

THE VOICE

MAGAZINE

Vol 24 Issue 17 2016-04-29

Minds We Meet

Interviewing Students Like You!

You Love Poetry

We'll Prove It!

The MA Debate

Decisions, decisions.

*Plus:
Self-Reliance!
Dear Barb
and much more!*



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



**We love to hear from you! Send your questions and
comments to voice@voicemagazine.org, and please
indicate if we may publish your letter.**

Hey! Did you know the Voice Magazine has a [Facebook page](#)?

No kidding! We also do the [twitter](#) thing once in a while if you're into that.

EDITORIAL

Distance in Person

Karl Low



We all know that AU is a distance university. What some might not know, however, is that even as a distance university, AU still runs some "normal" classrooms. In partnerships with other universities and colleges, AU has run on-site, grouped study classes for years. It was a very limited offering of courses, usually chosen to supplement other offerings already being given at that college or learning institution. However, it was recently pointed out that this will be ending. Due to declining enrollments in these courses, and, of course, the cost of keeping an entirely separate model running, AU has decided that it will be closing these grouped study programs, and will be transitioning students in them to AU's usual model of distance based courses for these students to complete their degrees. The classroom based classes are scheduled to end as of April 30, 2017. You can find all the details about the shift in a Facebook [post](#) from AU's Director of Communications, John O'Brien. For students at specific institution, specific information for them will be rolled out over the coming weeks, but it's likely to be along the lines of what's been released for [Grande Prairie Regional College](#) students.

While I can understand the motivation for the change, I do feel bad for those students caught in the shift. Yes, there will be options and routes made available to them to complete their degrees, but I assume that these students chose the grouped and paced study courses for a reason. So even if the option is there for them to move over to the more traditional AU model, some of them may find they simply don't have what it takes to complete their AU program once they make the shift over to distance and self-directed learning, because, let's be honest, this mode of education isn't for everyone. Some people need the extra support, the kick in the butt, and constant reminder of their courses that the classroom provides. It's very easy for a student who's not prepared to be self-motivated in an AU course to never get it done. Hopefully AU will understand this and be prepared to provide some extra support to these learners. Besides, doing so might just convince them to switch to distance education entirely.

In the meantime, this week, our feature interview is with Louise Baptiste, who is graduating from her Bachelor of Nursing program and moving forward into a master's degree. And she did it while raising five kids.

And while we're on the subject of a master's degree, Deanna Roney takes a look at the choice that we all hope we'll have to face one day, do we pursue a post-graduate degree? If so, which one? Also, as last this month was national poetry month, Barb Lehtiniemi points out why this matters, why we all love poetry, even if we don't.

Plus, the Fit Student gives us some advice on something that every traditional AU student needs to develop, self-reliance. We don't have a classroom of other students pushing us along. We don't have set deadlines for our materials to be in, and to succeed in an AU course demands much more self-reliance than is required in traditional universities. Fortunately, the advice is fairly simple to follow. So check it out, and enjoy the read!

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Karl". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

MINDS WE MEET



Louise Baptiste is an AU student. Recently, she completed the last course to be finalized for the Bachelor of Nursing degree and was accepted into a master's degree program.

Scott Douglas Jacobsen recently interviewed Louise by e-mail, and here's what she had to say about near-graduation, master's degree program acceptance, and being an Indigenous student with five kids at AU.

How did you get involved in the AU community?

I originally was a licensed practical nurse, and decided that I would like to go back to school to obtain further education. I was drawn towards AU because it allowed me the opportunity to work fulltime, while being able to attend my children's activities, and complete my degree.

What about the Bachelor of Nursing (BN) degree program?

I chose the BN program because I love my career field of nursing. I have worked as a nurse for 13 years, 7 of those have been as a nurse educator to practical nursing students. This program allowed me to complete my degree in my chosen profession

while still working in that same profession full-time. In my current workplace advanced education is encouraged and required, so I felt that this was the best route to do so.

What made you interested in nursing?

I originally chose to become a nurse after I had my first daughter and saw how the nurses loved their job in the NICU. I felt that working in this career would allow me to help others, especially those from more vulnerable populations, such as where I come from. I wanted to help others, teach others, and be a role model to others from a similar background.

What kind of work have you done in relation to the BN program, your course and extracurricular work?

In the BN program there are three course clusters: Cluster A is non-nursing courses, Cluster B consists of mainly nursing courses and 3 clinical practicums that have online and in-person components; and, Cluster C contained an extensive final practicum. I just completed Cluster C recently.

As an Indigenous student - First Nations, Inuit, or Métis, what is your specific heritage?

I am a First Nations status student, my father is Caucasian and my mother is Cree, originally from Samson First Nation in Maskwacis. My mother initially lost her status when she married my father, but my mother, sister, and I gained our status back at a later date.

Do you think your heritage influences your personal perspectives?

My heritage has had a huge impact on me. I did not grow up on my own reserve, but spent most of my adolescence and young adult life living on or near a couple of reserves close to Rocky Mountain House, called Sunchild and O'Chiese. My parents divorced when I was young, and I was raised by my father, who was close to the Aboriginal culture despite being non-Aboriginal. I was raised outside the norm, without power or running water, and was very poor most of my formative life.

I have recently grown to know family members from my mother's side, and it has been an eye opener for me. I can see how the residential school system almost destroyed many members of my family who are suffering from addiction issues. My grandmother (*nokhom*) was taken from her family and raised in residential schools, and the trauma of this affected her ability to be a mother to her own children. My mother was also raised in residential schools, and had similar difficulties. I feel that our family would have been closer to each other, and our traditional culture, had this not cascaded down and had such an intergenerational impact. I left home at a young age due to the circumstances in my household, and ended up dropping out of school and being homeless. I would have had a deeper connection to my community if my mother had raised me, but, as I grow older, I feel myself being pulled closer to my roots. I feel that it is my responsibility to help improve and lead the way for my people, since I have been given opportunities that others may have not.

What kind of support have you received from the community this heritage connects you with?

I have been actually received support and encouragement through some family members and role models. One particular role model is Dr. Lisa Bourque-Bearskin, who has a PhD in nursing. She is the president of the Aboriginal Nurses Association of Canada (ANAC). I aspire to be like her, and am honored to be the recipient of her support.

Is it a different experience being an Indigenous student?

I do not know any other Indigenous students in the BN program or at AU, but I do know of 2 students who are applying to the program who are Aboriginal. Although there was a lot of group work in the program, other than clinical practicums, I did not have face to face interaction with other students; so I feel that it is probably less of a variable at an online institution. However, I did find that I was able to focus on my culture throughout some of the assignments, as health care and access to health care is a huge issue for many First Nations people.

Have you noted any common experiences between yourself and other indigenous students that you think other students may not have to deal with?

I have found that many Indigenous students seem to struggle with education in general, especially those who live on reservations. I know that a lot of this has been due to lack of funding or less funding provided to reservation schools. The effect of such has had an impact on Indigenous students in being able to attend post secondary institutions in general. Even at the institution I work at there are not as many Indigenous students as I thought there would be. I feel that people often have misperceptions of post secondary funding provided to Aboriginal students. Unfortunately, there are limited funds for large groups of people, and many people are turned down each year.

What is your favorite thing to do during time off?

My favourite thing to do is to spend time with my family during time off. A lot of time is spent at hockey, and their other extracurricular activities. I also enjoy date nights with my husband, because they are very rare.

You have five kids, which can be hectic. How do you manage the demands of a mother in the midst of classes at university?

I have found that being a mother while working fulltime and going to school is very hectic, but one gets good at multi-tasking. I have often had to bring books and my computer to my kid's activities, games and practices. They are usually required to be an hour early, so I have spent that time studying, writing essays, etc. while waiting for their games/practices. Three of my children are 12, 14, and 16, so they sometimes help with the younger ones. I had my younger children while attending AU, and it has been a struggle. I found it especially hard with my youngest because he wanted my attention continuously, I often found myself typing with one hand while nursing him or holding him with my other hand.

I also provided care to my niece before her mother passed away in the last couple of years, and often still provide care for her on the weekends. It has been challenging because her mother was, unfortunately, one of the missing and murdered aboriginal women in Alberta. I have been very lucky to have the emotional support and help of my husband, and my sister while attending AU.

What is the experience of being a mother-student, or working-mother student?

I feel that my children see how hard I have worked to gain an education, and I know that it has instilled the importance of education into them. I know that they appreciate how hard it is to work, be a student, and a mother at the same time. It is challenging because my house is not always perfect, and they are expected to help out, but I know that they are proud of what I have accomplished.

Was there a particular reason for AU over other universities?

Yes, AU allowed me to attend school while being able to work and provide for my children. As well, I live in a rural area, although I work in Calgary, and found AU convenient because I was able to spend quality time with my children.

What is your favorite hobby?

I love singing. In my free time, I sing a lot, especially country genre.

Who is your favorite artist?

I love the artistry of the late Dr. Dale Auger. He was a Cree Aboriginal artist from Alberta. His artwork is so vivid, and he was known for sharing the ways of the Cree people. He was also a role model for me, as I eventually plan on obtaining a Doctorate of Education Degree as well.

Who is your favorite poet?

I am not into poetry too much, but I find that music is a form of poetry. I love Dani and Lizzy's song *Dancing in the Sky*.

Any recommended authors or books?

To be honest, I have not had a lot of time to read books recently, but I have a couple of books on my to-read-list written by Eden Robinson, which include *Monkey Beach* and *Traplines*.

So you've completed the work for the Bachelor of Nursing degree, but are still waiting for the mark for the last course to be finalized. What does it feel like to be so close to done?

It is a wonderful feeling, like a weight has been lifted off of my shoulders. I have been working towards this, initially since 2007, and then re-enrolled in 2011 due to life's circumstances. Being a high school dropout, I never thought I would be able to do this, I will be the first person in my family to obtain a university degree. I am very proud of this accomplishment.

You've also been accepted to a master's program, congratulations! Which program and why did you pick it?

I will be starting my Masters of Education in July 2016. I chose to apply for this program because I have worked as a nurse educator since 2009, and I feel that having this degree will help me to focus on leadership, and influences on Aboriginal as well as nursing education.

What was your single most important experience while at AU?

My final practicum was my most important experience. I felt that I was able to put everything together, and finally feel as though I saw the end in sight.

What is your greatest regret?

My greatest regret is that I did not finish my degree sooner. I found that at times I was not as motivated as I should have been.

Any thoughts on e-texts?

I am old fashioned, and prefer opening up a textbook, and making notes. However, the nice thing about e-texts is that you do not need to drag textbooks with you to study.

Any recommendations for first- and second-year nurses?

Make sure to set up a study schedule, and I would recommend taking the program with a friend, so that you can help to motivate each other.

What do you think is the most important skill for any undergraduate student?

I feel being organized is very important. It does not matter if one has children or works fulltime, there are always other distractions. I would say that the majority of undergraduate students choose AU because they have other obligations. I think that organizing a study schedule and sticking to it is important for success, as well as remembering to take breaks and doing what you enjoy, so as not to feel overwhelmed.

Any feelings or thoughts in conclusion?

I am very grateful to have been able to attend AU, and I think that distance education is important for those of us who are unable to attend the traditional route. I feel that many Indigenous students living on reservations with internet access would benefit from this type of education, due to having responsibilities to their families and children.

Thank you for your time, Louise.

Scott Douglas Jacobsen is an AUSU Councillor. He works with various organizations, and runs In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal, and In-Sight Publishing.

Music Review

AKA V

Samantha Stevens



Musician: AKA V

Single: "Always Go Home"

It is always exciting when a young musician embarks on their musical journey. It is even more exciting when they get their feet under them and are ready to share their music with the world. This is the point that AKA V (Vanessa Huneault) is at in her career.

Since releasing her first single at the beginning of April, AKA V has been busy touring and playing many venues across the UK and Canada. Originally from a small town in Quebec called Rouyn-Noranda, AKA V hit the road at the age of 20 and ended up in Toronto, Ontario where she launched into the music business as the lead vocalist for the Canadian band OzGoode. She also got an education in Audio Production and Engineering. Now starting on her solo career, she is guided by her

never-ending optimism and shows a great deal of promise.

For fans of Sheryl Crow, AKA V's sound is very similar. Considered alternative pop rock, there are also undertones of country and folk. However, in the single "Always Go Home", AKA V clearly demonstrates her talent as a singer-songwriter and her ability to create a track that is both unique for a pop song, and yet strangely familiar.

When writing "Always Go Home" AKA V says she was inspired by her own journey from a small town to starting a career in the big city: "This world can be very cruel and the entertainment industry is not for everybody. I wanted to tell those people that there is no shame in going back home, whatever your home is, wherever it is. Go back to that safe place, there is no need to become somebody you wouldn't be proud of because you're too scared to face the fact that this one dream didn't work out" (<http://www.akavmusic.com/#!/bio/vnvst>). In an industry that sometimes requires artists to change themselves to fit a certain image, AKA V's message in "Always Go Home" is a powerful reminder to stay true to yourself in the face of adversity.

The track begins with a simple drum, guitar, and bass intro. The melody brings to mind tones similar to that of Guns and Roses, but without the heavy rock power that I expected. Yet, the music fits perfectly with AKA V's breathy vocals. The frequent harmony between instruments and singing prevent the drums from overpowering the track. Unfortunately, for those who like a bit of punch to their music, especially when it comes to the drums or a powerhouse guitar solo, "Always Go Home" is as smooth as silk. This helps keep the focus of the listener on AKA V's beautiful vocals and insightful lyrics, which, given the depth of the subject matter, makes this song perfect.

There is also a video in the works for "Always Go Home" that promises to be a short movie emphasizing the themes in the song. For a sneak peak, check out the [teaser](#).

For us university students who are chasing our education and career dreams, "Always Go Home" is a powerful song. I frequently listen to it when I am being pulled in many professional directions at once. It helps keep me focused and reminds me that if one career path doesn't work, there is no shame in taking that step back and re-evaluating what is most important. You have to love wisdom infused with music, and I can't wait to see what comes next for AKA V.

Samantha currently uses her skills as a writer to promote independent musicians and raise awareness and support for many global, environmental, and humanitarian issues. Check out her website and blog at: <http://sstevenswriter.wix.com/writer>



Canadian Education News



Alberta education kept afloat via borrowing

Alberta education will remain intact in spite of low oil prices through a deficit. School councils and parents expressed concern about the funding for students because of the downturn in the Alberta economy, but the budget will increase from by 4.3% from the previous year to \$7.9 billion. The budget will provide k-12 and advanced education funding and there are "no major school builds or renovations" included in the budget. Education Minister, David Eggen, said, "We know that we might have to make sacrifices in other areas, and borrow some money, but a child's education at

each stage of their development should not be compromised. That's the way we roll here in Alberta."

According to Advanced Education Minister Marlin Schmidt, students do not need to be worried that the tuition freeze for the second year will cause problems for them in future years.

Edmonton launches the Mindshare series

The University of Alberta launched Mindshare, which is a series that "brings together top researchers, politicians, bureaucrats and industry leaders from Canada and abroad."

These minds were brought together in Edmonton on April 18th to discuss the future of energy systems. Canada Research Chair in Cultural Studies at University of Alberta, Imre Szeman, said, "The next steps in addressing environmental crisis will have to be led by the social sciences and humanities."

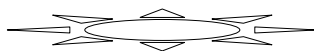
Other aspects of the discussion were China and its large coal consumption, and that consumption's changes to the environment such as air pollution. For those with an interest, there's further information about Mindshare events throughout Canada, [here](#).

New competition for national and international researchers for postdoctoral fellowships

Canadian and international researchers can take part in an competition for 2016-2017 postdoctoral fellowships. They are called the Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships for those that "have recently completed a PhD, PhD-equivalent, or health professional degree."

The fellowships come with \$70,000 per year for two years. Their intent is to bring in the world's best researchers at the postdoctoral level. These will be held in collaboration with a host institution.

The deadline for the recent PhD graduates is September 21, 2016. For more information, candidates and others can look into the [Banting Postdoctoral Fellowship website](#).



You Love Poetry And I Can Prove It

Barbara Lehtiniemi



"If I had my life to live over again, I would have made a rule to read some poetry and listen to some music at least once a week; for perhaps the parts of my brain now atrophied would have thus been kept active through use. The loss of these tastes is a loss of happiness, and may possibly be injurious to the intellect, and more probably to the moral character, by enfeebling the emotional part of our nature." — Charles Darwin

Is poetry relevant today? Once one of the highest forms of literature, poetry appears to be struggling on the sidelines these days. Few people write poetry, it

seems, and even fewer read it.

But not so fast. Did you sing along to the car radio yesterday? Or download some Prince tunes when you heard the news? Or put your child to bed with a lullaby?

Song lyrics are poems set to music. Far from being irrelevant, poetry provides the soundtrack of our lives. Our days are infused with poetic melody. We listen to music at home, in the car, at work, at the gym. Even if we don't sing along, we recite the words in our head.

Poetry allows us to use language in ways that simply aren't possible in everyday speech. I might say, "The sky is a neat shade of blue and there are clouds that look a bit wavy." And I might prosaically write, "A series of wave-like clouds lap against an azure sky." But to describe that in a poem, I have to work harder to evoke the feeling the image inspires: "Angelic robes rippling across heaven's infinite ocean." (ugh!—needs more work, I know.)

Poetry need not be frothy to be evocative. In the opening lines of the 1977 song "Solsbury Hill", for example, Peter Gabriel uses the simplest words possible: "Climbing up on Solsbury Hill/I could see the city light/Wind was blowing, time stood still/Eagle flew out of the night." Relying on rhythm and rhyme to provide the imagery, Gabriel invites the listener to join him in the experience (or nearly join—for years I thought he was saying Salisbury Hill, so I would have been in the wrong place.)

Listening to poetic song lyrics can be uplifting, but reading poetry is beneficial, too. Reading a poem requires your full attention. You're not just reading for information, or following a narrative, but immersing yourself in the words—what they're saying and how they're saying it.

When I took ENGL 212, *Poetry and Plays*, I learned to slow down and read each poem carefully. Reading aloud helped, too, because it allowed me to get the full effect of the sound of the words—just like listening to song lyrics. (The connection between poetry and song lyrics was emphasized with two music CDs, one by Leonard Cohen and the other by Loreena McKennitt, which were included in the course materials.) Although analyzing poetry doesn't sound like fun, having to analyze how each word is a necessary building block of the overall effect contributed to my enjoyment of poetry.

Reading poetry prompted me to appreciate how writing poetry could improve my writing overall. Writing—or attempting to write—poetry allows us to play with words in ways we can't with everyday prose. Achieving a pleasing rhythm requires hunting for the precise word or expression. During the search process, the writer learns new words or learns to use words in a new way. Vocabulary expands, and our improved ability to use language shows up in everyday writing and speech.

Reading poetry also made me realize how surrounded we are by poetry. Nursery rhymes and lullabies, greeting cards and Christmas carols, song lyrics and Shakespearean lines, even sporting chants and advertising slogans. And, of course, where would we be without the mnemonic devices that set hard-to-remember details to rhyme (I still have to sing through part of the alphabet to remember that W follows U and V.)

April is National Poetry Month. If you sang a song, sonnet, or slogan this month, chances are you love poetry—at least a little bit. Before the month is over, think about the poetry already in your life. Then expand your love: invite more poetry in by reading a few poems or maybe by writing one of your own.

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

Women Of Interest

Margaret Lally "Ma" Murray was born in Kansas in 1888 and died September 25, 1982. Margaret came to Canada in search of a cowboy to marry; instead she met and married newspaper publisher George Murray. Margaret joined George as co-editor and publisher of a number of popular publications including *The Chinook* in Vancouver, B.C., *The Bridge River-Lillooet News* in Lillooet, B.C., and the *Alaska Highway News* in Fort St. John. Margaret became renowned in her own right for her funny, forthright, brassy, and coarse writing style, which ultimately endeared her to readers. Her editorials were often reprinted in other newspapers, thus allowing other readers the ability to experience her unique style. As well, in 1971, Margaret "Ma" Murray became an Officer of the Order of Canada. Murray continued to write her editorials long after the death of her husband and even the occasional column after her own retirement.

Additional information about Margaret Lally Murray's colorful personality and style is available at the following websites.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Margaret_Lally_%22Ma%22_Murray
<https://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/women/030001-1214-e.html>

compiled by Barb Godin

The MA Debate

Deanna Roney



I have watched many videos, read many articles and blogs, and researched many options in an attempt to decide which master's degree I want to pursue. Or, do I want to go forward with a master's degree at all? I suppose the final question is the one that I will have to answer before I can decide the first one.

My aspirations lean toward an MFA, a Master's of Fine Arts, or alternatively toward no M at all. However, after years of dedicated schooling tailored to my interests, I was beginning to wonder if I should consider continuing with something broader. But I am getting ahead of myself. An MFA is a beast of

contradictions. While many writers hold an MFA it is certainly not a requirement (though neither is a BA) and many hold the opinion that an MFA can hamper the ambitious writer; instead of nurturing one's own style it creates writers who all sound the same. I tend to take that particular stance with a grain of salt as this has also been said about a BA and creative writing courses in general. And, without those, I would not be where I am. So is this stance against the MFA mimicking those against the BA? And would this then mean that an MFA might be indispensable to me?

There are a few distance MFA options available, and the choice boils down to genre. For myself, there is one genre that I am most interested in, and maybe two that hold interest, but certainly not three. For one MFA, the genre I am most interested in isn't offered. For the other, it requires study in three genres to create a diverse learning experience. This sounds appealing, but it would then hamper the progress I could make in one genre while I was dabbling in the others.

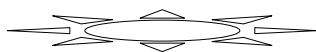
The next, and possibly more practical, option is a Masters of Integrated Studies (MAIS). This degree you are able to customize to fit specific (non-creative writing) aspirations. It may be possible to find more work through this program of study, but not in the field I most desire. So this would mean putting my goals on the back burner and studying for a few more years to get a job I don't particularly want to fund life while what I really want to do with that life stays on the back burner.

It may seem like this is a cut and dry choice. And perhaps it is. Maybe all I need is to dig in and find the courage to pursue something which a majority of people deem un-pursuable. To once again throw societal standards out the window and do something that if I don't I would forever regret. I posted on the unofficial AU Facebook page looking for opinions on the matter. One response was that education is about finding ourselves. A master's degree is not solely an academic pursuit but a personal discovery. Thus, if one is to pursue a master's degree, it should be in what that person is most passionate about.

The decision on the worth of pursuing an MAIS, or an MFA, is ultimately a personal choice. A choice that has to be considered and understood for what it is. Do I want to pursue more education and put some of my writing

on hold while I do? Or do I want to dive in head first? Ultimately, the MFA (or MAIS) will always be there. There will always be an option to continue; it is not a choice that needs to be made immediately after completing an undergraduate degree.

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



The Fit Student Self-Reliance

Marie Well

Tools to Tough it Out

What is self-reliance? Well, the ability to rely on yourself. Self-reliant people have the advantage of always having themselves to turn to when life's troubles hit or even when life's highlights shake things up.

While relying on others can help us with coping, I used to rely on others for comfort, for decision-making, and for goal-setting—too much so. This lack of independence proved a mistake.

For instance, once I approached an animation school to produce an animated commercial for a non-profit organization. Heartily, I wrote and recorded the audio track

for the commercial while overseeing the animators. Yet the animators threatened to sue me when anything went wrong, , and not just once—repetitively: a hidden cost of relying on others. The experience left me with a distaste for charity.

As another example, I approached the National Film Board to make a film, co-written by me, about one of my professors' research. The National Film Board gave the go-ahead, but I dropped the project due to lack of pay and misbehavior on one person's part: an additional cost of relying on others.

Now, according to Gail Wagnild, author of *True Resilience*, increasing your self-reliance bolsters your ability to troubleshoot, to gain confidence, and to tough out the storms.

One way to increase your self-reliance is to learn basic skills such as cooking, home repairs, auto repairs, first-aid, and self-defence. If possible, learn the whole nine-yards of these basic skills.

I can personally tell you the value of learning self-defence. At one time in my life, a woman with a few rough edges loathed me. She approached me once and punched me. I cowered. Later, however, I spent years intensively practicing martial arts, weight-lifting, and cycling. When this woman appeared next, my

body rippled with muscles, my heart rate beat optimally, and my self-defence skills peaked. She rushed toward me angrily. I went into my combative stance. And that was it: fight over before it had begun. I had

learned self-reliance through self-defence. The moral of the story? Learn basic skills, such as self-defence, so that you, too, can tough it out.

Another way to increase your self-reliance involves taking responsibility for your actions. Gail Wagnild argues that when we give away our responsibility to others, we tend to blame them when things go wrong. By blaming others, we fail to learn from our own mistakes.

I too can tell you the value of taking responsibility for your own actions. I blamed my master's thesis supervisor for my shortcomings in graduate school. She gave me bad advice although she had good intentions. When my first semester performance didn't meet the PhD standard, I blamed her. Yet, when I later took on the challenge of mentally conditioning myself to succeed at the graduate level, I realized why I had faltered: my writing and my reading needed improvement. I had also spent a lot of time on extracurricular activities during graduate studies. Only after I examined my own errors could I begin fixing them. In other words, take responsibility for your life in order to learn and grow.

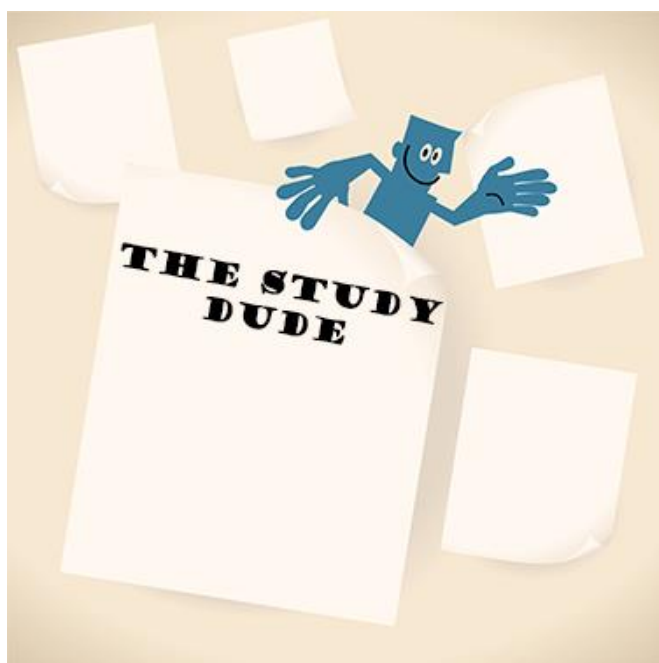
You can also increase your self-reliance by facing your fears. Gail Wagnild advises you to face the fear involved in pursuing your dreams: do you fear enrolling in a master's program? Fear competing in athletics? Fear making a career change? Or do you fear moving to a new home? Don't let fear and a lack of faith stop you from achieving your goals. Don't let your need for security, your complacency, or your finances stop you in your tracks. Tough it out.

How did fear stifle my growth? Today, I long to enroll in a master of education program and work toward my PhD, yet I fear not having enough resources or time. Yet I maintain faith that my dream of acquiring a PhD will eventually come true, so I work a little toward my goal each day. Face your fears: take the initiative to achieve your goals, even if through small steps. Stepping toward your goal a little bit each day will quicken you to the doorsteps of your dreams.

One last way to increase your self-reliance involves faking it until you make it. Gail Wagnild suggests that you should take on the bodily posture of a confident person if you want to assert authority in a field. Put your hands on your hips, chin up, back straight. Project your voice. Even if you're not confident, if you at least look confident, you fake it until you make it.

And yes, I have another personal story to tell—one about how I faked it until I made it, of course. I recently started working as a journalist for the media. I had never before published in print media. My only formal training in journalism was a brief online course that cost me ten dollars. I screamed *amateur!* Yet, my first story wound up as a magazine's cover story. My second story wound up the most read for a print magazine's Web edition. In sum, if you want to develop self-reliance to further your goals, fake it until you make it.

Now that you know the value of self-reliance, go ahead, put on your boxing gloves, strut your stuff, face your fears, and don't blame anyone. But, before you enter the ring, at least learn the basics—the basics of how to tough it out.



Study Tips from a Semi-Anonymous Friend

A Whiff of Data

There is nothing more that The Study Dude wants for you than to collect, analyze—and whiff smells.

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 continues to explore Creswell's book *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. Creswell will get you bottling scents and capturing sounds in your research. Who knows: your

research might end up as an art exhibit at the Banff Center.

The Not-So-Chiselled Features of Qualitative Research

Qualitative research moves from the unknown to the known: at first, the direction of qualitative research is not set in stone. *Induction* marks the word for research that starts from the unknown. Simple as that. Deductive research, on the other hand, starts from what you already know, such as a theory, which you then test.

In graduate studies, I couldn't figure out what inductive research meant. If someone had said inductive research meant qualitative research, where you *explore* a topic, I might have clued in. Unfortunately, one professor drew an elaborate diagram on her chalkboard with the words "specific" and "general" on either side and drew arrows. According to her, one direction of arrows meant inductive and the other direction, deductive. I still don't get her diagram. That's even after I completed a logic course at the top 1% of the class.

Creswell puts an end to any misunderstandings about what induction means. More than that, he describes what qualitative research involves in general:

- Qualitative researchers collect many different types of data, from interviews to observations. The researcher chunks the data into meaningful themes.
- Qualitative research is never done in a lab; it's done in the natural setting.
- Qualitative researchers can use an instrument (such as a questionnaire) they themselves developed, but not those developed by others.
- The themes that emerge in qualitative research should get more abstract as you go along, ending up as, say, four or five themes.
- If you do qualitative research for your thesis, add a section describing the characteristics of qualitative research if you think your readers might need some background.
- The meaning that participants give is the meaning qualitative researchers should examine. As a researcher, don't look to your own meaning or the meaning found in the literature, the participant's meaning means everything to qualitative research.
- Because qualitative research is inductive—an exploration—expect to change your research questions and approaches to data collection.

Get lots of different views in your research. You can use a visual model to capture the big picture.

Gather Data—Of the Stinky Kind

Data comes in many forms: text, observation notes, sounds, and even scents.

While attending a creative academic conference, I had the privilege of watching a performance based entirely on collected sounds. The graduate student's performance piece contrasted the spirituality of an evangelist with the hardness of the city.

This artistic researcher took to the streets, recording noises. She came up with an ensemble of harsh engines revving; loud brash music wailing from car windows; and, wildly enough, a man preaching his religious values.

Amid the clatter and clang came the voice of what seemed to be an angel: the evangelist. Stunned, I asked her about the spiritual voice. She said that her recorded evangelist spoke rudely at times, but she chose to omit those parts—she intentionally altered the data, she said, to make a point of how sound recordings could be manipulated. I cried during her performance, and she kindly gave me a copy of her CD.

Sounds can make interesting statements in research, but how do you collect and analyze scents? An 80's Bugs Bunny cartoon talked about a smell-o-vision instead of a television, but that never materialized. Should you tuck muck into individual bags, take the occasional whiff, and then jot down the sensation in words?

Creswell doesn't delight us with a method for collecting scents, but he does provide a listing of data, smells included, to collect:

- Your data can come in the form of observations, interviews, documents, or audio-visual elements.
- The audio-visuals can include photos, videos, art items, software, and films.
- The documents can include government documents, company minutes, newspaper clippings, journals, or diaries.
- The interviews can include face-to-face interviews, focus groups (yes, a focus group serves as a type of interview), email interviews, or telephone recorded interviews.
- Observations can include the researcher serving as a full participant (incognito) all the way to a full observer (standing on the sidelines—not participating at all).
- Some of the documents include a researcher's journal, a participant's journal (for the duration of the study), book biographies, or photos or videos taken by the participants.
- Some of the interviews can be unstructured or semi-structured. In qualitative research, the interviews often aren't structured. You can also mix up the types of interviews you do, from email to face-to-face to telephone recorded.
- Some of the audio-visual materials may include just sounds (such as laughter or crying), emails, phone texts, tastes—and smells. Please tell us more, Creswell, on how a researcher collects a smell. Maybe research studies that gauge a pet's diet would benefit from collecting smells. Other than that, I can't think of any reason to collect smells. If you can think of any, please email The Voice.

The Disneyland Part of Research: Interpreting Data

The joy of research lies in the analysis. When I worked in market research, I couldn't wait to create charts of statistical data. Seeing the patterns that emerged excited me so much that I now long to open my own market research firm.

While interpreting statistical data brings joy, analyzing qualitative data feels like a vacation in Disneyland or Universal Studios—more fun than you can handle. Moreover, knowing how to interpret qualitative data comes in handy when writing a thesis—or even an undergraduate-level essay.

You see, if you figure out the steps of coding and finding themes, your A's as an undergraduate student will turn into A+'s. I unknowingly used many of Creswell's steps for interpreting data while I completed an undergraduate degree—and they work.

However, in graduate studies, I used a software program for coding data called Nvivo that is designed to organize and find relations in unstructured data. My coding sessions turned into Nvivo nightmares. Nvivo how-to videos didn't exist back then. So, I randomly began entering into Nvivo every smidgeon of text on Suncor's Website. I coded almost every verb and noun, which you shouldn't do. To top things off, my feeble computer froze every Nvivo session; data mysteriously disappeared. After hours of coding irrelevant words—just to determine word frequency and gather themes—I gave up.

But Nvivo fever still lurks in my soul. I might purchase a Nvivo site license. After all, any essay, book project, or thesis can stand to benefit from a little Nvivo love. Just make sure your computer can handle the load.

Today (four weeks after first drafting this article), I've started learning Nvivo—the right way. I plan on doing a Nvivo guided research project in 2018—on graduate level study tips. If you can afford a license to Nvivo, and if you have some Endnote or RefWorks love happening, use Nvivo for your research projects. (Nvivo integrates with Endnote and RefWorks.)

Creswell lays out the steps—and software—for interpreting your data:

- Think about your data. Jot down frequent notes about your data. Ask yourself questions about the data. Get to know your data intimately.
- Whether you are collecting your data or writing it up, keep analyzing your data. Don't quit analyzing until you submit your final report.
- For interviews, use open-ended questions. Open-ended questions don't reduce to numbers or yes or no or true or false dichotomies.
- Most qualitative data boils down to four or five themes.
- For interpreting grounded theory studies, position categories into a theory and then weave your themes into a story.
- For interpreting case studies and ethnographic research, describe in detail the participants and the settings. Follow-up with themes.
- For interpreting phenomenological research, look at statements participants make about their experience and views of the phenomenon you are studying.
- For interpreting narrative research, take the stories your participants tell and reframe them with a plot, a setting, characters, rising action, climax, and ending. Give your story the feel of a film or play script, in other words. Read up on playwriting and scriptwriting if you want to excel—and have fun—at narrative research.
- Transcribe your interviews. Scan your documents. Type up observations you've written. [Put the pdfs and word documents and videos and audios and tweets into Nvivo if you really want to up your game.]

- Read all of your documents thoroughly. Make notes in the margins. [Nvivo can give you an edge with note-making.]
- When coding, chunk bits of the documents together under a heading. These headings are your codes. Let the headings come directly from the recorded words of the participants you interview. Shorten these headings into abbreviations and write them up on a sheet for easy reference. You will constantly refine these headings, so don't worry if they change. Just make sure that all of the pieces of the chunk still fit the heading. [Nvivo allows you to code text, parts of pictures, audio—and even video. Sigh! I'm in love.]
- You can either (1) let codes emerge from the data, (2) use pre-existing codes (perhaps as outlined by a theory?) and fit your data into them, (3) use both pre-existing codes and emerging codes.
- The major themes will end up as headings in your findings section of your thesis.
- Some qualitative software to consider using include: [MAXqda](#), [Atlas.ti](#), [QSR Nvivo](#), and [HyperRESEARCH](#). If you've got some extra cash lying around, I'd go with Nvivo. Nvivo has lots of video tutorials and some universities offer site licences (not AU unfortunately).

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

Creswell, John W. *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.



In Conversation With Joe Salgo from Of Clocks and Clouds

Wanda Waterman



Of Clocks and Clouds is a Brooklyn-based duo comprised of singer-guitarist Joe Salgo and Ross Procaccio. Their music has been praised for guarding what's good about classic and modern rock while enriching it with an electronic ambience. Better Off, their latest album, will be out July 15. Recently, Joe Salgo was kind enough to answer Wanda Waterman's questions about why they create what they do.

What role did music play in your childhood?

Salgo: I'm a child of the 80's, so music was huge in my childhood. Before I started playing music, I would delve deep into my dad's vinyl collection: Chuck Berry, Dire Straits, and the Beatles, to name a few.

My parents had this funky-looking ottoman that I pretended was a synthesizer, and I used it to jam along to "Walk of Life" by Dire Straits. Then in preschool I made my first "guitar" out of wood and rubber bands, and I used to jump around with that in the living room. I always imagined myself playing music for people.

What's the story behind the lyrics on "Another Life?"

Salgo: This song is a breakup song. It's the story of being with someone day in and day out, and then one day they're gone from your life. Both Ross and I went through some pretty heavy breakups while we were writing the songs for the new record, and this is what came of it.

It's not a happy story—in fact, the whole record is a breakup album. The record has sort of an arc that starts with a bit of anger and pain and leads to resolution and acceptance. In "Another Life" we wanted to juxtapose the sad lyrics with upbeat instrumentation and arrangement.

Your music is infused with a kind of post-rock ambience—but it still sounds like rock. How do you make that happen?

Salgo: I think that's a combination of Ross's style and mine. He played in a post-rock band in college called "Planet Earth Taxi Company." I think the rock-and-roll aspect comes from the two of us jamming together. We like to get heavy, but we still like the trippy ambient stuff. So it's a combination of those styles.

How did you come up with your band's name?

Salgo: I read an article in *WIRED* magazine about a German scientific philosopher named Karl Popper, who wrote about measurable events in nature. He divided the world into two categories: clocks and clouds. Clocks are the things that are constant and easily measured; clouds are more amorphous and constantly changing. That really resonated with me and became sort of a mission statement for the way we make music.

How did you two find each other?

Salgo: JDate.

Not really—we met at Ross's old band's show. After the show we talked and realized that we were both born and raised in Brooklyn, which is a rare thing to find in NYC these days. I asked him if he knew any drummers and he said yes—him. He was looking to leave his band. We've been playing together ever since.

What are your rehearsals like?

Salgo: We practice, record, and hang at 6611 Studios in Dyker Heights, Brooklyn. Our practices vary; sometimes we prep our set lists for shows. Other days we develop new songs. And sometimes we just get weird and jam aimlessly for hours while we record.

What's your favourite instrument to play, and why?

Salgo: Ross uses his drums as therapy. He lets the emotions out in his playing. I've really delved deep into the guitar and delay effects and looping. The spontaneity of that keeps me on my toes.

What do you love best about the album *Better Off*, so far?

Salgo: We like the diversity of the styles within the songs. We have some heavy rock tunes, some lo-fi instrumentals, some Latin grooves, and some psychedelic electronic. Yet it all comes from the same place.

If your band's life were a movie, what kinds of scenes would make you laugh? Or cry?

Salgo: *Mrs. Doubtfire*. No wait, maybe *Armageddon*. When Bruce Willis decides to stay and die—that makes me cry every time.

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

Salgo: Our life experiences feed our creativity.

Tell us about your upcoming projects.

Salgo: We're working on a collaboration with Dave Doobie (a fellow Brooklyn native) from Shinobi Ninja. We plan on shooting one or two music videos in the coming months as well. Got some cool new merch coming, too.

Do you have anything else to add?

Salgo: Just want to say if you are reading this, thank you for taking an interest in our music. We can't do it without you.

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

Student Sizzle AU's Hot Social Media Topics

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

AthaU Facebook Group

Xtina seeks insight on the difference between the 3- and 4-year Bachelor of Management programs. Colleen attempts to gauge interest in an online used textbook database. Nicole wonders if she can switch a current exam request to UProctor. Billy announces a new Facebook [page](#) for AU Information Systems students.

Other posts include UProctor, re-writing a supplemental exam, bursaries, and courses ANTH 336, COMM 277, COMP 318, ECON 366, PSYC 401, and SOCI 537.

Twitter

[@AthabascaU](#) tweets: "New to [#AthaU](#) or new to the [#AthaU](#) Library? [#AthaU](#) students!

There is a Library Orientation webinar next week: <http://goo.gl/Gj9J9U>."

[@AthabascaUSU](#) (AUSU) tweets: "Get your FREE copy of SmartDraw Business Graphics Software from AUSU? Free to all members! <http://bit.ly/1H8kX4r>."

Youtube

Watch AU's own Director of Indigenous Education in [Dr. Tracey Lindberg - 100 Years of \(Some\) Women Getting the Vote in AB](#), posted by [Paula E. Kirman](#).





Next Break

This column is coming to you from downtown Red Deer, Alberta. Yet again, I've packed up my laptop and some files so I could work in a hotel room while Roy attends a senior's housing association conference. Deciding what to bring is always a challenge, but I'm getting better at doing that without bringing the kitchen sink.

I make sure to bring good food because eating in restaurants is both expensive and not great for your health. Fruit, yogurt, veggies, and nuts are as important to a successful, multi-day hotel stay as a phone charger, good book, and change of shoes. Monday night will be banquet and entertainment night. I haven't been disappointed by either in many years, so bring them on.

Doing contract work makes working from virtually anywhere possible. I'm not punching a time clock in a workplace. The miracle of technology makes it almost as easy to work from the Sheraton as from a converted bedroom on our farm. In some ways, even easier because of fewer distractions. I'm not responsible for the dishes or laundry here. Though sometimes the desk setup leaves something to be desired. Even in the chair's top position I'm too short for the desk. A little side table and an ottoman fit better for this 5' 3" body. I hope the damage hasn't already been done as I forced myself to work through discomfort. When will I learn?

I'll always have a soft spot for Red Deer and this hotel (formerly The Capri). In 1994 I was appointed to one of Ralph Klein's seventeen health authorities. Hundreds of us gathered at The Capri for our orientation. I remember being awed by the enormity of the challenge ahead. I wasn't yet discouraged or jaded. I believed we could make a difference. The hotel seemed grand and well designed. A small town feel but with the amenities most would expect and demand.

The hotel has been renovated and has kept pace with what visitors want, including free Wi-Fi, fridge, coffee bar, and microwave. Red Deer is a lot bigger than it was twenty-two years ago. Yet it's still easy to navigate the core areas, many within blocks of the hotel. Us farm kids loath looking for and paying for parking, so free and easy parking wins brownie points, every time.

You'll be relieved to know that Roy and I did contribute to the local economy with some power shopping as the Bower Mall was about to close on Sunday evening. If I get a big chunk of work done, I intend to scope out a couple bookstores before we leave on Wednesday. See the maturity there. Work first, play later. Do the hard thing first, before you get the reward.

If only I could do that with Words with Friends. I've gotten re-hooked. After not playing for months, I discovered the Fast Game and Solo Play options. Now I've got three games going at once and a whole list of new words to use (during my next break!), 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

Gifted

Dear Barb:

I am the mother of an adult son who has addiction problems. My husband and I have bailed him out of jail many times for drunken behaviour, among other things. He can't hold a job and is unable to pay his rent most of the time, so we pay it for him because I can't imagine seeing my son homeless on the street. He has stolen money from us, broken into our home, even stolen our car. I keep thinking that he will eventually start to feel better about himself and give up the drugs and booze. So far that hasn't worked and I really don't know where to turn. Our friends and family tell us to just let him be. They say I am enabling him, but really, I love my son and don't want to see him on the street or something bad happening to him. I feel like I'm between a rock and a hard place, I really need some advice! Thanks, Diane.

Hi Diane:

So sorry for what you are going through. You are definitely in a difficult place, but to get through this you are going to have to go an even more difficult place. Addiction is a complicated issue and the answer is not simply trying to make your son feel better about himself. You say you are helping your son because you don't want anything bad to happen to him, well it's already happened! If you are providing everything your son needs, what is his motivation to get off drugs and alcohol and make his life better? Your son needs to be in a treatment facility where they have the experience to deal with this tragic situation. Your family doctor

should be able to direct you and your family to get the help you need. Also, get in touch with the drug and alcohol addiction centers in your city and they will be of assistance in beginning this process. There is really only so much you can do; the rest is up to your son. Personal counseling will be beneficial for you, as this is a very heartbreaking situation for families to manage. Good luck to you and your family.

Dear Barb:

I just received an invitation to a wedding shower for a friend. I wouldn't say she is a close friend, and I don't think I would know anyone at the shower so I'm not planning to attend. The wedding will be in Alberta and I am in Ontario, so I won't be attending the wedding either, but I am definitely sending money for the wedding. My question is should I send a shower gift even though I am not attending? Thank you Anna.

Hi Anna:


Great question! No you do not have to send a gift if you are not attending the shower. The purpose of a shower is to get together with family and close friends and celebrate the upcoming wedding and the gifts are a nice benefit. If you are not a family member or close friend and you are planning on giving a wedding gift, I really don't think you are expected to give a shower gift as well, but on the other hand if you want to give a gift, you can certainly do that. In that case you should send or deliver the gift to the host before the day of the shower so it will be there for the gathering.

Email your questions to voice@voicemagazine.org. Some submissions may be edited for length or to protect confidentiality; your real name and location will never be printed. This column is for entertainment only. The author is not a professional counsellor and this column is not intended to take the place of professional advice.

Weird Canada

You Can't Kill Sasquatch

In late 1800's Nanaimo, BC, a man requested permission to shoot a "wild man of Home Lake." The request was denied because, according to the authorities, it was illegal to kill Sasquatch.



Kenny! Look! He must have smelled the eggs! Get your gun!

I can't shoot him, Barbie! It's against the law!

Whatever shall we do?!

Ask him if he wants sunny-side-up or over-easy!



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IMPORTANT DATES

- **April 29:** May course extension deadline
- **April 30:** Deadline to apply for 2016 Convocation
- **May 6:** Deadline to complete coursework for Convo'16
- **May 10:** AUSU Council Meeting (4:30pm MDT)
- **May 10:** Deadline to register in a course starting Jun 1
- **May 13:** June degree requirements deadline
- **May 31:** June course extension deadline

Last Chance to Apply for AUSU's Awards and Bursaries!

Application Deadline: May 1, 2016

The following awards are available, **each worth \$1000:**

AUSU Bursary (5 available) – If you have a hard time making ends meet, or you rely on student loans, this award could help with the financial strain.

Academic Achievement Award (2 available) – If you've got a great GPA this award might be for you. It is easy to apply, just fill out the form and attach your transcript!

Balanced Student (2 available) – Is it a challenge to balance all of your commitments? Every lifestyle requires balance and this award is meant to recognize those that seem to be able to do it all!

Returning Student Award (2 available) – This awards recognizes students who returned to school after a long absence and overcame obstacles along the way!

Student Service Award (2 available) – Do you provide a service to your community? This awards recognized the accomplishments of student volunteers!

Find our more or apply online [here](#).



FREE Smart Draw Subscription

Did you know that AUSU provides all AUSU members with a **FREE** subscription to **SmartDraw**?

SmartDraw is an award-winning business graphics software. It allows users to create a wide range of charts, diagrams and other business graphics that can be dropped in to Microsoft Word or Excel files. This makes it easy for students to include professional diagrams in their assignments for AU classes.

To obtain the software: Email admin@ausu.org with your name and student ID for the subscription info!



AUSU Advocacy

Did you know the most important service AUSU does for our memberships is advocacy?

This includes advocacy on an individual level for students having a difficult time with AU. It also includes group advocacy for all AU students with the University, as well as external advocacy to ensure AU has a voice at the provincial and national level.

Find out more about AUSU's advocacy efforts [here](#).



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