

# THE VOICE

## MAGAZINE

Vol 24 Issue 32 2016-08-19

### What's Going On at AU?

Big Announcements, Big Problems

### Back to School Shopping

AU Style

### The Dopplegänger Cure

A Graphic Sci Fi Adventure!

*Plus:*

*Looming Decisions*

*Council Connection: Budget!*  
*and much more!*



# CONTENTS

*The Voice's* interactive Table of Contents allows you to click a story title to jump to an article. Clicking the bottom right corner of any page returns you here. Some ads and graphics are also links.

## Features

Whats Going on At AU? ..... 4

## Articles

Editorial: *Busy, Busy*. ..... 3  
Back to School Shopping: *AU Style* ..... 5  
Council Connection..... 9  
Looming Decisions..... 17

## Columns

The Study Dude: *Your Inner Wit* ..... 6  
The Mindful Bard: *Sanata* ..... 12  
The Creative Spark: *The Joke's On Us!* ..... 13  
Music Review: *Union Duke* ..... 18  
Dear Barb: *You Can't Go Home Again* ..... 19

## News and Events

Women of Interest ..... 11  
Student Sizzle..... 15  
Canadian Education News ..... 16  
AUSU Update..... 21

## Graphic

The Doppelgänger Cure..... 20

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# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



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

***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****Busy, busy.****Karl Low**

Well. We've got a lot of stuff to cover this week folks, so let's get to it.

First, if you haven't already heard about it, AUSU Council has lost two members. There's a little bit of detail in the "Council Connection" article this week, but right here I'll just say that only one of them resigned. See, now you have to go read the article to see what happened to the other. And doing that will make you read all about the new AUSU budget for 2016/2017. Which you should read anyway, because it's your student union fees (that \$9/course you pay) that are going into it.

The result, of course, is that Council is now down two members, and as you probably know, has decided to run a by-election. If you've ever thought you have an idea for what could make AU better for students, or if you've been looking for a way to get more involved with AU and give back to it by helping it become a better choice for other students, then this could be your opportunity. With regular elections every two years, signing up now will give you a significant amount of time to get your feet under you and hopefully make some positive changes for your fellow students here at AU. It also doesn't hurt for developing further connections

with the university, and just to have a greater idea of some of the things going on at and behind the scenes at Athabasca University. The call for nominations will start on August 31, and last until September 14. While two weeks might seem like a long time, from experience I can tell you that it runs by quicker than you expect, so if you have an interest in possibly running for council, there's no better time than the present to start investigating what's involved.

This week, I've decided that my own article, "What's Going on At AU" is the feature, just because the subject matter is important enough to warrant it. And because I can. AU made an important announcement this week about it's future, and had some serious difficulties with it's email systems that affected anybody, student or otherwise, who was trying to contact them. I've got some information on what happened, and some questions about how this might affect us in future.

Also this week, we're trying something new and replacing our regular comic feature with a graphic novel science fiction story, "The Doppelgänger Cure" which will be presenting to you one part at a time for the next several weeks. Tune in each week to see the newest installment.

And since we don't have our comic to bring the funny this week, instead, we've got articles on how you can bring the funny to your writing (and if it turns out you're good at it, please get in touch with me.) Plus, of course, our usual smorgasbord of news, insight, advice, music and film reviews, and other items to keep you busy and connected with your fellow students.

Enjoy the read!

## What's Going on At AU

Karl Low



It's been an eventful week at AU. This Wednesday brought an announcement that you've probably already seen on social media and AU's website, but if you haven't, AU has finally chosen its next President, Dr. Neil Fassina. He officially starts in the position on October 11th, but in his announcement speech last Wednesday, the 17th, he announced that he's going to "hit the ground listening".

*The Voice Magazine* is in the process of trying to get an interview with Dr. Fassina, in the hopes that we can get him talking as well, and with luck, we'll be bringing that to you in the next couple of weeks. In the meantime, you can get up to speed with Dr. Fassina's background at the official AU [press release](#) or at AU's [Office of the President](#) page. The short

version is that he has a Bachelor of Science in Psychology from the University of Calgary, and his PhD is in Organizational Behavior and Human Resource Management, and he professes his style to be one of consultation, promising to help us build AU into a "student focused open university and global leader in online and distance education, research, and technology."

And then we have the AU email failure. If you've been too busy procrastinating, or too deep in studying to have sent an email to the university over the past few days, you may not have known that there was a day or so when every e-mail sent to the university was getting bounced back. Some of you may even know that it has something to do with the university changing its internal system to Microsoft Office 365, but that doesn't tell you if you need to be worried about it happening again in the future, or what control AU has over it. Fortunately, here at *The Voice Magazine* we found some more detail for you.

It was explained in Facebook that the email problem was because of the university's changeover to Microsoft Office 365, but I've been told that that's not the whole story. According to my source, the problem stems from Athabasca University implementing a single server as a gateway/router for all emails to the university while they upgraded people to the new Microsoft system, in order for the emails to be properly delivered to both the new and the legacy systems AU has in place running various pieces of technology and other software. This server was also being used to filter out the masses of spam that AU receives. As the upgrade was completed, the IT department in AU started to loosen the spam filters slowly, to give the spam filtering features in Office 365 time to learn what was spam and what wasn't. Eventually, however, the flow of spam became too much, and since all of it was coming from the one gateway server AU had implemented, that server got blacklisted as a spam origin point on multiple blacklists, starting with Microsoft's. This resulted in every email coming from that server, which, at that point, was every email destined for an Athabasca university email address, to be blocked by the mailing systems.

AU has since contacted Microsoft, I'm told, as well as other sites that host blacklists, and explained the situation. The gateway server has been removed from those lists, and the spam filters on that server tightened up again, putting things back to normal. What I haven't been able to find out yet is if there's a chance this situation will recur when they once again try to remove the legacy systems from AU, or for how long students should be extra-vigilant at making sure their emails have been properly received at AU. Unfortunately, given the very limited time-frame (and that he's probably extremely busy trying to solve these issues at the moment), the Director of IT operations, John Latremouille was unable to respond to my questions before press time. I'm hopeful we'll have the answers ready for next week's issue so that we can keep you informed about what to expect, and how to make sure it has as little effect on your studies as possible. What we do know, from Director of Communications, Jon O'Brien, is that notices were put on the student portal and various social media sites about the problem, and many tutors and units within AU were proactive in reaching out to give students alternative means to get in touch with them.

## Back to School Shopping AU Style

Barbara Lehtiniemi



Late summer brings a cyclone of back-to-school advertisements. A new school year prompts thoughts of fresh beginnings and the need for crisp new school supplies.

But there's a different kind of back-to-school shopping that doesn't involve lined paper, fresh pens, or tablet computers. It's the kind of shopping students do when they're selecting their next courses.

Course selection began in high school. For the first time, I could choose some courses myself. From kindergarten through grade eight, I had been obliged to take the same subjects as every other student in my grade. For grade nine, we students could—with restrictions—select courses that interested us or related to our chosen career path.

I recall studying the course catalogue over and over. Like looking over a buffet, there were many tempting subjects to choose from but ultimately more than one could digest. Should

I take History or Geography? World Religions or Social Studies? Theatre Arts or Music? It seems laughably narrow in scope now, but for a young teen, the option of making decisions for oneself was empowering.

Long after high school ended, I began taking continuing education courses through a community college. Twice a year the course catalogue was published for the upcoming semester. As soon as I heard the catalogue was available, I'd rush over to the campus to pick up a copy (even if it was available online, the print copy was a must for me.)

After highlighting the courses I needed for my program, I would read the catalogue from cover to cover. I'd peruse every available course description and wonder if I should consider it. Perhaps I should pick up some computer programming basics? Take a creative writing course? Learn Spanish? The last section of "general interest and leisure" courses was a fun cornucopia of floral arranging, photography skills, and DIY projects. The learning possibilities seemed endless. I wanted to take them all. Although I usually only signed up for the courses I needed for my program, it was fun to see what else was out there.

At AU, I miss that rush that follows the publication of the course catalogue. Since courses can start any month, AU course descriptions are available year-round. I do look at the course offerings from time to time, especially when it's time to enrol in my next course, and I check the new course listing frequently.

But I miss a printed course catalogue. I miss reading the descriptions of all the courses, not just the ones I think I might be interested in. Having the courses listed by category on a website means that I have to make a couple decisions before I reach the course description itself: First, I have to decide whether an area of study or subject is of interest to me (ARHI? ENSC? POEC? WTF?), then I have to decide—based primarily on the name of the course—whether it's worth clicking on to read the syllabus.

While I like that the AU course catalogue is available anytime, anywhere, the online format leaves me wondering if I'm missing some intensely interesting or valuable course because I didn't click past the course title.

Fortunately, AU students come to the rescue with comments and suggestions on social media and through articles in *The Voice Magazine*. I've followed tips by other students and broadened my list of potential courses. And, just like in high school, there are more courses than I can possibly digest.

Perhaps that's the AU students' style: dig a little deeper, work a little harder, and pay attention to what everyone else is doing. I may prefer a print course catalogue, but with AU back-to-school course shopping is like AU itself: open, online, and everywhere.

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



## Study Tips from a Semi-Anonymous Friend

### Your Inner Wit

*There is nothing more that The Study Dude wants for you than to write with authentic wit.*

*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 further explores *Mastering the Craft of Writing: How to Write With Clarity, Emphasis, & Style* by Stephen

Wilbers. He'll teach you the fine line between metaphors and clichés. He'll also show you the path to your authentic, witty self.

### Teetering Between Metaphors and Clichés

What's a metaphor? Everyone should know. Except me, that is.

Today, in my mailbox, I received a thick book about metaphors by philosopher Paul Ricoeur, a book which covers the meanings and uses of metaphors from antiquity to modern times.

Later in the day, I went shopping. While standing in line at a Starbucks, a sales clerk asked me about the books I'm reading. So, I mentioned several titles, including the metaphor book. Her response? She broke down and confessed that she, too, hadn't a clue on how to create—or even identify—a metaphor.

You too might benefit from a brush-up on metaphors. Wilbers, unlike Ricoeur, gives a brief overview of not only metaphors, but also clichés (as sometimes a metaphor can morph into a cliché):

- Insert a metaphor and then revisit it near the end of your essay. Popping in an extension of the metaphor at the end of your piece adds character to your writing.





- Sometimes, inserting a metaphor you revisit in your paper adds to continuity.
- When you revisit your metaphor, do so by making a new point or adding extra support for a prior one.
- Use simple and original metaphors.
- Avoid cliché metaphors.
- Sometimes a simple—and brief—cliché might fit your piece, such as "the notion of .... *raises a flag*."
- Although critics rant against using clichés, sometimes clichés add value.
- Whatever you do, don't say "if you will." Better yet, don't say, "Whatever you do."
- Try to create an original metaphor or, at least, modify a cliché one.
- Don't use multiple clichés. They quickly downgrade your writing.

## Be Genuine

How do you show your genuine self in writing? One way involves crossing out your multisyllabic nouns and replacing them with short lively words.

One writer for the Voice wrote about a traumatic childhood experience where she found herself harassed and ostracized by her schoolmates. In her article, she used simple, one-syllable words I had never seen before to create authority and style in her writing. I found her voice candid—and genuine.

Wilbers says to seek out the person you wish to be and write as if you are that person. I wish to write like the writers of bestselling nonfiction: as an example, Gary Keller and Jay Papasan, who co-wrote *The ONE Thing: The Surprisingly Simple Truth Behind Extraordinary Results*. Another example of an author I wish to imitate is Daniel H. Pink in his bestseller *Drive: The Surprising Truth about What Motivates Us*. These authors write simplistically—and apply fragments with ease.

I struggle to find my voice in different writings. Recently, in Wilber's book, I read about using fragments for style. So, I tried it.

Also, Steven Pinker, in his book *A Sense of Style*, says to go ahead and start a sentence with "and" or "but" if the breakup of an otherwise long sentence makes the paragraph more pleasing to the eye. So, I tried that too.

And, another book whose name I have since forgotten, recommended to repeat information word-for-word for clarity's sake. I tried that one, too, but to a fault.

In other words, the more you learn about the tricks of writing, the more you can try them out until they gel.

One caveat: avoid using those sentence fragments or sentences beginning with "and" or "but" in academic writing. But, do use them in creative writing.

Wilbers enlightens on how to appear genuine in your writing:

- When you write, imagine a trait that captures your ideal self. Then, write as if you are that ideal self. If you wish to be "witty," write with humor. If you wish to sound like a critic, give adequate justification for criticisms you make about an author's work. If you wish to be "philosophical," reference philosophers and talk about big questions, such as "Why do we exist?" or "What counts as knowledge?"
- If you want to come across as an expert on a subject, use a more authoritative tone. Slip in some big words— but do so sparingly—so that you *improve*, not detract, from the overall clarity.



- Avoid multisyllabic nouns if you want to sound genuine. Instead, use simpler, punchier words, sprinkling in more short verbs and less long nouns.
- If something you write sounds overdone, rethink how you might say it to a neighbor.
- When you play around with style, you come closer to realizing your true identity.
- Let us know your ideas, your feelings, when you write. Make us laugh. Reveal the magic moments of your life, the life tests of your journey, the epiphanies of your insights—most of all, we want to hear your heart beat throughout the ink on the page.

## Humor

Some people have the funny gene. I don't.

I want to learn the art of wit, though. Wit strikes me as the "king" of humor: classy, intelligent, and funny. Yet, if you search the word "wit" on Amazon, you'll get endless books on how to write comedy. But next-to-nothing on writing with wit.

Yet, I dream doing a live presentation where I leave the audience belly-laughing. Better yet, I dream of writing essays that introduce elements of wit in a highbrow, British way. And now that I'm writing about wit, I'm afraid to say anything funny.

But, you can choose from many different types of humor, not just witty kinds.

Wilbers gives some insight into the basics of writing for laughs:

- When you want to throw in a midsentence punch line, surround the joke with dashes.
- Use light-hearted or dark humor, depending on your personality.
- Use existentialist humor, which pokes fun at the absurdity and meaninglessness of life.
- You can use humor to deliver a serious point you wish to make.
- Paradoxes involve contradictions that bring to light some truth.
- Situational irony occurs when the character has a certain point of view and the reader has a more accurate insight.
- Sarcasm arises when you make fun of someone or insult them. Ridicule is the vilest type of sarcasm.
- Overstatements exaggerate a point.
- Self-deprecating humor occurs when you poke fun at yourself.
- Wit, the granddaddy of humor, "is the clever use of language to produce a comic twist or surprise [where]... there is a sudden shock of delight as the audience grasps the unexpected and often unlikely connection..." (p. 281)
- Puns take words that sound similarly but have different meanings, and makes light of them. Puns often sound like "groaners."

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

Wilbers, Stephen. (2014). *Mastering the Craft of Writing: How to Write with Clarity, Emphasis, & Style*. Cincinnati, Ohio: Writer's Digest Books.



## Council Connection

### August 9, 2016

**Alaa Salih**

The AUSU Council meeting for August 9, 2016, was supposed to be two-hours long, however, it went on to be over three-hours. Despite being a very lengthy meeting, it was productive and interesting. It went beyond the normal two-hour period because there were no Council meetings in July due to various holidays making it harder to book, and because July is generally a slower period for AUSU. However, the Council meeting in August brought to attention new motions, reviewed policy positions, and there was even an in-camera period.

The meeting was called at around 5:35 PM. There were a couple of action items to review and ratify. The first was the appointment of Carle Knipe, Bonita Arbeau, Alex Pappas, Lisa Sinclair, and Lyle Harvey to the Joint Council/Voice Action Plan Committee. The motion carried unanimously.

There were a lot of new motions to discuss. The first proposed motion was to approve an increase to \$3,838.10 in the current office software budget for some anticipated annual renewal expenses that had not been factored in by the new Council and staff at the time of their first budget.

More important, however, was the approval of AUSU's new 2016/2017 budget. The Finance Committee presented their draft budget for the financial year of October 1, 2016 to September 30, 2017. After a slight amendment to increase telephone expenses due to a last minute line item that hadn't been included, the budget stood with total anticipated revenues being down slightly to \$615,300 from last year's budget of \$622,880, and total anticipated expenses also dropping from \$730,386 to \$691,518. This means that the 2016/2017 budget has an anticipated deficit of \$76,218, as compared to last year's budget having an expected deficit of \$107,516.

Of course, expected doesn't mean it will happen, as I'm told that the actual revenue for this year is now expected to only be \$611,379, and expenses only \$669,349. Which means the projected real deficit for this coming year is \$57,790.

So what's changed? On the income side, not much. A lower anticipated income is based primarily on AU's expected enrolment numbers.

On the expense side, administration costs are increasing by almost 15%, (\$14,330 from \$12,500) and meeting expenses by almost a third (\$16,500 from \$12,500). Fortunately, that's balanced by a decrease in the amount budgeted for rent, which is now some \$8,000 lower than last year's budget. VPFA Kim Newsome explained that staff and Council are trying hard to keep administrative costs down, but are unwilling to do so at the expense of service to members, and that AUSU is currently looking at the possibility of looking for office space that is less expensive than their current space in an effort to create a sustainable budget.

AUSU is also expecting to spend more on technology this year, doubling last year's budgets for computer hardware for the office and for councillors, and nearly doubling it for software.

The staff payroll will remain close to the same, with an increase in benefits being closely matched by a decrease in "Staff Appreciation"

The biggest change in AUSU's budgeted expenses comes in the Councillor Salaries and Benefits column. After AUSU's internal Executive Compensation review committee did it's work and brought the Executive Salaries into line with other student organizations in Alberta, AUSU will be saving almost \$35,000 in Executive Honoraria alone over last year's budget, a drop of almost 25%. This, coupled with slight reductions in both representation expenses and money spent on member programs, is largely responsible for AU's budgeted expenses for next year coming down nearly \$39,000 from the current year's budget.

One item in the budget that did not change was the amount set aside for awards to students. That remains the same at \$50,000.

It was noted in the discussions that while income from AUSU's investments will likely be higher, and the services fees cost likely lower than projected in the budget, these numbers were chosen to reflect a possible worst-case scenario on items AUSU has little control over.

The budget discussion was lengthy, but eventually the motion to approve the 2016/2017 budget carried unanimously. The budget is now available at [this link](#).

Sadly, the next motion was to accept the resignation of Councillor Philip Kirkbride as of June 24, 2016, ending his term on council approximately 22 months early. Even though Kirkbride was not present, the council members thanked him for his hard work and contribution. It was mentioned that he helped a lot with the AUSU Awards Committee, so thanks Philip for your hard work! This motion passed unanimously.

On a happy note, AUSU Council added a motion that proposed the appointment of Councillor Scott Jacobsen to the AUSU Member Engagement and Communications Committee. This motion also was carried unanimously. So, congratulations Scott!

The council members went on to discuss policy revisions. The policy that had the most changes was for travel and related expenses. When AUSU members travel on AUSU business, they will receive \$0.48/km to cover gas and a meal allowance of \$65/full day of travel. The previous meal amount was \$60 (\$15 breakfast, \$20 lunch, \$25 dinner). Therefore, dinner increased to \$30, as it is sometimes hard to fit dinner under \$25, especially once the tip and taxes have been added. So, the overall change is only \$5 per day. It is good to note that a full day of travel means 10 or more hours away from home.

The larger change is that they do not need to keep the receipts for their expenses. However, prior to travelling, advance payments of meal allowances and incidentals must be requested and approved by the executive council. This policy helps the councillors and staff greatly, as it was noted that it can be hard to keep track of every receipt over a longer conference, and adds additional staff time taken to verify what are generally small amounts.

Changes were then made to AUSU's financial oversight policies 6.05 and 6.06. Previously, any spending of 10% over budgeted amounts had to be brought before council. This meant it could vary from as low as a \$50 overage needing to receive full council approval if it was for computer software, while a change of over \$10,000 would have been under that 10% line if it was for staff salaries. At the same time, almost all spending within the budget amounts could be done entirely by the Executive Director.

Council has instead now instituted tighter controls on expenditures over certain dollar amounts or budget percentages to only be allowable if authorized by different groups within council. Unbudgeted or expenses that are over-budget can now be approved by the Executive council or the Finance Committee depending on their size, with any unbudgeted expenditures over \$2,000 still needing to be approved by Council as a whole.

AUSU then reviewed its policy positions, noting that the position policies all say that AUSU will advocate for certain things, but in reality AUSU does not possess the capability to actively advocate and lobby for all of the position policies simultaneously. The policies were adjusted to note that they are AUSU's positions, which if an opportunity arises should be put forward, but that AUSU will only devote specific resources to advocating for certain priority issues each year.

The meeting was then moved in-camera at 7:16 p.m. The other student observer, Mark Teeninga, and I were politely asked to leave the meeting until we were contacted again.

The in-camera session ended at around 7:39 p.m., and when I rejoined, it was read into the public portion of the meeting that Council had voted on removing Josh Cross from council for 2 or more full absences from council and committee meetings without sufficient notice.

The next motion was to appoint Scott Jacobsen as chair of the AUSU Awards Committee. This motion carried unanimously.

Now with two vacant seats on council, AUSU Council decided to call a by-election for September 30, 2016, to fill them from the members of AUSU. For more information, see [here](#).

Next, the council members briefly talked about reports for the months of June and July 2016. It is good to note that Communication and Member Services Coordinator, Donette Kingyens, has added more statistics about the AUSU mobile app. So, thanks Donette! The mobile app has grown so much, and it really does help students stay connected.

The meeting then went into the question and answer period. I asked more about the two vacant positions on the AUSU council. They said they would keep everyone notified. However, the by-election timeline is tentatively set as follows:

<b>Call for Nominations</b>	August 31 – September 14
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<b>Nominees Announced</b>	September 19
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<b>Campaign Period</b>	September 19 to October 3
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<b>Election</b>	September 30 to October 3
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Also, there may be a change in the date of the October Council Meeting. Instead, of being on October, 11 2016, the meeting might be moved to the 18<sup>th</sup> of October. The reasoning is that the council thought it would be helpful for the new members (who will be elected to fill the two positions on Council) to have the chance to get up to speed on council activities before attending the meeting. The September council meeting will remain as it is on the 13<sup>th</sup> of September at 5:30 p.m. MDT.

With that, the Councillors commented that this Council meeting was by far the longest meeting for this term. However, it was very successful! At 8:14 p.m., the meeting was adjourned.

### Women Of Interest

**Carrie Matilda Derick**, was born January 14, 1862, and died November 10, 1941. In 1912 she became the first woman professor at a university in Canada. She was a botanist and geneticist, who founded the Genetics Department at McGill University in Montreal. In 1896 Derick received her M.A. in Botany and went on to complete the requirements for her PhD, but in 1901 the university did not grant women PhD's. She taught and lectured at McGill University for seven years assisting the Chair of Biology, David Penhallow, while never receiving a promotion or pay increase. Her yearly salary was \$1,250 while her male colleagues received \$3,000 per year. In 1905 Derick wrote to Principal Peterson and was finally promoted to assistant professor. Today, women comprise only 30% of the professors at Canadian universities and make a salary which is \$13,000 less than their male counterpart on average. Additional information about Carrie Matilda Derick can be found at the following websites.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carrie\\_Derick](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carrie_Derick)

<http://faculty.marianopolis.edu/c.belanger/quebechistory/encyclopedia/CarrieMatildaDerick-QuebecHistory.htm>

<http://montrealgazette.com/news/local-news/honouring-carrie-derrick-canadas-first-female-professor-on-international-womens-day>

compiled by Barb Godin



## The Mindful Bard Sanata

Wanda Waterman

### Necessity is the Mother of Enlightenment



**Album:** *Sanata (Stillness)*

**Artist:** Kiran Ahluwalia

*"Those who speak my tongue are unevenly scattered. Still, I collect conversations. I may run into someone. I've been your refugee, life, oh life."*

- "Hayat" by Kiran Ahluwalia, from *Sanata*

As we drew closer to Rue Jean Talon: "Music," my guy announced. "Let's go listen."

As we drew closer to Place de la Gare the sound kept growing sweeter. Here were a few excellent musical elements—tabla, classical Indian rhythms, Malian guitar, dramatic, pitch-perfect vocal delivery, and tight performance—beautifully blended together by a tiny

band lead by the enchanting Kiran Ahluwalia.

She was performing as part of a series of free concerts called *Hors Les Murs (de la maison de la culture)*, a summertime program of world class acts delighting the denizens of Villeray, Saint-Michel, and Parc-Extension, her fabulous voice accompanied by masters of the tabla, accordion, and guitar.

Her husband, renowned jazz guitarist Rez Abbasi, had a style informed by jazz, blues, Tuareg, Gnawa, and classical sitar music. His low-key stage presence was a testament to a deeply introspective commitment to his art, and his guitar's gritty sensuality rose blissfully to the transcendence to which Kiran's voice summoned it.

As for the accordion player, though limited to Western notes he still infused the accordion with an Indian flavour by skillfully following, as well as countering, the rhythms of the tabla. And the tabla carried it all, whipping out beats that flowed and surged like rapids, bearing everyone along while responding with sensitivity to Kiran's every change of direction.

This kind of performance naturally attracts willowy bohemian women doing interpretive dance, and there was no dearth of those, but Kiran was hardly airy-fairy; between songs she shared bits of universal wisdom, explaining that this song was about the *saboteur* inner voice, that song about necessity being the mother of enlightenment, etc. It's clear that Kiran has mindfully travelled the road of higher consciousness.

Later, after looking her up online, I was amazed I hadn't heard of her before (*note to self: keep up with Juno winners*). Born in India, Kiran moved to Toronto with her family when she was nine, but remained immersed in Indian music, studying it while pursuing conventional studies.

She completed an MBA at Dalhousie before deciding to return to India to study music. Her career switch was a gift to the world; this beautiful mind holds an artistic sensibility informed by the discipline of ancient traditions but interprets these traditions so playfully and creatively that her music can't help but please even the tinniest ear.

*Sanata* is her most recent album. The word means "stillness," but it's the most vibrant and intense stillness you'll ever encounter. She calls her music "Indo-Saharan," which is truly apt. The title track starts out with Tuareg rhythms under Kiran singing a sombre melodic line that moves into some surprising musical intervals (a distinguishing mark of her sound), and then into intense singing that sounds like an exhortation to take the right things seriously and forget the rest.

"Jhoom" features some male background vocals and more of that wonderful Malian-style guitar playing. "Lament" starts with ominous minor melodies, and it rises, via ambient sounds, to a defiant rhythm and then a brilliant fusion jazz guitar solo and a triumphant vocal.

"Hayat" is positively thrilling, launched by a brilliant guitar and soon joined by Kiran's voice and a male vocal. Like many of her songs it begins with a dark, ominous sound and moves into a festive, danceable gladness. (On this track and "Jhoom" you can also hear that same amazing accordion that was so mesmerising at the park performance.)

*Sanata* manifests seven of the Mindful Bard's criteria for music well worth a listen.

- It's authentic, original, and delightful.
- It stimulates my mind.
- It provides respite from a cruel world, a respite enabling me to renew myself for a return to mindful artistic endeavor.
- It's about attainment of the true self.
- It inspires an awareness of the sanctity of creation.
- It makes me want to be a better artist.
- It makes me appreciate that life is a complex and rare phenomena, making living a unique opportunity.

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



## The Creative Spark! The Joke's On Us!

Marie Well



Wouldn't you love to tap into the secrets of professional comedy writing?

Well, I want to teach. And as a teacher, I hope to stand at the podium, tell a joke, and cause an uproar of belly laughter to break the student-teacher ice.

I also want to study, and as a student, I hope to introduce an essay with an original but telling joke. Or, alternatively, I hope to introduce a speech with a gut-busting blurb. Or lastly, I hope to sprinkle subtle words throughout an anecdote that ignite guffaws.

But, I'm not bonkers enough to tell good jokes. I'm just not funny. So, what can I do to finally get a funny bone?

Looking back, as a young teen, I once had a funny streak, mimicking popular dance styles and spurring self-deprecating jokes. But, life's pitfalls led me to bottle up my funny comebacks.

But later, I tried bursting through the mental block with the plan to perform on comedy stage shows. I crafted a character to enact. I had props. I even had a plan. But I didn't execute.

You see, friends said my comedy act sucked.

But now, I've had an epiphany to share with you. The book *Comedy Writing for Late-Night TV*, by Joe Toplyn, spits out how to write original jokes. Joe wrote doozies for a few late-night shows, including Jay Leno's show. Got your attention?

To learn how to craft jokes from scratch, let's slice up Joe's key trick for joke-telling. Better yet, let's use Joe Toplyn's formula for cracking a joke about The Voice Magazine.

**You start by considering that your joke has three parts: a topic, an angle, and a punch-line.** Don't just say a punch-line, lead into it. That's right, start with a topic statement that is about something true and compelling but not necessarily funny, for instance, something about popular culture or a news item you heard. You could say, "Last month, the Voice Magazine reached a readership of 10,000, a record high." Then, you would create an angle, which leads into the punch-line. You'll get a sense of it soon enough.

And keep in mind that the topic shouldn't poke fun at things people have no control over (like disabilities or cultural upbringings). Also, the punch-line should feel "safe" and not at all threatening to the audience.

So, that's all good, but how do you make the actual punch-line?

**First, grab the handles from the topic and link them to associated words.**

Now, let's take the topic sentence, "Last month, the Voice Magazine reached a readership of 10,000, a record high." With that topic, find two handles, or, in other words, two key components. Here's one handle: The Voice Magazine. Here's another handle: readership of 10,000.

Now, make two lists, one for each handle (one for "The Voice Magazine" and the other for "readership of 10,000"). Write down as many related items as you can think of: these items are your associations.

My preliminary list of associations off the cuff looks something as follows:

#### **HANDLE 1: The Voice Magazine**

ASSOCIATIONS 1: Dear Barb, From Where I Sit, the Study Dude, the editorial, Writer's Toolbox, comic, music reviews, AUSU watchdog, summer themes, online, In Conversations, student run, camping, free, extra income, student hub, personal confessions, the only place to meet other students

#### **HANDLE 2: Readership of 10,000**

ASSOCIATIONS 2: record students avoiding studies, students seeking the only place to meet other students, isolated and sometimes lonely students, students across Canada, students too poor to afford paper magazines, stay-at-home moms, students in remote places, 10,000 maybe similar to the population of Balzac.

Next, take one (or more) association from each list of associations and craft your original joke, starting with the topic. I will use "10,000 maybe similar to the population of Balzac" and "Dear Barb" and "isolated and sometimes lonely students."

So, voila! Here's my attempt at an original Voice Magazine joke by linking one (or more) associations from each list:

"Last month, the Voice Magazine reached a readership of 10,000, a record high. That means that all of Balzac's undergrads had at least one identifiable school mate: Dear Barb."

David Letterman even had a penchant for Balzac cracks.

Well, now that you've learned a key way to crack a joke, if you want to read more tips, buy Joe Toplyn's book, *Comedy Writing for Late-Night TV*.

But, before I go, here's a tad bit of a teaser: the funniest letters are *k, g, d, b, t, p*, with *k* being the funniest of them all, says Joe. That's why *Balzac* and *Dear Barb* work wonders.

Truthfully, I won't crack jokes for Conan O'Brien any time soon, but now I've got tips for introducing essays with on the button smart cracks.

## Student Sizzle AU's Hot Social Media Topics

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



### AthaU Facebook Group

Micheál seeks student input on the Bsc CIS (computing information systems) at AU.

Billy posts a link to the AU InfoSys group Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/athabascainfosys/>.

Jessica has finished her undergrad degree but is thinking of continuing on in the MA-IS program.

Other posts include the frustrating AU e-mail woes this week which resulted in many student e-mails delivered to junk folders, and the announcement of AU's new president, Neil Fassina.

### Twitter

@AthabascaU tweets: "'We are all partners in Athabasca University's present and future' #AthaU's 8th president, Dr. Neil Fassina."

@AthabascaUSU (AUSU) tweets: "Want to use Wikipedia for scholarly research? Learn how with @AthabascaU Wikipedia Tutorial. <http://bit.ly/1Qywqh5>."

### Youtube

Fun and games with the Edmonton Eskimos in Athabasca University Trivia - Running Backs.



## Canadian Education News

Scott Jacobsen



### McGill offers bachelor of education, debuts in Listuguj First Nation

According to [CBC News](#), McGill University will offer a bachelor of education program in September. It will debut in the Listiguj First Nation and "taught by community members with master's degrees and doctorates."

There have 25 students chosen out of 41 applicants, who are "all Mi'kmaq students from Listuguj, Eel River Bar, and Gesgapegiag First Nations." The CBC news reports states many applicants hope to teach at the Listiguj school, Alaqsitew Gitpu.

Darcy Gray, Listiguj Chief, said, "...it's being offered here in Listuguj...taught primarily by our people and...you're going to see so much incorporation of our traditions, our culture, our history, our ways of learning traditional knowledge..."

### Residential schools' legacy some indigenous peoples' trust towards Canadian education, study

According to [Vancouver Metro News](#), a new study indicates that some indigenous people are "wary and fearful" of the Canadian educational system based on the "legacy of residential schools." The study was published in the August, 2016 issue of Canadian Review of Sociology.

That "distrust" of the Canadian educational system can make parents "less engaged with teachers and could hurt children's education." The study was based on dozens of interviews with mostly indigenous educators and parents from southern Ontario.

Emily Milne, Assistant Professor of Sociology at MacEwan University and the researcher, explained almost all indigenous participant in the study was affected by the Residential school system. Milne said, "There was a bit less trust there with schools because of this history."

### University of Calgary school of medicine earns accreditation

[University of Calgary](#) Cumming School of Medicine (CSM) has received accreditation from the Association of Faculties of Medicine in Canada. The accreditation system is common to "all North American medical schools" and is not easy. Of the 17 Canadian medical schools, 4 failed to achieve accreditation from this common system.

CSM has maintained that coveted status since its inception as a medical school in 1970. Once again, it is an accredited medical school for another 8 years based on the recent accreditation. According to Dr. Jon Meddings, Dean of Medicine, that 8-year term is the "best possible result."

Dr. Tom Feasby, Chair UME Accreditation Steering Committee and for Dean of Medicine, said, "Students can be assured that they will get an outstanding medical education at the Cumming School in a modern university that values research and community service."

*A native British Columbian, Scott Douglas Jacobsen is an AU undergrad and AUSU Councillor. He researches and runs In-Sight: Independent Interview-Based Journal, and In-Sight Publishing.*

## Looming Decisions

Deanna Roney



It is mid-August and already the geese are flying over. Can it possibly be that summer is nearly gone? It doesn't seem entirely possible and yet the leaves are changing and the geese are honking. When I completed my undergrad degree in the beginning of the year I had allotted myself a definitive amount of time to decide which path I wanted to head down next. I decided that instead of forcing myself into a decision immediately I needed to take a few moments to breathe, to float in the lake and just be. However, August, my self-defined deadline, has come and almost gone without a decision made.

There are many things that influence this choice, but the lack of being able to decide has been impeded mostly by the lack of time to dedicate to thinking on it. I am learning, though, that instead of stressing myself out about this choice, I need to allow the deadline to move. The summer months are notoriously busy; I spent the last few summers allotting myself a few days here or there to enjoy the weather, and spent the rest stressing out about a course. I am pleasantly surprised that I have allowed myself the time to work on my own projects and to spend time with family and friends (guilt free): even if that means the summer seems to have gone by twice as fast.

With September looming it is time for me to buckle down and consider my choices. The annual news of AU's possible shut-down has me weighing it as a negative against the university. While this news comes around every year, and I have learned to roll my eyes and continue on, I have to consider this now. I have no fear that the university will close its doors. However, my concerns come with the support from the university. What provisions are being made to ensure that tutors will remain accessible to students? Talk of job-loss and call-centres are concerning when considering continuing on with AU.

My experience within the proverbial walls of AU was a wonderful one. I thoroughly appreciate and loved the school. But, the last year I saw many issues being raised and I have to wonder how these will be resolved? What is being done to ensure students have access to physical textbooks if they prefer? And access to their tutor for courses where call-centre's are not a good fit? To ensure that tutor-moral is kept up? These things have a massive impact on students. The budget issues are concerning and how to best handle them is best left to the experts, however, the impact these are going to have on the students has not been made clear. The adjustments that the school will have to make have not been made transparent. The most recent article posted by AU does not address anything other than acknowledging an issue and that they are attempting to deal with it.

For students, both present and prospective, I think there needs to be transparency on the discussions AU is having about the budget concerns. As far as I can tell something is going to have to give; the question is what?

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

## Music Review

### Union Duke

Samantha Stevens



**Band:** Union Duke

**Album:** *Golden Days*

No summer is complete without adding an awesomely fun folk album to your playlist. Toronto folk quintet Union Duke has just released their third album *Golden Days*, and it promises to be a rollicking good time.

Founded in 2008 by childhood friends Ethan Smith, Jim McDonald, Matt Warry-Smith, and later joined by musicians Will Staunton, and Rob McLaren, the boys of Union Duke have been busy this summer with live performances scheduled all over the country. Upcoming shows include a stop at the Nancy Appleby Theatre in Athabasca, AB on October 13th. For complete details and to check out to see if they are playing near you, take a look at Union Duke's [website](#).

Union Duke has also garnered a considerable amount of Canadian fame. The band once played live on the now extinct Canadian show [Canada AM](#). Watching the video of their performance on Canada AM tells me that audiences will appreciate the amount of energy the band members put into their performance, something that they try to translate into their songs.

Union Duke's third album, *Golden Days*, was just released August 5th. Hoping to capture the band's live performance energy, *Golden Days* was [recorded live](#). The album was then mixed by "Grammy award-winning mix engineer Mark Lawson at Sonobee (Arcade Fire, Basia Bulat, Timbre Timber)" (<https://unionduke.com>), and [mastered](#) by Reuben Ghose at Mojito Mastering. The leading single "Got You On My Mind" was [released](#) back in May at Exclaim.ca to give audiences a taste of what to expect on the upcoming album.

Although considered indie rock with influences of blues, folk, and country, similar to the Country Music Association Award winning The Soggy Bottom Boys, and fans of that will enjoy the twangy banjo, brilliant guitar solos, and amazing vocal harmonization. However, this isn't true for every song. The track "Right For Me" is more of a softer love song that lacks many of the country and folk elements heard in the other songs. Then there is the cheeky "CoffeeWhiskey" with its string busting fiddle and hilarious lyrics. Overall, when you hit play on *Golden Days* throw your genre-defining expectations out of the window, and get ready for a fun time.

The music on *Golden Days* is perfect for those less than great days, because the catchy beats, electrifying tempos, and well thought-out lyrics are sure to put a smile on your face.

Union Duke's *Golden Days* can be found on the band's [bandcamp](#) page, and the band's two other albums and EPs can also be found there. *Golden Days* can also be bought on iTunes, Google Play, and straight from the band's [website](#).

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



Dear  
Barb

Barbara Godin

## You Can't Go Home Again

Dear Barb:

*I was away for my first year of university and I recently returned home for the summer. When I got home it seemed everything had changed and it doesn't feel like home anymore. In fact I just want to go back to school! I tried to talk to my mom about how I feel but she doesn't want to hear it. My friends all seem to have changed and I don't feel like we have anything in common anymore. My mom and sister were really happy when I first came home but now it seems like they are busy with their own lives and I just don't know what to do with myself. Plus my mom is trying to give me a curfew and after being on my own for eight months, I really don't think she should do this. My sister and I had always shared a room and now it seems like she's taken over the whole room and I have no space for my stuff. I have been texting my friends from university and a lot of them feel the same way. I feel kind of sad and almost wish I hadn't gone away to school or that I hadn't come home! Is what I'm feeling normal and will it eventually go away, or is there something wrong with me? Looking forward to your response, Amber.*

Hi Amber:

No there is nothing wrong with you, what you are feeling is normal. While you were away at school everyone's life moved forward just as yours did. This is all part of growing up. We often yearn for our childhood, but yet want our independence. While you were away you

grew up and experienced some freedom and independence which you are unwilling to relinquish. Your mother is still seeing you as the same young girl who left home eight months earlier and therefore is treating you in the same manner. While away at university you would not have had to answer to anyone about your comings and goings, but at home your mom may want to know where you are going and when you will be home. You and your parents have to make adjustments. Also it's pretty normal not to have as many common interests with your friends at home as you did before. You are all becoming adults and following your own paths in life. It may take your parents a while to realize you are growing up and capable of making your own decisions and choices. On the other hand, you are living in their home and so should follow their rules. It's a balancing act for everyone and all part of the maturing process.

Follow Barb on twitter @BarbGod

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.



## The Doppelgänger Cure

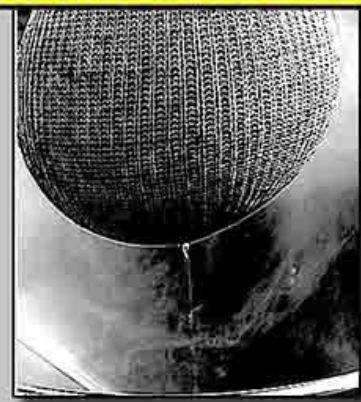
*We've been on the Flotsam for a year now.*



*The day begins with strong coffee.*



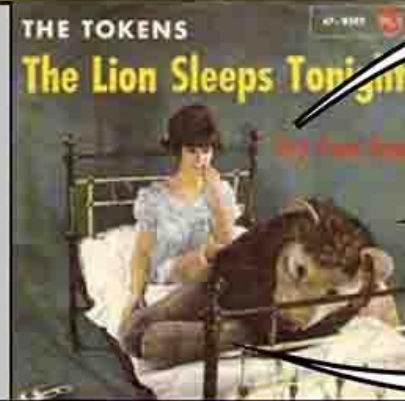
*The grounds are stuffed into a sock and boiled in a kettle.*



*Each crew member is assigned tasks.*



*My partner, Alan, and I spend our evenings listening to old vinyl.*



*We're just so happy.*

Talk to me.

What do you want to talk about?

What do YOU want to talk about?

*But I've been feeling unbalanced of late.*



*Our ship's shrink having bailed at the last space station, citing burnout . . .*



*. . . I've decided to join a trial for a radically new form of psychotherapy.*



*To be continued . . .*



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## IMPORTANT DATES

- **Aug 15:** Sept degree requirements deadline
- **Aug 31:** September course extension deadline
- **Sept 6:** [AU Open House Webinar](#)
- **Sept 10:** Deadline to register in a course starting Oct 1
- **Sept 13:** AUSU Council Meeting (5:30pm MT)
- **Sept 15:** Oct degree requirements deadline
- **Sept 31:** October course extension deadline

## Student Lifeline - Parenting

Healthy, fulfilling relationships are essential to well-being and happiness in all phases of life. Almost everyone struggles with relationships from time to time. Maybe you've moved away, you're leading a busy life, and you're struggling to stay in touch with friends. Or maybe you'd like to make new friends, meet a life partner, or resolve conflicts with your family or coworkers.

The **Student LifeLine** can support you with tips and strategies to help you build, nurture, and sustain quality relationships.

**This is a FREE service for all AUSU members!**

Contact **Student LifeLine** any time, 24/7 at **1-800-567-2255 (TTY:1-877-371-9978)** to speak with a caring consultant for expert advice.

You can also log in any time to [www.lifeworks.com](http://www.lifeworks.com) (username: **AUSU**, password: **wellness**) to access a wealth of helpful articles and tools, including:

- A **NEW** podcast, **Workplace Manners**
- Podcast [Pillars of Happiness](#) or [Relationship Rescue](#).
- [Making New Friends as an Adult](#)
- [Friends, Relationships, and Building a Community](#)
- [Communicating as a Couple](#)
- [Ten Tips for Building a Strong Relationship](#)
- [Staying Connected With Friends and Family When You Live Far Away](#)

Whether you're looking for strategies to expand your circle of friends, get along better with family, or strengthen an existing relationship, **Student LifeLine** is here to help.

**Student Lifeline provides help and support 24/7 for any issues, from health, wellness, work, life, money, school, community referrals, and more!**

The graphic features a background of hands reaching up. Text on the hands includes: "I'm so busy. How can I keep my relationship strong and healthy?", "LifeWorks.com", "User ID AUSU", and "Password wellness". At the bottom, it says "Help is at your fingertips, 24/7". Logos for the App Store, Google Play, and BlackBerry World are shown on the right, along with the AUSU logo.

## Lynda.com Course Spotlight

One of the most popular lynda.com courses with AUSU members is "**Foundations of Programming**", which has many different course sections, including:

- Code Efficiency
- Data Structures
- Design Patterns
- Discrete Mathematics
- Fundamentals
- Open-Source Licensing
- Web Security
- ... and more!

This is just one of thousands of FREE online training courses on everything from programming, software, business skills, photography, editing, and more!

**Get your FREE lynda.com subscription courtesy of AUSU by visiting the AUSU website [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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