but honestly, the entire notion of having to have a day (or rather, half-day as supposedly pranking someone after noon says that you're the fool who didn't know the rules) devoted to pranking people just seems, well, silly. And not in a "That's the point" way.

I dislike it for a couple reasons. The first, and most obvious, is that it means most of the internet is virtually useless for several hours on April 1 as various companies and news agencies try to put up eye-catching stories and advertisements for things that don't exist. Of course, every other day of the year, we call these by what they really are, trolls and click-bait. And there's quite enough of that on the web already, thank you. Do we really need a day devoted to it?

The second is the institutional nature of the day. It's become almost a way of a company showing how "cool" it is by developing some absurd prank, but honestly, I don't use any company because of how cool they are, and as I find myself dealing with some minor frustration or another throughout the day and the rest of the year, I often wonder just how hard it would have been to fix whatever this problem was, and perhaps if the company

had spent the time doing that instead of planning some sort of elaborate April Fools scheme, how much better my life could be.

Third, and completely hypocritically, I dislike it because I really can't participate. *The Voice Magazine* comes out once a week. Getting the content for one issue put together on time is a huge task, so trying to do a second issue just for the twelve-hour span of April Fools? Forget about it.

Of course, what if I told you there was an April Fools prank in this issue? Does that count as a prank if there isn't one? After all, if there's no other prank in this issue, then telling you there's a prank in the issue is the prank. But if it is the prank, then it's not a prank because it's just a true statement. Except it's not. And knowing that my mind gets distracted by this type of thing on April Fools day when I'm supposed to be putting together a magazine explains to you why I dislike April Fools.

This week, our feature article is a Minds We Meet with none other than Voice Writer, Samantha Stevens. If you've ever wondered who'd like to live in a hobbit hole, you need look no further. Also, be sure to take a look at The Fit Student, where Marie's personal struggles with her weight will ring true to many of us, I'm sure. Then Scott Jacobsen takes a look at the new federal budget and some of what it might mean for students and for Canada.

You should also be sure to read the letter to the editor sent by none other than AUSU's VP External, Colleen Doucette. What Colleen is concerned about becomes doubly concerning when you couple it with Barb Lehtiniemi's look at the upcoming changes to the AUSU Bylaws. Student engagement is obviously a difficult issue for AUSU, working at a distance makes it very hard to make students feel like they can take effective action. It's not as if we can hold a sit-in or some sort of visible protest.

What we can do, however, is enjoy the read!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karl', with a stylized, flowing script.

# MINDS WE MEET



*Samantha Stevens is an AU student from St-Jean-sur-Richelieu QC. She is in the Bachelor of Arts program, English major, but is rounding out her education by also studying philosophy and psychology.*

The Voice Magazine *didn't have to go too far to find Samantha: she writes music reviews and other articles for the magazine. We recently interviewed Samantha by e-mail, and here's what she had to say about school, hiking, and planning for the big win.*

**First of all, whereabouts do you live? And have you always lived there?**

Right now I am living in St-Jean-sur-Richelieu in Quebec. I've only lived here for about a year and half but I love it here. It is such a nice town, the people are really friendly and there is lots to see and do. And as an added bonus, the town is really close to one of my favourite cities, Montreal. I'm originally from Toronto, but I've lived all over Canada. I was in Halifax before I moved to St-Jean.

**What do you do like to do when you're not studying?**

I spend all of my leisure time with my husband and our two dogs, Max and Windigo. Sometimes we are out adventuring and exploring, whether it's hiking or just walking around a new and intriguing town or city; other times we are relaxing in our den and playing video games. Other than that I spend my time painting, gardening, writing, baking, reading, or listening to music.

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

My grade three teacher Mrs. Macbeth. I wouldn't be where I am if it wasn't for her. When I started in her class I had just moved to the area, and I couldn't read or write. But by the end of the school year, I was reading children's novels, and I haven't stopped reading since.

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

If I had to pick one person it would be Edgar Allan Poe. Apart from his unique fascination with the macabre, I think that he would just be a really interesting person to talk too. As well, there are some interesting parallels and coincidences between our lives, one being that he died on October 7, 1849 and I was born October 7, 1984!

**Describe your experience with online learning. What do you like? Dislike?**

I love online learning! It can be frustrating at times, especially when waiting for marks or a response from a tutor, but I like that I can make my own schedule and adjust it as I like. I'm not the type of person who thrives with fixed daily schedules.

**What was your most memorable AU course?**

So far I would have to pick PSYC 465 *Psychology of Sustainability*. The course forced me to reexamine many of the sustainable development and environmental sustainability issues that currently exist. As well, I learned how much we are influenced by the natural environment and the impact that even our most ingrained behaviours and beliefs have on our world. The final project of the course, which is a slide presentation that you present to your tutor, allowed me to explore the research and ideas which examine how exercising and relaxing in a natural space, like a garden or park, affects our physiological and psychological processes.

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

My husband and I have often discussed this! We would build a completely self-sustaining house, mostly off the grid, with all eco-friendly materials, and in a unique design that would use technology with green living, like installing a green roof, a green wall, and all natural-light lighting fixtures. And if we had our way it would resemble a Hobbit-house! We would most likely build somewhere remote, so buying a good truck would be necessary. I would build a heated green house so that I can grow fresh produce year round. And we would take the trips that we have both dreamed of—I would opt for Kyoto, Japan and he would like to go to skiing in Switzerland. Other than that whatever is left over would be invested. Like I said, we have thought it out!

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

That's easy—telekinesis! I could get so much done every day with a superpower like that.

**What is your most prized possession?**

I would have to say my mind. It's not really a possession, but even if I lost all of material things, like my music and books, I could still recall them and share them with others. Plus, no matter what obstacle lies in front of me, I can always rely on my mind and everything that I've learned over the years to figure out a solution.

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

You can never give up. Whether it's during a long hiking trip or a goal that just seems completely out of reach, giving up is never an option. When I am faced with a particular challenge that I think is insurmountable, I just remember how far I've come in life and remind myself that I can overcome anything with determination, perseverance, and a bit of humour.

**What do you think about e-texts?**

I actually don't like them. I like having a physical book that I can leaf through, interact with, and keep around for years to come.

**Where has life taken you so far?**

I have travelled all over Canada, the east-coast of the US, the Caribbean, Europe, China, and Hong Kong.

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

*Helen and Troy's Epic Road Quest* by A. Lee Martinez. His stories are so imaginative and hilarious.

**Final question: you've been writing music reviews and other articles for *The Voice* for a couple years now. How has that experience been?**

I am really enjoying it. Not only has my writing improved, but I've also gotten to talk to some really amazing musicians, and hear lots of fantastic music.



## Study Tips from a Semi-Anonymous Friend

### Change the World

*There is nothing more that The Study Dude wants for you than to do a narrative study on Mama June's experience with turkey neck.*

*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 straighten out your worldview, select your method, and settle on a recipe for stellar study design. John W. Creswell, author of *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*—and umpteen-dozen other books—has laid the cobblestone for your dissertation.

### Solve a Problem, or Find the Meaning, or Change the World: Worldviews

Worldviews, otherwise known by highbrows as paradigms, help you to position your research in a larger framework. What does that mean in straight English? It means you can either oppose injustices, discover what people think of experiences, solve a problem, or make claims on how the world works. And that's about it. Step outside the lines and you will get dinged. Ah, the flexibility of academia. Maybe that explains why we still haven't pierced our flags into another solar system's soil.

If you want to change the world, then look to the advocacy paradigm. The advocacy paradigm involves research on views from a number of marginalized populations, including feminists, LGBT, and people with disabilities.

I often wondered why feminist perspectives and queer theory took off with such rage, but disability theory seemed to shrivel in its own shadows. You see, I took an eye-opening course in Community Rehabilitation that focused on disability advocacy. The instructor taught that we should celebrate—and not shun—people with disabilities' diversities. Murdering people with disabilities in the name of mercy killings, for instance, should never be accepted: after all, disability is not a problem, but a uniqueness, and everything unique has something to offer. Yet, the discourse I learned from disability studies some fifteen years ago hardly made a dent in today's media. Why? Perhaps the advocacy worldview needs polishing to better include the needs of people with disabilities.

Regardless of issues I may have with the limitations of worldviews, you pretty much have to pick one worldview and stick with it. Creswell outlines the four worldviews you can choose from:

1. The post-positivist worldview takes a quantitative position (which means they deal with a lot of surveys, experiments, and numerical stuff). If you want to study post-positivism, look at authors such as Comte, Mill, Durkheim, and Locke (as cited by Smith in Creswell), Phillips, and Burbules. Post-positivists believe that things serve as causes and result in outcomes. For instance, the fall of a leaf from a tree (the outcome) is partly caused by gravity and partly caused by the wind (the causes). Post-positivists are called reductionist, meaning that they reduce these causes and outcomes into tiny, discrete ideas. For instance, gravity will be one concept, wind pressure another, wind direction another, the speed at which



the leaf falls yet a possible other. Post-positivists start with a theory and then work toward testing it to see if the theory can be refuted (rejected) or not. For instance, the theory might say that a wind pressure threshold of such-and-such, combined with the force of gravity will cause a leaf to fall from a tree. Perhaps not a great example, but I hope you at least get the drift. Post-positivist research is deductive, which means they start with a theory and then test it to see if it's wrong or not.

2. The social constructivists take a qualitative position (which means they deal with a lot of note-taking, interviews, focus groups--textual stuff). If you want to study social constructivism, look to authors such as Mannheim, Berger and Luekman, Lincoln and Guba, Schwandt, Nueman, and Crotty. Social constructivists believe that "individuals develop [or construct] subjective meanings of their experiences" (p. 8) and meaning is created socially. In plain English, that means we have our own views and opinions of things and Yahoo! media does influence us more than we would like to think. Interviews and focus groups will have open-ended questions that allow participants to explore the topic from their own points-of-view. Finding themes for constructivist research is a difficult task, as constructivists believe that multiple meanings exist—as many meanings as there exist different subjective experiences. Or, in other words, five different people will have different interpretations of something.

How can you possibly capture so many points of views into a theme? It's not easy, if not impossible, says social constructivists. Instead, you, as the researcher, interpret your findings in part from your own personal experiences. Yes, your experiences meld into those of your subjects. These meanings are moulded by social and historical contexts. Also, constructivist research is inductive, which means that you let a theory emerge from the data. You don't start with a hypothesis based on hours and hours of research. Instead, with constructivist research, you explore and discover things.

3. The advocacy (or participatory) worldview also takes a qualitative perspective. If you want to study advocacy or participatory perspectives, look to authors such as Marx, Adorno, Marcuse, Habermas, and Freire (as cited by Nueman in Creswell, 2009), Heron and Reason, Kemmis and Wilkinson. The advocacy or participatory worldviews believe that research and political agendas go hand-in-hand. The goal is to change the lives of marginalized individuals. Participants are directly involved in the research process, sometimes contributing to the writing of the article or the choosing of research questions and so forth. Feminist perspectives, racialized discourses, critical theory, queer theory, and disability theory all tend to fall under this worldview.
4. The pragmatic worldview takes a mixed methods approach, or at least, allows the researcher to pick and choose the best fitting methods for their purposes. If you want to study pragmatic perspectives, look to authors such as Pierce, James, Mead, Dewey, Rorty, Murphy, Patton, and Cherryholmes. The pragmatic worldview focuses on practical actions and consequences--answers to problems. Pragmatists don't need to stick to one worldview. They can pick and choose from both qualitative and quantitative worldviews as they see fit. There is no fixed truth—truth is whatever practically works at any given point in time. Because pragmatists see research done in social, historical, and political contexts, a postmodern view can be added (which focuses on the goals of political and social change).

### **How to Study Turkey Neck and Other Phenomena: Methods**

Methods are playtime for academic researchers. As a researcher, you get to select how you want to perform your research, although your selection is limited by your choice of worldview. For instance, if you want to do a post-positivist quantitative study, you have to settle on either surveys or experiments. In a future Study Dude



article, I will delve into experimental designs—an area I've longed to explore since I first fixated on the phenomenon of motion parallax. But for now, bear with the Study Dude's limited knowledge of experiments.

If you want to do a qualitative study, you can select your research methods from a smorgasbord of options, including grounded theory. Grounded theory helps you to build a theory from scratch. (And if you read last month's Study Dude articles, you discovered how much fun you can have building theory.)

My favourite research strategy, however, involves mixed methods. I wish I knew I had the option to do mixed methods research in graduate studies, as I'm a pragmatist at heart. On one hand, I like mixed methods as I don't like to be chained down to one worldview, and I prefer to solve problems rather than rant (really!). On the other hand, the issue with doing mixed method research is that I don't have thousands of hours to dedicate to both quantitative and qualitative research. Who wants to do a national survey plus a hundred hours of interview transcriptions in a one-year MA program? Not me.

So, listen to the master: Creswell helps you to choose your research strategy appropriately.

- In quantitative research you can choose from surveys or experimental designs. Surveys can involve questionnaires or very close-ended structured interview questions. Experiments compare two groups: a treatment group that receives a, well, treatment, and a second group that doesn't get a treatment.
- In qualitative research, you can choose from ethnography, grounded theory, case studies, phenomenology, and narrative studies.
- Ethnography uses lengthy observations and interviews to study groups in their natural cultural settings.
- Grounded theory builds a theory based on the perceptions of research subjects. You constantly compare your latest findings with findings you've already discovered, and themes naturally emerge.
- Case studies use all kinds of data collection methods in order to study activities, events, and processes of people—or even of just one person. I'm not clear on what a person's *processes* might involve. Maybe processes involve studies of things like steps for getting dressed in the morning if you are physically disabled.
- Phenomenological studies "identifies the essence of human experience about a phenomenon as described by participants" (p. 13). Researcher's experiences don't count here—just the subjects.
- Narrative research involves the study of stories of one or more participant's lives. The researcher takes the story and turns it into what is called a narrative chronology. The researcher's point-of-view get added into the story to make what is called a collaborative narrative.

### **It's All Personal to Me: Choosing a Research Design**

When choosing your research design, Creswell says that your personal experiences come into play. Yes, your personal strengths can determine what research strategy you choose. For instance, I worked in market research for a while and excelled at math, so I have a loving relationship with numbers. Yet, I also learned to love writing through drafting these Study Dude articles. Just recently, I began writing as a journalist for several print publications in Alberta. And people who love to write should focus on qualitative methods. As I love both quantitative and qualitative worlds, I feel an urge to take on a mixed methods strategy. Such a strategy might add another year or two to a dissertation, but I could instead perform the qualitative part in the master's program and save the quantitative part for a PhD. Or could I? When in doubt, ask your supervisor.

When choosing a research design, you also need to consider your audience. In my faculty of Communications and Culture, quantitative methods were spat on. So, I settled on a grounded theory study. Talk to your faculty

about your choices of methods, and proceed cautiously. You might find that the math department steers clear of feminist approaches while the feminist department may venture into experiments. It all depends.

Creswell spells out the criteria for choosing your research design: your considerations include what worldview you feel fits, what methods you aim to use (such as interviews or surveys), and what strategy you want to use (such as quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods approaches). They also depend on on your research problem, your personal experiences, and your audience.

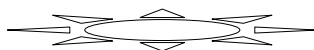
- Your research problem will affect your design. Use a quantitative approach when you want to test a theory, when you want to see how useful tweaking or adding a variable might be, or when you want to see what stuff led to what outcomes. Otherwise a qualitative approach might be better.
- As for personal experiences, if you have a knack for statistics, then why not use a quantitative approach (if your faculty will allow it, of course). If instead you prefer writing to numbers, you might choose a qualitative approach. If still instead you like both writing and stats, then maybe do a mixed methods approach. But be cautious, a mixed method approach requires both quantitative and qualitative research, so your time and resources will be doubly spent.
- When it comes to your audience, you want to choose your research so that it appeals to journal reviewers, journal readers, your thesis committee, your department, and your conference attendees. These people might have a preferred style: quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods.

Next week, I will show you how limited the theories you can choose from really are. Universities lean heavily to the political left for a reason: the methods are mostly leftist.

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

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## The New Federal Budget

**Scott Jacobsen**



The federal Liberal government of Canada has pledged billions of dollars for infrastructure in its new budget. According to *The Globe and Mail*, the pledge is "\$125 billion over 10 years" (*The Globe and Mail*, 2016). That's a lot of money. And it's for national, provincial, and territorial infrastructure, with increased funding for research and innovation, among other areas. So it matters to colleges and universities, which means AU, too – whether directly or indirectly. So what's in the budget?

A number of reports note how the 2016 federal budget affects affordable housing, Canadian arts, citizens' eligibility for old age security, Canadian families, First Nations, the

innovation sector, ocean and freshwater management, real estate, postsecondary students, and other areas.

Lots of things, in other words. Budget 2016 has a wide range of pledges, with changes to be implemented across the national socio-economic landscape. But this doesn't come without costs. Because nothing is free, expenses and pledged investments lead to costs at the same time. Some things loom, even become worse, like the deficit.

The budget is expected to increase the deficit to \$29.4 billion for 2016-17, which Prime Minister Justin Trudeau defends, naturally (Mintz, 2016; Nease, 2016; Grenier, 2016). Based on a survey, Canadians more or less accept the budget and deficit too (Grenier, 2016; Anderson & Coletto, 2016). So even though there's an increase in the deficit through the dramatic suite of pledges amounting to \$125 billion, Canadians are generally okay with it.

This is backed by a report in *The Economist*. *The Economist* indicated that the Canadian "economy" was "weakened by low commodity prices" but PM Trudeau's government continued forward with the promises made during the campaign regardless (*The Economist*, 2016). It continued that the Liberal government of Canada had reversed the fiscal policy of the ex-Conservative government of Canada.

It is important to note that the federal government will give tax cuts to the middle class and tax hikes for the higher-earners to attempt to balance them (*ibid.*). The Economist article leaves on a vital note and query by stating, "...most economists support deficit spending at a time when borrowing rates are low and the economy is weak. The question is: will Mr Trudeau know when to stop?" (*ibid.*).

At the provincial level, we find similar reports from the Globe and Mail about the balance between deficit and spending being wise or foolish. "There are questions though as to how much more money provinces and municipalities can contribute to infrastructure, given that many cities and provinces are already managing high debt loads" The Globe and Mail said (*The Globe and Mail*, 2016).

So that means infrastructure spending is an issue, deficit spending is a good thing with a weak economy and low borrowing rates, but there are other, more general, considerations. Those like when deficit spending for investments in infrastructure is reasonable and when it is not. Some reports say it is a good time, and in the future it might not be. Or maybe it will, we don't know with certainty. The future is murky.

The federal budget from the Liberal government has stated they have a major focus on strengthening the middle class. A Canadian middle class that many college and university graduates will be filling in the future, which is an acute concern for AU undergraduate and graduate students.

According to government sources, strengthening the middle class includes six main parts: a middle class tax cut, the Canada Child Benefit (CCB), helping young Canadians succeed, Employment Insurance (EI), skills training, and job creation, and middle class prosperity (The Government of Canada, 2016b). An important component is the pledged investment in the postsecondary sector too (Samson, 2016).

It talks about the rising costs of tuition for postsecondary education, the concomitant difficulties for young Canadians to attend postsecondary institutions as a result, and the necessity for the prosperity of the country for young Canadians to be able to become certified through postsecondary education (The Government of Canada, 2016c).

This is especially important at AU, where 31% of students have dependents, according to 2010/11 AU statistics (Athabasca University, 2016). One of the most relevant aspects, I think, of this new budget is the section, in

Chapter I, to do with the success of young Canadians (The Government of Canada, 2016c). Or by implication, we the students. And the budget has a number of measures designed to help students who are having trouble affording post-secondary education (Gray, 2016).

So the new budget covers a broad range of areas of the socio-economic vista, increases the deficit, but it may be that the deficit spending is a net good for now. The PM and public (on net) approve of the budget and deficit, but there will need to be examination in the future about the extent of the federal government's deficit spending. The infrastructure spending affects us at AU – directly or indirectly, will affect us throughout 2016/17, and will need re-evaluation in the future in terms of its viability as time progresses. Echoing *The Economist*, are the pledges net good or net bad? My answer: now, they're good; later, time will tell.

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## Music Review Donovan Woods

Samantha Stevens



Photo by Matt Barnes

**Musician:** Donovan Woods

**Album:** *Hard Settle, Ain't Troubled*

Genres are perhaps the worst thing in the music world. Genres put music into a definable box; they make it easy for those who write about music to pinpoint exactly what they are listening to. Is it a good thing to confine such a phenomenon as music to a rigid definition of terms? Absolutely not! Some of the best music today is that which defies genre, music that flows out of the musician's soul and into the hearts and minds of listeners, music that

evokes a wide range of emotions. That is the type of music that Donovan Woods creates.

Released in February 2016, *Hard Settle, Ain't Troubled* is the fourth album from Sarnia, Ontario native Donovan Woods. (<http://www.donovanwoods.net/about/>) As a follow-up to his Juno nominated album *Don't Get To Grand*, the songs on *Hard Settle, Ain't Troubled* are a spectacular example of the flexibility of music.

Considered folk or folk-rock, Donovan's music is so much more. There are elements of country and roots, but then you can also hear the piano, cello, and violin in some songs. The best way that I can define Donovan's music is by saying that it creates the exact feeling that I have while travelling on the road around Canada. There is something wholesome about his music, something that stabs at the heart of what it means to be a Canadian and live in a small Canadian town.

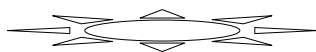
"What Kind of Love is That?" is the opening track and my new favorite song. There is a warmth to the song that is difficult to describe. The music sounds extravagant, but it is a simple harmony between a choice few instruments masterfully picked to create an elaborate and complex sound. Donovan's soft raspy vocals add to the simplicity and appeal of the song.

"They Don't Make Anything in That Town" is a sobering look at the rise and fall of a small town and illustrates one of the many stories in that town. This absolutely beautiful song opens with a piano solo that eventually is accompanied by the violin and Donovan's stunning vocals. The music and message is heartbreaking and many listeners will find the song relatable.

"Do I Know Your Name?" has a bit more of a pop feel, but there is such a complex combination of other genres that influence this song it is difficult to pinpoint them all. This song is truly unique. The lyrics are a bit repetitive, yet I think that is the point. Maybe the song is meant to be a bit confusing; maybe the song is meant to evoke questions.

These three tracks are only a sample of the wonderful music on *Hard Settle, Ain't Troubled*. I recommend checking out the album for yourself. I also recommend that you listen to the album at least once with headphones and no distractions in order to detect all of the subtle sounds that make up Donovan's wonderful music. Donovan's songs are great for playing in the background while studying and reading, but you owe it to yourself to relax and allow the music to carry you away.

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



## Opinion: Who's Fooling Whom

Barbara Lehtiniemi



AUSU council appears to be on a lock-step march to amend Article 10 of its Bylaws. Astonishingly, some councillors—armed with what I can only describe as incomplete information—seem to believe that removing a valuable safeguard from AUSU bylaws is not only a good idea, but necessary.

Article 10 currently prevents any AUSU council from amending the bylaws on their own. That article currently states: "*These Bylaws may be amended, in whole or in part, by a special resolution of AUSU as defined in these Bylaws.*" A special resolution requires council to take proposed bylaws amendments to the students at an Annual General Meeting

(AGM,) or a Special General Meeting (SGM.) At such meetings, all members present, including those on council, may vote on proposed bylaw changes.

Now, AUSU wants to remove the right of members to be included in the vote. In an e-mail sent to members on February 28, 2016, AUSU announced that, to bring AUSU bylaws "into alignment with the Post Secondary Learning Act", AUSU is proposing that bylaw amendments will be voted on by council only. Under the proposed amendments, members will be permitted to express their opinion at "member consultation opportunities" but council will not be obliged to take members' concerns into account when voting on amendments.

How scary is this? Big-time scary. For starters, if this proposed bylaw amendment had been in place one year ago, you wouldn't be reading this now. That was when AUSU council proposed an amendment to bylaw Article 7.5, effectively turfing *The Voice Magazine*. If that bylaw change had not required a membership vote at the AGM, I suspect it would have simply been passed by council no matter what objections students had.

What else could council do without the oversight of the membership? Well, if council can change bylaws without a membership vote, they could, for example:

- raise your membership fees (Article 4.4.2)
- eliminate the right of members to examine AUSU records (Article 7.3)
- change what would become of AUSU's assets should the union dissolve (Article 11)
- change how long it is before they need to have another election, if ever. (Article 9.1)

Of course, they don't intend to do any of these things—I hope—but isn't it scary how easy it would be?

Good governance includes looking at all the potential consequences of a decision—the *unintended* consequences as well as the *intended* ones. Good governance also includes gathering and examining all pertinent information required to make the best decision.

Has council done their homework on this? I didn't get that impression when I attended one of the "member consultation opportunities" last month. Attending that telephone meeting were five AUSU representatives: four councillors—two of whom were executive councillors—and one AUSU staff member. I was the sole non-council member present.

What started to seem like a David and Goliath situation quickly turned into a gong show. Instead of consulting with the sole member (me), several AUSU reps (I won't identify them in order to preserve their dignity) almost immediately began arguing amongst themselves. It appears that not all AUSU councillors think they have received adequate information on the proposed bylaw change to make a decision.

What information have they received? That's not clear. What was provided to me, upon my request, was a copy of a legal opinion on Article 10 from AUSU's lawyer. What wasn't provide to me, despite my request, was the correspondence from AUSU seeking this opinion. The lawyer's letter referenced a June 1, 2015 e-mail from AUSU, so it should be easy enough for AUSU to track it down.

What also isn't clear is why AUSU approached their lawyer about Article 10. One AUSU rep at the consultation session noted the curious timing of the request, coming just days after last year's AGM. At the AGM, AUSU members attempted to compel AUSU to follow bylaw Article 4.6.1 and expel from membership three councillors who had broken AUSU bylaws. An executive councillor at the consultation session said the AGM had nothing to do with the query to their lawyer. This comment, however, seems somewhat disingenuous considering that AUSU council's former VPFA has already characterized the thousands of dollars of legal fees in May and June 2015 as resulting from AUSU asking their lawyer for "a full legal opinion on the matters brought forward at the AGM."

What *is* clear is that Alberta's Ministry of Advanced Education has neither suggested nor requested a change to Article 10. Since AUSU believes that the current Article 10 somehow violates Alberta's Post-Secondary Learning Act, you'd think the first place they'd go looking for answers is the ministry responsible for the legislation.

During the "member consultation opportunity," once I insisted the AUSU reps stop fighting amongst themselves—as entertaining as that was—and consult with the student, I asked why they didn't ask the ministry about Article 10. I pointed out that a lawyer's opinion was just that—an opinion, but only the ministry could give them a ruling on the legislation.

Despite this reasonable question, two of the AUSU reps were vehement about the bylaw change. Article 10 is illegal because our lawyer says it's illegal and we're going to change it and we don't want to bother the ministry about this, is how I interpret their reasoning. Two other AUSU reps expressed doubt about the sole legal opinion they received, with one wondering what expertise the lawyer had in regards to the PSLA, and the other pointing to problem areas within the opinion statement itself.

As the sole non-council member present, I was asked if I would "be satisfied" if AUSU sought a *second* legal opinion on the matter of Article 10. Why ask me? I don't know the level of expertise of the first lawyer, and I have no idea which Alberta lawyers would have PSLA-specific expertise. In the end, though, having two lawyers' opinions is still no match for getting a ruling from the Ministry of Advanced Education—something AUSU so far has refused to do.

Why is AUSU reluctant to ask the right questions of the right people? It's not like they're strangers to research. In the recently-concluded Forensic Audit Committee report, the research activity described seemed exhaustive. That committee interviewed students who proposed the Forensic Audit at last year's AGM, consulted auditors, and spent months combing through AUSU meeting minutes, reports, budget documents, and e-mails. Even bylaw amendments have formerly warranted a committee to spend months researching the most minute changes.

But now, when the stakes are high for AUSU's members, research doesn't seem to be a priority. No committee has been assembled, no task force assigned to finding out if the bylaw article in question even needs amendment. AUSU did say they looked at what other student associations are doing and concluded that most of them do not include membership in the vote for amendments. I looked at the constitutions and bylaws of the other Alberta student associations myself—they are readily available online—but came to different conclusions as to how amendments are handled.

The proposed bylaw amendment went before council for a first reading on March 10. On April 14, it will go before the outgoing council for a second reading. It's not clear what happens after that, since current AUSU bylaws state that bylaws can only be amended by a Special Resolution of AUSU. Since the AGM—scheduled for April 7—will already have taken place, presumably the newly-configured council will have to call an SGM to honour bylaw requirements.

Can we have faith in current council to do the right thing on April 14 and torpedo the proposed bylaw amendment? Councillors cannot make an informed decision unless and until they are fully informed. The new AUSU council—with five new faces—will be sworn in only minutes after the matter is on the table for a vote. They may be inheriting an unwelcome legacy which will pit them against the membership at the outset of their term.

I'd like to see AUSU fulfil job number one on their published mission statement: to "keep our members at the forefront of our actions." The proposed amendment to Article 10 does exactly the opposite.

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





## The Fit Student Managing Your Mind

Marie Well

### End Depression; End Eating Disorders

Standing on the scale, I hit my target weight. Yet nothing feels different. I long to have that high—that feeling of exhilaration—that is supposed to happen when you skinny down. So, I aim for a lower weight—that is until I feel weak and lifeless, until I see a picture of a boney dying soul that could very well be me within a year or so. It's a turning point.

As a student, to perform at peak, you need a healthy mind and a healthy body. Whether you want to prevent eating disorders or depression, your life's purpose and your self-worth can help you overcome. The book *Managing Your Mind* by Gillian Butler and Tony Hope shows that weight doesn't change the inner you. And time for fun keeps you healthy.

### Prevent Depression? Indulge in What You Love

Doesn't the idea of indulging seem kind of, well, self-absorbed? You bet it does, and you need to take lots of time during the day, like me, to get full of yourself: indulge in hot bubble baths, indulge in journaling for pleasure, indulge in shutting off that foul morning alarm for an extra thirty minutes of sleep. No shame in that.

More importantly, find out the activities you truly value and love and spend your time absorbed in them. I dream of becoming a Ph.D, so I read academic material daily to bring me closer to that goal. As another example, I love my boyfriend to Saturn's moons and back.

So, I spend as much time with him as possible. I also enjoy reading about mental health issues, as it seems I've been stricken by a number of them throughout my life: OCD, anxiety, PTSD—you name it. Taking daily time-outs for niceties keeps me strong.

In fact, by indulging in things you love, especially in things you value, you buffer yourself against depression, according to Butler and Hope. So, align your goals with your passions and with the tasks you do each day for enjoyment: it's as simple as that.

If you don't know your passions and values, then explore, inquire, seek them out. The more you do the things you love, the more likely your passions will tap you on the shoulder for some play time. Opportunities await the daily doer; and opportunities, passions, and goals quell the flames of depression.

### Break Free from The Fat--Skinny Cycle

For most of my life, I struggled with weight. I played sports and ate well during my youth, but when I stopped engaging in physical activity, I resorted to excessive dieting. In one photograph of me on the beach of Hawaii at the age of about 21, my bones protruded from my flesh. Recalling that day in Hawaii, I shudder at the number of insults people hurled at me: "Bone wrack!" "Anorexic!"

When I began eating (and wow—did I ever eat), I gained almost eighty pounds within a four-year time frame. I appeared on the local news as a protestor, horrifically obese. I felt like crying. So, I started swimming regularly,

timed my chewing rate with the second hand of a clock, and ate half my normal portions. Within a year of reaching my peak weight, I lost the eighty pounds. The only problem was that I returned to an anorexic state.

Eventually, with the influence of a dear friend, I started eating regularly and exercising voraciously. I exercised strenuously for hours daily, six days a week. I ate like a pig, too, yet stayed super lean. All of my money went to new clothes, frequent tailoring, or expensive makeup from The Bay. What a waste! (Now I hoard books, instead.)

Since then, my weight has fluctuated significantly more than once. Recently, I dieted to the point that my weight dropped to an unhealthy level. I started getting wobbly-kneed from lack of energy. I avoided eating. Someone pointed out a picture of a woman whose eating disorder spiralled and whose bones almost pierced through her skin, and the photo shocked me. I was fast-tracking to a similar state.

As a solution, I began reading books on anorexia. I learned in Butler and Hope's book *Managing Your Mind* that when we don't eat regularly (consuming just enough to stabilize weight), we often develop issues with obesity and anorexia or bulimia. Yet, the biggest takeaway was that we often think having control over our weight bolsters our self-esteem; the truth, however, suggests that no matter what weight we reach, we are still the same person. If I gain ten pounds, well, I'm still the same me. I used to think that the skinner I became, the better I was. Yet, every time I reached my weight goal, I felt like nothing changed. No fireworks went off in my head. No bands played. Neither did I jump on stage to be whisked away by John Travolta in a dance to the 70s band playing Xanadu. I was still the same me.

Now I eat more regularly, and don't eye the weigh scale on a daily basis. I feel freer than before. I manage to eat just enough to sustain my current weight. I found my set weight of 123 pounds, and I rarely sway more than six pounds away from that mark.

Regardless of what weight I'm at, I think I'm a kind and gentle person, and kindness and gentleness matter more than skipping breakfast, don't they? When I look in the mirror, whether I weight 123, 110, or 180, I still see the same twinkle in my eyes and the same broad smile: the marks of spiritual beauty.

### Women Of Interest

**Jean Flatt Davey** was born March 16, 1909 in Hamilton Ontario and died March 31, 1980. Davey was the second woman, and the first woman doctor, enlisted in the Women's Division of the Royal Canadian Air Force. Davey went on to be awarded the Order of the British Empire (established to acknowledge contributions to the arts and sciences, as well as charitable and public service work outside of Civil Service) on May 28, 1943. Jean Davey made further accomplishments including becoming the Chief of Medicine at the Women's College Hospital, Professor at University of Toronto Faculty of Medicine; as well as being inducted into the Order of Canada in 1973.

Further information available at the following websites:

[http://airforceapp.forces.gc.ca/CFAWC/eLibrary/Journal/2012-Vol1/Iss1-Winter/Sections/08-RCAF\\_Womens\\_Division\\_e.pdf](http://airforceapp.forces.gc.ca/CFAWC/eLibrary/Journal/2012-Vol1/Iss1-Winter/Sections/08-RCAF_Womens_Division_e.pdf)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal\\_Canadian\\_Air\\_Force\\_Women%27s\\_Division](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal_Canadian_Air_Force_Women%27s_Division)

compiled by Barb Godin

## Canadian Education News



### Infrastructure Budget

The federal Liberals released their first budget on March 22 with billions of dollars pledged for infrastructure spending. The budget supports postsecondary education via "funding for infrastructure, research and innovation, financial assistance, youth jobs and skills training, and indigenous education."

According to the chair of Universities Canada and the president of the University of Calgary, Dr. Elizabeth Cannon, the federal Liberal government knows that universities will be a short- and long-term

engine of economic stimulus based on (pledged) investment in infrastructure. Dr. Cannon specifically commended two things. The \$2 billion pledged for a "strategic infrastructure fund for postsecondary institutions" and the \$95 million pledged for an "annual increase to the federal research granting councils."

### Groningen Declaration: Canada Joins International Data Exchange

Sending transcripts can be stressful for students, they can get lost, delay courses, and be costly. Created in 2012, The Groningen Declaration Network on Digital Student Data Portability, is meant to "modernize and improve the international exchange of transcripts, diplomas and applications by creating ... networks between academic institutions and other organizations worldwide."

Kathleen Massey, university registrar and executive director of enrolment services at McGill University, reported that the idea is to make transmission of credentials for Canadians easier both nationally and internationally. According to Ms. Massey, current post-secondary methodologies are outdated, cause delays, and open to potential fraud because of being paper-based. Ms. Massey said, "We want to correct that...by making sure there is a direct electronic exchange of information."

### Postsecondary Students Want Career-Related Opportunities While at School

According to an online survey created by the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (HEQCO) partnered with the Academics Group, postsecondary students were "career-motivated, seeking preparation for their chosen career path." According to the report, students made use of the various opportunities at university such as "experiential learning, networking opportunities and career-related workshops...completing personal research, joining extracurricular teams and volunteering for activities related to their academic field," but also "asked for more experiential and work-integrated learning opportunities" such as "more career-related workshops and the opportunity to learn practical, career-related skills in class," and "that their institutions help them find jobs."

## A Better Kind of Reality TV

Deanna Roney



CBC's Canada Reads is an annual competition where panellists defend books that fit into a specific theme. This year the theme was growing and changing. The books that made the short list this year were *Birdie*, by Tracey Lindberg and defended by Bruce Poon Tip; *Bone and Bread*, by Saleema Nawaz and defended by Farah Mohamed; *Minister Without Portfolio*, by Michael Winter and defended by Adam Copland; *The Hero's Walk* by Anita Rau Badami and defended by Vinay Virmani; and *The Illegal*, by Lawrence Hill, and defended by Clara Hughes.

The debates were intense, emotions were high, and you could see the passion which each of these defenders had for their specific book, even the books which they were debating against. The panellists were professional and respectful of the other books when raising issues within them or defending against them. But there were comments which raised eyebrows and somethat, out of context, could be offensive. The panellists did not back down from an argument and were not shy in asking for an apology about comments made without enough thought.

I find myself watching less engrossing reality TV, such as *The Voice* (TV show, not the magazine), or *America's got Talent*. I watch these not because I can sing (because trust me I can't) and not because I have some strange talent (unless I have yet to discover it myself), but because I am watching someone who is striving for a creative dream and succeeding. I am able to watch a singer/song-writer blow audiences away with their voice when they only used to sing to themselves in the mirror. I watch these shows because I can see someone following their dream and be amazed at how they are being received. I watch these because I have a dream of writing succeeding creatively; CBC's Canada Reads allowed me to watch exactly what I have been trying to squeeze from other shows. I was able to watch a book debate, to hear what these people thought, I could see an audience invested in the outcome of the debate, hear gasps as the votes tallied and someone was eliminated.

Throughout the program one panellist, Adam Copeland, commented that it was a wonderful thing that in Canada there is a national debate about books. That in Canada a previously spandex wearing, baby oiled WWE wrestler is able to debate books on this level. Each panellist was passionate about their book, and that there is so much hype about this debate and the outcome is pretty incredible. Since watching this show I have purchased two of the five books on the shortlist and one from last year's debate. I purchased these based on their defender, on how passionate they were about it, and how they spoke about it. I could see that this book had an impact on the panellist and seeing how it moved them, moved me. I wanted to see what it was all about.



One of the books, *The Hero's Walk* by Anita Rau Badami, will be heading for the big screen. Vinay Virmani, the book's defender, is a screen writer and has the rights to turn this book into a movie. He was so moved by the book and found it so important that he decided he had to make a movie out of it. So, this debate, this reality TV, has the ability to launch books onto the bestseller list, to inspire further development into movies, but, perhaps most importantly, it has the ability to inspire people to read.

This debate is infectious. The passion that everyone has for these books is contagious. This debate gave me everything I tried to get through other shows; it gave me exactly what I wanted and I was completely invested in the outcome. I found myself in a bookstore with two of the five books and wound up in a discussion with the lady at the checkout about not only this debate, but past debates. This debate is encouraging discussion where otherwise there might not be any. I was so caught up in the debate that as she spoke about one of these books being eliminated I jumped in and said "Don't tell me, I haven't watched yet!" only to realize she was talking about a book from a day previous, and I had seen it be eliminated. I may have been slightly embarrassed.

If you have not watched the debates I encourage you to check them out on cbc.ca. While I don't know how you could get to the recap without seeing the spoiler, (*Editor's note: Got you covered. Go to [this link](#) to get the downloadable podcasts, with no spoiler on the page*) even knowing who won and who lost, the debate itself is incredible to watch. The Q&A period after the debate is also very interesting, to hear the audience members discuss the books, or reinterpret the arguments is, to me, as much a part of the debate than the actual debate process.

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

## Student Sizzle AU's Hot Social Media Topics

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

### AthaU Facebook Group

Ryan seeks feedback on French and German courses. Kevin is looking for senior COMP and CMIS courses with practice exams. Ashley has re-enrolled and is contemplating which direction her studies should take.

Other posts include double majors, course extension fees, going back to finish high school, PLAR, and courses ADMN 232, ECON 248, PHIL 231, and WGST 266.

### Twitter

@AthabascaU tweets: "What is [#ambient](#) music and how can it help your studies? <http://goo.gl/7JDLGz> [#studying](#)."

@AU Business tweets: "#AU grads are up to great things! [#MBA '10](#) [@DebbyCarreau](#)'s new book, The Mentor Myth, available in April. Congrats!"

@AthabascaUSU (AUSU) tweets: "AUSU's 2016 Annual Report for the April 7 AGM is now posted online! <http://bit.ly/1RIMtUY>."

### Youtube

"Northern Love", [An Interview with Paul Nonnekes](#), posted by [AU Press](#).



## In Conversation ..with Skunkmello

Wanda Waterman



*Skunkmello is a Brooklyn-based rock band that's been thrilling audiences for the last few years with their own lively blend of blues and rock and a unique narrative style of lyric-writing. They've just released the track "Highway 17" from their album *Hot Chicken*, which is due for release the 10th of June. A hectic touring schedule has had them traversing the United States and stopping at some of the best venues and festivals in the country, including SXSW, CMJ, and Musikfest. The band is comprised of Matt Bartlett (vocals, guitar, harmonica), Ed Cuervo (guitar, vocals), Jay Holt (bass, vocals), and Jono Ori (drums, vocals). Recently Matt and Jono took the time to answer Wanda Waterman's questions about their musical journey.*

### What role did music play in your childhood?

JONO: I come from a long line of musicians and musical theater people, and the Philadelphia area (where I grew up) has a very rich, insulated musical community. I started playing in my first band at around the age of 12, but before that music was always the most important thing in our house.

MATT: I always liked building things and inventing various characters and faux universes to spend my time in. Music provided another essential avenue of invention in which I could create in real time with sounds. Over time, music became the way my friends and I would hang out. It was what we did to relax and what we did to party:

pumping loud noises out of blasted amplifiers in the suburban basements of cringing parents while clandestinely sipping on the booze we'd previously siphoned from their liquor cabinets or lifted off of stalled trains. High-proof rock-and-roll.

### What or who in your musical training had the most—and best—influence on you, as a musician, a composer, and a human being?

JONO: My grandmother was a singer and piano player. She had a shot at being a professional musician, but the schedule and low pay that came with that line of work deterred her. Instead, our family became her audience. She encouraged all of her grandchildren to pursue music.

MATT: My folks put up with a lot of high-voltage noise over my youthful years, so that counts. There were musical mentors and front-lawn flop-outs, now lost to the annals of burnt brain cells and empty bottles. And there were also all my friends from life and my friends from the records: Hendrix, Zappa, the Grateful Dead, the Rolling Stones, Miles Davis, Captain Beefheart, Dylan, the Band, Townes Van Zandt, and so many others. Strange people. Good buddies. Good times.

### How did that rockabilly sound emerge?

JONO: The foundation of our music is in our history as a band as much as it is in the roots and rock music that influences us. The whole thing started with us taking Matt's musical ideas, finding grooves that felt comfortable with them, and then expanding upon those to create structured pieces of music. So any genre we attempt to conquer in our work mainly emerges from that kind of pattern. Jamming musical ideas until a rhythm emerges, and then allowing ourselves to be flexible with whatever style or genre comes out naturally. Sometimes that's rockabilly, or blues, or punk rock, or reggae, or folk music, or country. It's always Skunkmello, though.

MATT: Yeah, that sounds right. We started out as a garage blues band but I guess our sound reflects the music we've been listening to, and I've been digging a lot of rockabilly, outlaw honky tonk, and jukebox rock-and-roll lately—that Bakersfield sound. Been listening to a lot of Chet Atkins, Scotty Moore, Roy Buchanan, Albert Lee, and James Burton. Humbling stuff; hopefully some of it shines through.

### **What was the most mesmerizing musical experience of your life?**

MATT: Depends on the day really and if it's happening, it's happening. I got misty a few weeks back watching Jim Campilongo play with his trio during their Monday night residency at Rockwood in the Lower East Side. He's a beautiful player with a brilliant trio, and in that moment it was utterly mesmerizing. Emotional stuff, for sure.

JONO: I'm mesmerized by music and its ability to unite people all the time, especially now that most of what I listen to is made by people I've met through being in this band. I think The Silks, a band we've split bills with a few times, are the best damn live band on earth. I'm always blown away with what Hollis Brown does, and they're writing amazing songs right now. The band Canyon Spells' live vocal performances are magic and rival some of the best I've ever heard. It's easy to be mesmerized in that kind of company.

### **Who writes these clever lyrics and what prepares him?**

JONO: Matt writes the lyrics, with the exception of a few changes made in the moment during recording sessions or when one of us feels emphasis needs to be placed on something else rhythmically. It works. He can tell you what prepared him to do that.

MATT: Yeah, for what it's worth, I write them and the words are basically born out of a lack of preparation, for life and everything else. I'm always reading and prefer the wilder and more debauched aspects of literature from numerous sources of dubious authority. That, combined with a knack for stumbling into strange and sordid circumstances in uneven parts of the world, helps to provide both the raw material as well as the motive to transcribe it to tune. I typically have pages of drivel stuffed into my pockets, ready to be uncrumpled at the most inopportune moments and unraveled into a song.

### **How did you find each other?**

JONO: I was introduced to Matt through his best friend Brett, who at the time was dating my ex-girlfriend's roommate. Matt and I had both been searching for someone to play music with and had a lot of shared musical interests right off the bat. Ed was sort of my natural first choice to fill out the band after that because he and I had played and recorded music together in another band for a few years. For live performances, we remained a three piece for a majority of the next three years. When we first started working on songs for what would become *Hot Chicken*, we realized that some of the stuff would be better executed on stage with a second guitar player, and because Ed already had a good grasp of the grooves we play, he switched to guitar and we recruited Jason from a local band called I'll Be John Brown to play bass.

### **What are your rehearsals like?**

JONO: It really depends upon what we're rehearsing for. The double-edged sword of getting more people to pay attention is that we get offered more opportunities that we feel we can't turn down. It's certainly not a bad thing; it's what musicians wish for. But when those opportunities come, rehearsals can feel very business-like because we always want to be as prepared as possible when we get out in front of new people. When we do have space and time to experiment and we're not just rehearsing for a set of tour dates, our rehearsals are more interesting. We try our songs in different ways, we jam for hours, we hang out and listen to other people's stuff and try to figure out how we can do what they did. That kind of thing.

### **Has anything funny or bizarre ever happened to you while in the recording studio or on the stage?**

MATT: Ed puked a few times into a garbage bucket in front of the stage one time while we were playing in Boston. That was pretty punk rock.

**Does Brooklyn help or hinder the muse?**

MATT: Both, probably. It was a great and vibrant place to make music for a while, but we've recently had to escape for the greener pastures of Queens. We put our time in there, for sure, but the warehouses and dives we used to frequent are unfortunately being torn down and laid up with astounding efficiency. Instead of quietly lamenting the encroaching vermin, we decided to cruise over the Pulaski Bridge to avoid the low-tide sludge that tends to gather in ditches below the water line.

**What do you love best about *Hot Chicken*? And why did you call it that?**

MATT: The flavor and the burn and what it does to your poor and unsuspecting intestines, large and small.

JONO: If we're talking about the album, I like how concise it feels. It's definitely more in line with *Whiskey & Oatmeal* and *Lowlife Dreams* in that respect. *Hot Chicken* feels a little bit more like one complete thought from start to finish.

MATT: Dowsed overnight in a briny death sauce of moonshine gasoline mixed with fermented Fukushima fire-sludge for a real cool time.

**What did you learn from your previous EPs and LP?**

JONO: What's more important about *Whiskey & Oatmeal* is probably what we forget about making it. We had a single night in the studio booked to record a demo for booking purposes. We walked out with a complete EP. *Lowlife Dreams* showed us the value of patience, considering how fast *Whiskey & Oatmeal* was completed. We worked tirelessly recording and mixing that thing. It's also how I learned to assemble a full package—sequencing songs, hiring a mastering engineer, creating the artwork, pulling all those pieces together for manufacturing. That was really rewarding for me.

**Click of the Wrist**

Overwhelmed by April showers ... of paperwork? The weather may be warming, but for those who are stuck inside with mounds of headache-inducing paperwork as tax time approaches, here's some good news: a few tools that may make the first half of this month (and the coming tax year!) go just a little more smoothly.

**Tax Time Tools****Currency Converter**

Need to know the exchange rate on a particular date in the past? This currency converter could save you a lot of time and hassle (and its date correlations for some currencies go back to the 1950s!).

**Bean Counter**

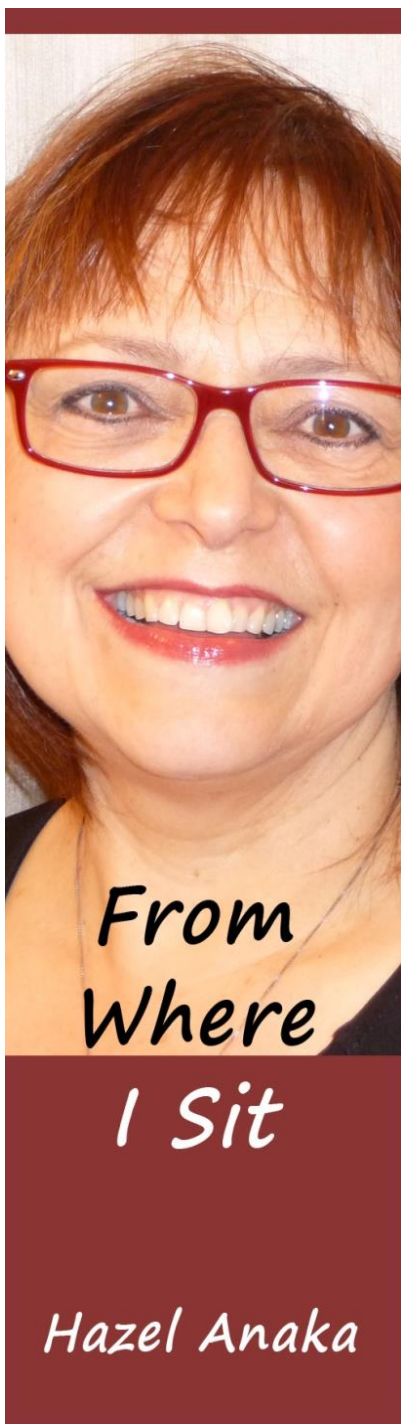
Not a literal bean counter! The Blunt Bean Counter, a Canadian accountant and blogger, has a goldmine of helpful tax advice and explanations on his blog.

**Not the Grocery Bag Method**

If receipts are your bane, look into Shoeboxed, an app that converts your receipts into data. You can do it manually, but with the paid version they'll take care of everything for you.







## One of Those

In the lead up to hosting Easter dinner we scrambled to get ready. There is nothing like the spectre of a houseful of guests to force one to get cracking on long-delayed to-do lists.

Because our house is only about eleven hundred square feet the challenge was finding room for about twenty-one and three-quarter people. (My niece's baby Brooklyn and our toddler Kade account for the fractions!) The wet snow and cooler forecast meant no one would spill outside onto the patio.

I did think the men might gravitate to the garage, if only to check out the new build. At least, that's how I convinced Roy to (for the love of God) finish adding the plate covers to the electrical outlets and switches, close up the breaker box, install the two outdoor motion detector lights, and wire in the outdoor receptacles. He also needed to sweep out the sand and grit carried in by wet winter tires. He's the one who insisted on a checker plate rubber mat for under the cars. That's gonna sweep up like a dream. Not.

It's taken him as many days to do that as it's taken me to decide on a menu. Oi. I burned up the internet getting recipes for braised red cabbage, baked asparagus, glazed carrots, and slow cooker roast beef. Add in spiral ham with glaze, nachinka (a Ukrainian cornmeal dish), and all the potluck contributions: two salads, potatoes, holubtsi (cabbage rolls), paska (Easter bread), and dessert and we'll have a feast.

I'm anal and paranoid, a rather unfortunate combination, in a hostess. I worry that everything won't be done on time (1 PM) as though world peace hangs in the balance if we eat at 1:10 or 1:22. I worry I'll run out of cooktop and oven space. I eliminated recipes if their required temperatures didn't work with each other. Because of all that I start waaay too soon. I peel, dice, slice, measure out ingredients, then put food to cook too early. Then I wonder how I'll keep dishes warm until the last guests arrive. It's nerve wracking.

Besides food prep, I'm responsible for most of the cleaning too. I hate the last-minute Sunday morning stuff like toilet cleaning. In order to give most people a seat and a table we're rounding up TV trays, stacking stools, adding leaves to

the table, and resurrecting the thirty-year-old kid's chrome set.

My favourite part is the decorating, picking out linens, napkins, serving dishes, flowers, setting up the liquor, making up Easter treat bags. And as much as this was a lot of work and worry and I wonder why I suggested doing it, it was good. It's just too bad I didn't enjoy it. I don't think the hostess ever does. Too busy seeing to the comfort of others. But I'd hate to be one of *those* who never reciprocates, 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*

## Too Much Attention?

**Dear Barb:**

*I'm working on my degree at AU and working full time, so I'm very busy. My neighbor is driving me crazy. Cara is a very nice person who lives in a condo behind me. She is pleasant enough, but I think she is lonely. I have talked to her a few times and we've even been on hikes together, but this was all before I started university. I find my days are pretty full with working and studying. I have told Cara how busy I am, but she still continues to call and come over. Sometimes I don't answer the door or the phone, but I think she knows I'm home. I am starting to feel like a prisoner in my own home. If I step out on the deck she comes rushing over, asking if I want to go for a walk or go shopping or whatever. I tell her that I am really busy and she says to let her know when is a good time to go. She says that but she still calls constantly and comes over. What can I do to stop her without hurting her feelings? Thanks Debra.*

Hi Debra:

You sound like you are just too nice! You need to think of yourself first. Be firm, and tell Cara that your time is limited and it will be until you finish your degree, but if you do have any free time you will let her know. Tell her you hope she will understand and that your intention is not to hurt her feelings. If that doesn't work, then you are just going to have to be more forceful. She may get angry and not speak to you for

a while, but if she is a reasonable person she will understand and get over it. You are a busy girl, but as you know, it will pay off in the end.

**Dear Barb:**

*I read and hear so much about bullying in the media and I know some people feel there is too much focus on it. Well I would just like to say I was bullied as a child, basically because I had red hair and wore pink glasses. Both are things I could do nothing about at the time, but as I grew up I did my best to change those things. For example, I began dying my hair as soon as my parents allowed me to and also stopped wearing my glasses. I became so affected by the teasing that I still can't wear glasses in public, therefore I walk around half blind. Some days I get angry with myself for I still allowing this to affect my life. So I don't think bullying gets too much attention, as it impacts people's lives in so many ways, and I'm sure for some people the effects have been devastating. Thanks for providing me with an opportunity to vent, Joan.*

Hi Joan:

Well said! Bullying is a very important issue and as you have pointed out, has longstanding repercussions. You may want to speak to a counselor to help you resolve these issues in your life. Thanks for your letter Joan.

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.

# FUNNY LIT LINES

You can lead a horticulture  
but you can't make her  
think.



~FROM: THE COLLECTED  
DOROTHY PARKER~

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.

## 2016 Annual Report

AUSU's 2016 Annual Report is now online ([here](#)).

The report outlines all of AUSU's progress, goal completion and initiatives over the past year, an outline of our services and awards, our audited financials from the 2014/2015 fiscal year and 2015/2016 budget, as well as reports from the executives and awards committee!

The report will be officially presented at the 2016 Annual General Meeting.

Email [services@ausu.org](mailto:services@ausu.org) with any questions.



## Your New Executive!

As per AUSU bylaws and policies, the newly elected council held an internal election for AUSU's **three Executive positions** on March 31. The results are in!

**President** - Shawna Wasylyshyn

**VP External and Student Affairs** - Kim Newsome

**VP Finance and Administration** - Brandon Simmons

All three executives have already served on AUSU executive. With their combined experiences, it is sure to be a successful year!

## IMPORTANT DATES

- **April 7:** AUSU Annual General Meeting
- **April 10:** Deadline to register in a course starting May 1
- **April 14:** Council changeover meeting & second reading of bylaw changes
- **April 15:** May degree requirements deadline
- **April 29:** May course extension deadline
- **April 30:** Deadline to apply for 2016 Convocation

## Annual General Meeting

AUSU's AGM is **Thursday, April 7 at 4:30pm MDT**.

The meeting will be by teleconference, and all members are welcome. This is the perfect opportunity to find out more about what is going on at AUSU and 'meet' the new council!

The agenda is online [here](#), and the teleconference instructions are included in the agenda.



## Mobile App Contest

Want to win an AUSU prize pack, including some sweet swag and a \$25 gift card to a store of your choosing?

AUSU just posted a question to the **campus wall** in the **AU Student Mobile App**:



## What is your favourite AU resource?

**Answer the question in the Mobile App by April 8 and be entered to win!** One lucky winner will be chosen at random to receive the prize pack after the contest ends. *(Note: must be an AUSU member to win).*

**If you have not yet downloaded the mobile app, you can find out more or download the app [here](#).**



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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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