

# THE VOICE

## MAGAZINE

Vol 24 Issue 38 2016-09-30

### Policies and Personalities

Interviewing The Candidates

### In Search of Fisherman's Tea

Don't Leave Home Without It

### Personal Branding

A Blessing or Curse?

*Plus:*

*Council Connection*

*The Art of the Resume*

*and much more!*



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# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



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

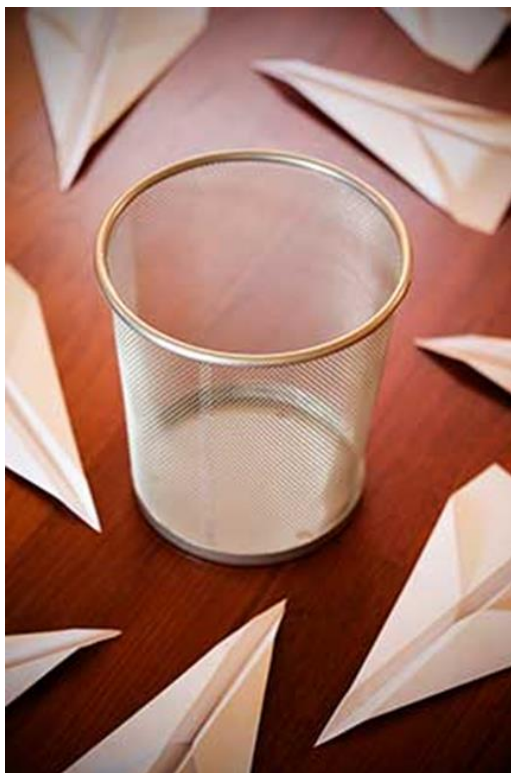
***Hey! Did you know the Voice Magazine has a [Facebook page](#)?***

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

## EDITORIAL

### Election Drama

Karl Low



What would an election be without a little drama, right? If you've already gone to vote, you may notice that what was announced as nine candidates is now fewer. Kevin Crouter has informed *The Voice Magazine* that he was disqualified as a candidate because he did not submit the required confirmation of candidacy email on time.

*The Voice Magazine* spoke to Kevin, and while he acknowledges that he was a day late in submitting that e-mail, he noted that he has been actively campaigning (including being one of the five candidates that answered our interview questions) and requested leniency on those grounds, a request that was subsequently denied.

The Chief Returning Officer has confirmed to *The Voice Magazine* that Kevin Crouter was indeed disqualified, but due to the very recent nature of this story, we have yet to confirm any of the other details. For this same reason, we are keeping Kevin's answers in the interview, even though you may not be able to vote for him.

Of course, with the by-election happening now, our feature article is our interview with those candidates who responded to our call. Five potential candidates answered questions ranging from their opinion on deficit budgeting to AUSU awards to what they hope to bring to AUSU, and even about their favorite beverage. If you haven't decided who you want to vote for, this interview will let you compare some answers side by side to help you make up your mind.

Also this week, be sure to check out Wanda Waterman's article on the perils of leaving home without the proper tea. It's a tale full of ritual, disappointment, and even fiendish laughter. I won't spoil it any more than that, but trust me, it's worth the read.

We also have some helpful advice from Deanna Roney on the art of the resume, and the Creative Spark! goes off the wall with a thriller about group work that might be just a little bit dangerous.

The Study Dude takes a bit of a diversion with a top ten list. Now I have to admit, I'm not generally a huge fan of top-ten lists, I see way too many of them on social media. But this one had some good information between the lines, so I thought it was worth the look. And speaking of social media, Carla Knipe returns with a look at the perils and perks of self-branding. Is this fascination we seem to have these days of creating our own personal brands going to come back to haunt us in the future? Her article raises some interesting questions that anybody who's worrying about their own social media presence might be wise to think about. Then again, when you learn that the top grossing YouTube artist pulled in over 12 million dollars in a year—primarily for playing videogames with his friends and recording it—you start to wonder if you can afford to.

And, of course, we have a selection of news, reviews, advice all designed to keep you amused, informed, and connected as you push through your latest course.

Enjoy the read!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karl', with a stylized flourish at the end.

## Policies and Personalities

### The Voice Magazine Probes AUSU By-Election Candidates



Voting has started, and if you haven't made up your mind yet, here's six pages of Q&A with the candidates who responded to our call for interviews. Yes, six pages. We had a lot to ask, and they had a lot to say.

We had a tight turnaround on this, the call went out on Monday, and of the nine, five were able to respond in the time we had. Ordered according to first-responders, AUSU candidates Kevin Crouter, Joshua Ryan, Sarah Blayney Lew, Robin Bleich, and Mark Swarek state their vision and bear their souls to seal your vote in the upcoming by-election.

Let's dig in:

*Please provide a one sentence description (elevator speech) of yourself.*

**Kevin Crouter:** I am a police officer for the Canadian Armed Forces. It's like your everyday police officer, but for the military!

**Joshua Ryan:** I'm a strategic thinking, disciplined IT management professional who gets the job done and doesn't take himself or life too seriously.

**Sarah Blayney Lew:** I'm an articulate, ambitious, and intelligent woman, who is making lemonade out of life's lemons and gaining confidence and strength every day.

**Robin Bleich:** I am an active listener, who enjoys networking and learning about others; I am innovative and see tasks through until the end.

**Mark Swarek:** I am a student with disabilities in the Bachelor of Professional Arts- Human Services program with diverse experience, and am very passionate about the meaningful engagement of our members. I would speak for initiatives that give all members more opportunities to influence decisions and be involved in student government; and be a voice on behalf of LGBTQ+ students and students with disabilities, etc. I invite student members to contact me at [mjswarek@gmail.com](mailto:mjswarek@gmail.com) (and would proactively make myself available to student members when I serve on Council, too).

*What would your dream S.U. look like?*

**Kevin Crouter:** A good student union is built on successful advocacy of student issues! I feel like a dream S.U would be one where innovative advocacy takes place!

**Joshua Ryan:** My dream student union is one that's reflective of the diversity of our students and well-known to and accessible by its members.

**Sarah Blayney Lew:** A cohesive team working towards a common goal of providing excellent advocacy and support for students.

**Robin Bleich:** A dream SU would have members with different skill sets; this allows students to capitalize on their invested representatives.

**Mark Swarek:** My dream Student Union would have much greater member engagement. At this time, we are engaging only a very small percentage of our members, and this is, in my opinion, a very big issue—if we are engaging only a very small percentage of our members do we even have the mandate to be making the decisions we are making, in particular spending the amount of money we are spending?

*What is one of your greatest talents or skills, and how can this skill contribute to student's union's operations?*

**Kevin Crouter:** One of my greatest abilities is planning and coordinating services! I currently do this in my role as a police officer, and I feel this could carry over to advocating for AU students!

**Joshua Ryan:** I believe I'm constantly considering the big picture, and believe this will help AUSU with longer-term strategic initiatives.

**Sarah Blayney Lew:** Excellent organization skills – I'm always asked if I have work to do because my desk is so neat and tidy! My runner up skill could be researching all aspects of a new project or skill, so that I can be a resource for people. It's part of what I do for a living so I'd better be good at it!

**Robin Bleich:** My greatest skill is communication on many platforms (emails, business plans, policies, legislation). Communication contributes to SU's operations indefinitely because we need to be able to listen, understand, and resolve situations as they arise. Councillors advocate on behalf of the student body.

**Mark Swarek:** I am highly resourceful and very skilled at thinking outside of the box and creating innovative solutions. AUSU will benefit from this skillset because I will contribute original thought and creative, innovative ideas to discussions, etc.

*If you had an enemy, what would they claim is the reason?*

**Kevin Crouter:** I imagine my enemies would claim that I can be slightly impatient in advancing my goals.

**Joshua Ryan:** I'm unfiltered in the sense that I call it how I see it, and some people don't like that approach.

**Sarah Blayney Lew:** You would have to ask them – I'm delightful!

**Robin Bleich:** They would claim that I'm too passionate.

**Mark Swarek:** I have enemies, some of them within this very organization. They would claim that I'm willing to fight for what I believe in, sometimes a little too easily. I have been working very hard, recently, to direct my energy to creating what I would like instead of fighting against what I don't like and choosing (carefully) what I want in my space, home, life, work, etc.

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*What would you do if you felt uneasy with a particular action but were out voted?*

**Kevin Crouter:** I have learned through years in the military that not getting your way is not the end of the world! You do your best to express your point of view and if it's not adopted, you carry on.

**Joshua Ryan:** I would ensure my viewpoint is stated and captured in the minutes but support the decision of the council majority.

**Sarah Blayney Lew:** I would still vote with my heart. Part of a democracy is learning to live with whatever the majority decides on and figuring out how to cooperate with that outcome.

**Robin Bleich:** In this context, I'm assuming "uneasy" means that ethics is not in question. So if I felt uneasy because I was out voted, I wouldn't let discouragement keep me from pitching the topic again in another form, or attempting a multi-faceted approach with an approved topic.

**Mark Swarek:** I would reflect on the reason for my uneasiness- Do I have a personal desire for a particular outcome? Is there an ethical, legal or moral principle I think is being compromised? etc. I may seek outside professional counsel (within the boundaries of applicable rules), if I felt it was necessary.

*AUSU is currently budgeting for a deficit. Do you agree with this? And if not, what do you think would be a good solution?*

**Kevin Crouter:** I feel its important to be fiscally transparent, so the budgeting of one is not a concern so much as why it was necessary. If elected I will look for savings and efficiency in the budget so we can return to balance without rate increases!

**Joshua Ryan:** I do not agree with this, it's not sustainable. We need to rationalize costs and expenses, reduce where appropriate and stay within our means without depleting our reserves.

**Sarah Blayney Lew:** In healthcare, we frequently run a deficit. So long as it doesn't impact essential services or programs, I support it. The issue is when you have substantial layoffs or can't support the basic operations – then I would have a problem!

**Robin Bleich:** The \$3.3m deficit, in AU'S case, occurs when an individual, business, or government budgets more spending than there is revenue available to pay for the spending, over a specific period of time. I think budgeting for a deficit is an agreeable choice, because sometimes unforeseeable events occur, which requires unallocated funds to assist. Job loss, higher tuition, less financial awards are not a solution, this will create more issues.

**Mark Swarek:** A deficit should only be considered if there is a strong business case for it- in particular, there are needs that can only be met if a deficit is approved, there are no other reasonable alternatives to meet those needs and avoid a deficit, and a solid action plan to recuperate within a reasonable time frame. I'm not convinced the current situation meets that criteria- however, I'm open to obtaining more information and hearing from the Executive, etc. Potential solutions would be in two possible categories (that I can think of so far): reduce budgeted expenses or increase budgeted revenues.

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*For awards, do you think it's better to have fewer, larger awards or many smaller ones? Also, should they be primarily needs based or achievement based?*

**Kevin Crouter:** I feel its best to have a mix between the two. On one hand, a big award would have a big impact in the lives of a few students, whereas several smaller ones would spread the assistance to many students. I suppose it would depend on the historical need expressed by students, to best fit what works for our student body.

**Joshua Ryan:** More smaller awards (equivalent to a single course tuition for example). There should be a balanced representation in available awards of academics and needs.

**Sarah Blayney Lew:** Fewer smaller awards, for both merit and financial need on a quarterly basis and then one larger award per program annually.

**Robin Bleich:** I think it depends on the AU student body voice. However, a collaborated effort of the aforementioned award options are practical because each student is different depending on their own situation. As for it being *needs* versus *achievement*, both of these are considered primary in my opinion.

**Mark Swarek:** This is one of the opportunities for greater member engagement- my opinion on this question should be no more (or less) important than any other member's opinion. In most instances, I would prefer to support as many people as possible, so I would lean towards many smaller awards, some needs based and some achievement based.

*Is there a program or activity AUSU does now that you think it should expand on?*

**Kevin Crouter:** I would be interested in exploring the possibility of the mobile app!

**Joshua Ryan:** Continue our student advocacy efforts towards service standards and the e-text initiative.

**Sarah Blayney Lew:** AUSU does a fantastic job of student advocacy. I'm always impressed by the way issues are addressed so efficiently, whether it be turnaround times for assignment marking or issues booking exams.

**Robin Bleich:** Viewing the budget prepared by AUSU, the *forecasted budget* versus *actual budget*, the travel bursary paid a total of \$771.77, when they budgeted for \$4000.00 2015/2016. This award should be marketed harder to help students with related financial trials and tribulations.

**Mark Swarek:** AUSU's tendency, when faced with feedback about issues that should be the highest priorities (such as human rights, information and privacy, etc), is to become defensive and reject any suggestion that there is room for improvement or that amends need to be made. I would like to see AUSU "expand on," or improve, in this area.

*Is there a program or activity AUSU does now that you think it should cut support for?*

**Kevin Crouter:** I feel AUSU can cut the student handbook and move the service it provides to a comprehensive mobile app, with possible integration with AU itself

**Joshua Ryan:** None at this time.

**Sarah Blayney Lew:** I don't see any programs that would need to be eliminated from AUSU.

**Robin Bleich:** No – I support the current services.

**Mark Swarek:** Any activity that AUSU does should be evaluated periodically using objective criteria to measure cost to effectiveness/value comparison. I think all programs and activities should be reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure AUSU's resources are being directed to the programs and activities that will benefit the most members (generally, there are certain circumstances where some programs and activities should be considered even if they only benefit a few).

*If you were able to make AUSU achieve any one thing, what would it be?*

**Kevin Crouter:** Negotiated agreement with other Canadian provinces to eliminate the need for out of province fees!

**Joshua Ryan:** Raise the awareness of our student population that AUSU is there to help.

**Sarah Blayney Lew:** I would love to see AU profiled in Maclean's Universities issue. We are the best at providing distance studies – it's the new age of post-secondary education and should be profiled alongside brick-and-mortar schools' distance programs.

**Robin Bleich:** Allowing the students the option to choose e-text or textbook when enrolling in a course. Mandating e-text isn't practical for every student.

**Mark Swarek:** One goal that I would like to achieve in this term is to inspire and facilitate a discussion (member consultation) about equity: for example, (1) should we consider establishing a policy or mandate for equitable gender representation on Council? (2) should we consider establishing a policy or mandate for international students, students with disabilities, lgbtq+ students, etc. to have representation on Council? I would like to see a specific Council position for a representative of students with disabilities and a specific Council position for a representative of lgbtq+ students. (3) is the vast difference between honoraria for Executive officers and Council members equitable, taking into consideration the difference in commitments and responsibilities? (4) are there other ways we could increase equity and equality at AUSU?

*What is your motto in life? In politics?*

**Kevin Crouter:** Everyone has his/her burden. What matters is how you carry it!

**Joshua Ryan:** Life - Always be true to yourself, never compromise your principles. Politics – Your constituents are why you are here, service before self always.

**Sarah Blayney Lew:** I'm not a politician (HA) but if I had a life motto, it would be "Just keep swimming".

**Robin Bleich:** Love what you do.

**Mark Swarek:** As I said earlier, I've been working very hard recently to direct my energy to creating what I would like instead of fighting against what I don't like. As a survivor of multiple traumatic experiences from childhood through to present day, I became entrenched in "defense," and fighting against things that I saw as a threat or harming me- I am endeavoring to move from that place into one where my focus is on affirmation of a better me, a better community, a better society and a better Students Union.

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### *What's your favorite drink?*

**Kevin Crouter:** This one is tough! Currently I am leaning toward Bulwark cider! But, traditionally I am a rum and coke kind of guy! As far as non alcoholic drink, I enjoy a good Perrier on a summer day!

**Joshua Ryan:** Alcoholic – Guinness. Non-Alcoholic – Coffee, 2 milk.

**Sarah Blayney Lew:** Vanilla latte.

**Robin Bleich:** Birthday Cake (loose Leaf ) tea with milk and vanilla agave.

**Mark Swarek:** I love coffee. I'm a coffee snob, to be honest. I bought some coffee at a convenience store a few weeks ago and didn't like it so I gave it away. Lol. My favorite coffee is organic and/or fair trade- some may think it's all "propaganda" however it tastes cleaner to me. I also like fruit juice mixed with ginger ale or ginger beer.

### *What will the students get if you are elected?*

**Kevin Crouter:** Someone who cares and who will work to make sure their interests are represented!

**Joshua Ryan:** Accessible, balanced representation on AUSU with your strategic interests in mind.

**Sarah Blayney Lew:** Focus, due diligence and a friendly ear.

**Robin Bleich:** Results.

**Mark Swarek:** AUSU members will get a representative- I will proactively engage student members in dialogue about current events at AUSU, make myself available to answer questions and/or listen to concerns, and at every opportunity look to create more opportunities for members to be more engaged in decision-making.

### *Finally, what should we have asked you that we didn't?*

**Kevin Crouter:** If I was stuck on an island and only had one food choice, what would it be?  
The answer is of course tacos! Haha I could never get sick of a good taco!

**Joshua Ryan:** Question: What do you think is a strength of AUSU?

Answer: The collective strength of our council and members in advocating on our behalf.

**Sarah Blayney Lew:** I could ramble on and on so I'm glad this is the last question!

**Robin Bleich:** What music I listen to when I study?Haha my five-year-old saying "mama, mama, mama, mom, mom, mommy" every ten minutes. ;)

**Mark Swarek:** I have always wondered about the feasibility of creating an AU student radio station to compliment the AU student newspaper. I would be very interested in participating in a discussion about this idea. Perhaps The Voice could facilitate it?

***A star cast to choose from, wouldn't you say? Don't miss voting for your favorite candidates on the upcoming Student Union by-election.***

## Stop Reading This Right Now!

**Barbara Lehtiniemi**



The polls are open for AUSU's by-election and voting time is limited.

Voting takes place for four days only, from Friday September 30 to Monday October 3. AUSU will e-mail each member a confidential ballot September 30. (Check your eligibility for AUSU membership [here](#). If you haven't received a ballot and believe you are eligible to vote, contact AUSU's Chief Returning Officer right away at [cro@ausu.org](mailto:cro@ausu.org).)

In this by-election, two council vacancies need to be filled. Unlike last spring's general election, in which only nine candidates vied for nine seats, students have ample choice for this by-election. Nine candidates are currently running for only two seats, meaning your vote is critically important.

Online studies, as AU students know, require a bit more effort than traditional university. Similarly, online voting means just a bit more work. Since campaigning is all online, student voters need to seek out candidate information in order to make an informed decision.

To find candidate info, start with the [Candidate Bio](#) page on the AUSU website. Here you'll find a brief overview of each candidate, such as where they're from, what AU program they're in, and the qualities and experience they feel they'll bring to AUSU council, if elected. A few candidates have included a link to their campaign poster, in downloadable PDF.

To interact with candidates, head to the special AUSU By-Election Forum page at [ausu.freeforums.net](http://ausu.freeforums.net). Your first visit to the forum page will require a quick registration process; on subsequent visits you can login with your e-mail and password.

The forum allows AUSU members to post questions for candidates. If you can't think of anything to ask, don't worry! You can just read through answers to other members' questions. As in previous elections, what *isn't* said is sometimes just as revealing—at time of writing, three candidates have yet to reply to *any* questions on the forum. The Questions for Candidates page is your best opportunity to determine which candidates you feel will best represent your interests on AUSU council.

There's also a Candidate Biography section on the forum where candidates can post additional bio information, unrestricted by word count limits. Again, participation varies: at time of writing, only five of the nine candidates had posted bio information here.

The by-election forums remain open until the polls close on October 3. The by-election results will be announced at a special AUSU council meeting on October 5 at 4:30 pm MT. All AUSU members are invited to attend this 30-minute special meeting, held by teleconference. You can find details on how to attend [here](#).

Polls close at midnight MT on Monday October 3. Time is short, so stop reading this right now! Check out the candidates running for AUSU council and then place your vote.

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

## In Search of Fisherman's Tea

Wanda Waterman



If you live in Southwestern Nova Scotia and place a "For Sale" sign in the window of a car parked in your dooryard, be prepared to provide the Bluenose Tea Ceremony to any potential buyers, especially buyers from the more traditional cultures here—the African Canadian, the Mi'kmaq, the Irish, the Scottish, and the French—who've been here so long that their cultures have joined to become nearly all-of-a-piece.

The ceremony begins with the question, "Izzat yer car yer sellin'?" and carries on with long silences, slow nods, the odd query, and, often enough, the rolling of

cigarettes and a hunkering down in the driveway to get a good look at the vehicle (and if your visitor hunkers, you'd best hunker, too).

In such instances you simply must offer tea. And if you wish to inquire about such a car parked in someone *else's* dooryard, you may find that none of your questions will be answered until you *accept* a cup of tea from the seller.

The Bluenose Tea Ceremony has an ambience and a *raison d'être* all its own. It isn't a thing that can be scheduled, because scheduling teatime makes you uppity (*Who d'ya think y'are, the Queen?*). You can't see it coming and so must always be ready to stop everything to either accept a cup of tea or to serve one.

Oh, how my workaholic soul used to rage at these interruptions, these demands that everything be put on pause for the hunkering, the small talk, the knowing looks, the smoking, and the silent breaks, all so necessary to making the deal. *Holy ol' jumpin,' can't we just seal this without putting my whole life on hold?* my inner Calvinist shrieked. The torture was even harder to bear knowing that most of the time no deal would be reached.

The only silver lining was the wonderful quality that obligatory tea, which we often referred to as "fisherman's tea," a secret blend of choice black and orange pekoe tea leaves, generously spooned into the pot and steeped for a good five minutes, if not boiled on the back of a wood stove and topped up periodically with more water or tea leaves as needed. When poured out the colour is a rich, deep amber, to which you add canned evaporated milk and lots of sugar if you want it. Drinking it black would be insupportable, and even whole milk is sometimes too weak to buffer the tea's kick.

Fisherman's tea isn't a gourmet taste; it's one of those things you love because you grew up with it. Outsiders don't often take to fisherman's tea, just as they don't often take to dulce, rappie pie, hodgepodge, or Solomon Gundy (to our great bewilderment), but there you go.

East coast grocery stores sell the same variety of teas as can be found anywhere, including that ubiquitous American brand of tea whose name I won't mention but whose flavour is hardly better than that of dishwater.

But true fisherman's tea is produced only by three Canadian brands, two of whom are uniquely Maritime: King Cole, Morse, and Red Rose. Not only do these brands deliver the right flavour and strength, they have just enough—or just the right *kind* of caffeine to renew one's optimism in the face of life's storms. The caffeine rush actually *feels* different, more elated, without the grumpiness, bad nerves, and confusion that often accompany too many coffees.

A cup of fisherman's tea is like a sweet, apple-faced friend waiting for a chat in the house after a morning of stacking wood, a pleasing ritual marking the intervals of your household chores, an essential component of church suppers, a steamy brew comforting hunters by the fire while their boots dry, a comforting aroma steaming on the table next to a warm stove when you wade home through the slush, sniffing and shivering, and yes, an elixir that grants fishermen the boost they need to keep up those long, gruelling stints at sea.

When I leave Nova Scotia I don't bring any of this tea with me, so confident am I that I can find its equivalent just about anywhere. At the very least, I think, I can order it online.

In New England kitchens I find all kinds of specialty teas, black, green, and herbal. I also find the ubiquitous American brand of tea whose name I will not mention but none of whose many products tastes much different from dishwater. The American tea sensibility, I learn, is vastly removed from that of the Maritime Provinces, where tea is nothing short of a robust brew singing with tannic acid.

The closest equivalent to fisherman's tea that I can find is Irish Breakfast tea. Few New Englanders drink it, preferring to get their caffeine, if they get it at all, from coffee, so Irish Breakfast tea is easy to find, though often a bit stale, having sat on the tea shelf for several years in its cramped little square tin waiting for a Nova Scotian to come along and rescue it from a dusty demise.

But drinking Irish Breakfast tea from a pretty little tin, in addition to not exactly being the same blend, goes against the spirit of fisherman's tea, which sees a "specialty tea" as something like a prissily dressed little girl at a family picnic. Fisherman's tea must be purchased in bulk: either loose leaves pressed into a block and wrapped in foil or cardboard boxes harbouring great bunches of teabags.

I try to order fisherman's tea online with no luck. I get on Facebook and whine: *Does anyone know where I can find good stout black tea in New England?* A friend quickly replies, telling me about a wonderful online tea company. I order Earl Grey, Jasmine Green, and Irish Breakfast. I thank my friend, who turns out to be a total tea snob, using a special teapot that brews and steeps teas at the precise temperature and time length required for every type of leaf. She wants to buy me a teapot like this, as she's mistakenly taken me for a tea gourmet. *No*, I say gently. *No. Thanks so much, but I'm Nova Scotian.*

On my visit to North Africa I find just two types of tea served in homes: a delicious green tea served with spearmint, and what the locals call red tea—actually a black tea satisfyingly similar to fisherman's tea, boiled over a charcoal fire and served with lots of sugar.

The red tea is nice, but the absence of canned milk or cream does set one's teeth on edge, so I rely on green tea and Arab coffee for my daily caffeine fix. When I ask for "English" tea in the cafés I'm repeatedly offered, to my horror, that ubiquitous American brand of tea whose name I will not mention but whose flavour is hardly different from dishwater. I soon stop asking.

Next, Montreal. I'm surprised that even here I can't find my triumvirate of Canadian tea brands, even in the big box stores. In the ethnic sections I find black teas of low price and average quality, which are fine for mornings, but I need something more apt for that afternoon pick-me-up. Someone tells me about a local "tea boutique," a term that makes me shudder but which does suggest a broad variety of choices.

In the boutique I find just one brand of extremely high-end tea of manifold types. The clerk looks like a diplomat, reserved, beautifully dressed, and charmingly cordial, speaking in a soft voice and looking up at me with profound sincerity as he opens one great round tin after another, extolling the virtues of each product while using the tin's broad lid as a fan to waft the heavenly fragrances my way.

"This jasmine green," he says reverently, "has been picked over seven times by rural villagers in order to ensure its purity."

I decide to buy some China black, too. He highly recommends I also buy one of their special small metal tins to store my tea, to preserve its special flavour and quality. I decline, not bothering this time to offer the excuse that I'm Nova Scotian.

Again the tea disappoints. I bring some of it back with me on my visit to Nova Scotia. When I get to my parent's yard I pull the little sachet from my purse, pour the tea leaves on the ground in a little heap, light it on fire, laugh fiendishly as it burns, stomp on it furiously, then go inside to make a pot of *real* tea.

The stores are closed, so if my folks are out of tea, I'll have to go looking for a car to buy.

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

Bob posts some updates for students in the BHRLR and UCHRLR programs. Paul posts a [link](#) to his AU news blog on the U.S. elections. JoAnne shares AUSU's posts on student advocacy and upcoming AUSU awards and bursaries.

Other posts include the Oxford comma, APA Style Blog, and courses BIOL 235, COMM 358, ENGL 255, and MUSI 268.

#### reddit

jevv1023 inquires if an indicated prerequisite 200-level course is mandatory for the PYSC course he's considering.

#### Twitter

[@AthabascaU](#) tweets: "Want to enter to win a FREE [@AthabascaU](#) UNDERGRAD COURSE? You can submit up to 5 entries for AUSU's [#igo2AU](#) Contest! <http://bit.ly/2d0F6kX>."

[@AU\\_Press](#) tweets: "Did you miss the Living on the Land launch last night? Order your copy or download the free PDF right here: <http://ow.ly/ofks304f9FD>."



## The Creative Spark

### Comedy Sketch Group-Work

Marie Well



*Does group-work make you book a brain scan? Well, make a group comedy sketch instead. Joe Topylin and I will show the way.*

Why waste your time on comedy? First, it's fun. Second, it's fun. And if fun isn't enough, then how about a snickering prof? One teetering to plus-sign your A?

So, instead of humdrum group work, ask your prof if you can make a comedy sketch. As a disclaimer, make sure you've got the buy-in from your prof—and your group—before you take the plunge.

Topylin's comedy sketch how-to's are specific to late night comedy shows.

In the comedy sketch below, we will pretend that you need to do a group presentation on the topic of metaphors. One person in your group will serve as the "host" (i.e., your group presenter); another person in your group will serve as the "audience interrupter" (someone staged as an audience member).

Here's my amateur stab at a comedy sketch skeleton followed by Joe Topylin's instructions on how to make one.

*[Group Presenter is reading from cue cards]*

**Group Presenter:** Let's learn how to write metaphors... metaphors about every student's favorite thing: exams. First, an adjective-noun metaphor...

*[Staged Audience Member, wearing a Michael Jackson t-shirt stands up]*

**Staged Audience Member:** Metaphors? I'm an expert.

**Group Presenter:** *[ignoring Staged Audience Member]* As I was saying, an adjective-noun metaphor combine to create friction as in "the annoyed exam."

**Staged Audience Member:** Here's a better one. *[singing to the rhythm of Michael Jackson's I'm Bad]* I'm bad. I'm bad. Long neck. Big eyes.

**Group Presenter:** That's not an adjective-noun metaphor; that's Michael Jackson cheating. You might like the adjective-noun metaphor: "image-enhancing exams"... the dropout's dream. *[addressing audience again]* Show unexpected tension in your noun-adjective combos. As for verb-noun metaphors, you want the action and the thing to also clash...

**Staged Audience Member:** How about this? *[singing to the rhythm of Michael Jackson's Beat It]* It doesn't matter if I'm wrong or right. Just cheat it. Ooh!

**Group Presenter:** Not a metaphor. But you've got a billion metaphorical reasons to cheat. Verb–noun metaphors should be from two different families... as in "During exam prep, I snored facts."

*[Staged Audience Member does a Michael Jackson leg kick while squealing "ooh!" and knocks out Group Presenter's cue cards. Staged Audience Member picks them up].*

**Staged Audience Member:** *[reading from cue card as Group Presenter snatches them back.]* An i-den-ti-ty metaphor is... is...

**Group Presenter:** You read my card.

**Staged Audience Member.** Maybe.

**Group Presenter:** Pathetic.

**Staged Audience Member:** Here's an identity metaphor.

*[Staged Audience Member starts to act and groan like a zombie]*

**Staged Audience Member:** *[singing to Michael Jackson's Thriller]* "Cause this is thriller, thriller night. There ain't no second chance against the thing with forty eyes."

*[Staged Audience Member bites Group Presenter's neck while snatching the cue cards, reading them. Group Presenter grabs back his cue cards.]*

**Group Presenter:** Enough! *[touches his neck, fixes his hair and wipes his shoulders]*

**Staged Audience Member:** But I know what an identity metaphor is...

**Group Presenter:** You really don't.

**Staged Audience Member:** Can I see your card again?

**Group Presenter:** Sit down.

*[Staged Audience Member sits down.]*

**Group Presenter:** As I was saying, identity metaphors come in three forms. You could say "A nincompoop is a pop quiz." "A pop quiz's nincompoop ." Or "a pop quiz of a nincompoop." Now, let's turn to similes.

*[Guy with Psycho Three shirt and an axe stands up]*

**Audience Psycho:** Similes? I'm an expert!

*[End of skit.]*

So, that's our sample comedy sketch. Now, I'm not seasoned at sketches, but with 9,999 more hours of practice, I could write for Saturday Night Live.

You could, too.

So, how do you make a comedy sketch?

Professional joke-writer Joe Toplyn shows us how in his book *Comedy Writing for Late-Night TV* (with Joe's stuff in bold):

**Step 1: Give three exaggerated qualities to your comedy character.** Staged Audience Member is a know-it-all who knows nothing. He chronically cheats. Lastly, he's addicted to Michael Jackson.

**Step 2: Give your comedic character a desire.** Staged Audience Member wants to prove his expertise with metaphors.

**Step 3: Make the presenter oppose your comedic character.** Group Presenter is constantly exposing Staged Audience Member's cheating or misinformed attempts at metaphors.

**Step 4: Make your comedic character do wilder and wilder things to get his way-and do something extreme.** First, Staged Audience Member first cites Michael Jackson songs for examples of metaphors. Next, realizing he doesn't know what a metaphor is, he tries to cheat—with a Michael Jackson dance kick to get hold of the cue cards. Unsuccessful, his cheating gets wilder; lastly, he acts like a Thriller zombie, biting the presenter's neck while snatching the cue cards a second-time.

**Step 5: Up the stakes.** I failed to up the stakes for the comedic character. He doesn't have more to lose. No-one pulls a gun. No-one posts his antics on YouTube. A vampire doesn't drag him off into a fraternity-of-the-dead.

**Step 6: Have your comedic character get or fail to get the desire.** Staged Audience Member fails to prove an expertise with metaphors.

**Step 7: End with a Twist.** I did this by implying the whole scene would repeat itself with Audience Psycho. You can also do the same type of jokes, but from different angles, says Toplyn. Or, you could have the comedic character attack the presenter personally. Have the presenter get revenge in a similar style.

**Step 8: Tighten the dialogue.** Joe says do the following: Put punchy words at the end. End with stop sound words: ones with d, t, p, b, k, or g. Shorten your sentences. Make every line advance or oppose your comedic character's goal.

But when making a comedy sketch for class, you'll want more educational stuff. So make the presenter sound like a gripping windbag: draw out his lines. Each teeming with *aha* ideas. But keep the Staged Audience Member and Audience Psycho lines short and funny.

Like a Danny Devito. Or Bozo's nose. Or your professor's comments on your comedy sketch. But most of all, make it fun.

## Personal Branding A Blessing or a Curse?

Carla Knipe



This is not going to be an article about Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie—or, if you prefer, "Brangelina". But the current state of their family problems aside, the celebrity power couple has become the top example of how entrenched personal branding is. Now, it seems that presenting yourself to the world as a walking CV or advertisement is a necessity. Or is it?

The concept of personal branding was developed during the mid-to-late 1990s, after the internet started to gain momentum and before social media became a thing. It was sparked by

business writer and advisor, Tom Peters, in an essay [A Brand Called You](#). Peters asserts that in the modern business world, people need to take a lesson from major companies and market themselves to the world using similar tactics. He asserts that branding is necessary to really show companies what you are all about, rather than the black-and-white two-dimensional view on a resume. If someone does not market themselves in this way, they risk being left behind.

Since then, personal branding as a career advancement tool has taken off. Technology has undoubtedly helped. Business schools and companies alike now offer courses and seminars to maximize personal branding through managed social media and other strategies lifted straight from public relations and advertising. The goal of branding is to create a complete self-package for what has been termed as "Me, Inc." Branding means that it is no longer enough to submit a polished resume to a company in the hope that the person sitting across the desk will like what he or she reads and hire you. Now, the whole package includes a killer LinkedIn profile, a lifestyle blog, a professional headshot (or if that fails, a collection of strategic selfies), a slick website, a personal YouTube channel, and the list goes on. The competition to stand out in the crowd and get ahead takes the whole business ethic from the 1980s and ramps it up a thousand times. The question is, however, that no one seems to have definitely answered is whether branding becomes just another form of pressure on the jobseeker. And what happens to those who don't—or can't—play along?

On one level, self-marketing can be positive in the right circumstances, particularly for self-employed entrepreneurs. But despite reading all of the advice available on branding, the whole definition and process becomes rather confusing. The ethos behind it is that it is a way to present an authentic self to the world. But ironically, the search for that authenticity just might result in an edited image of the self that is inauthentic.

A troubling aspect of personal branding is that branding is biased toward extroverts who love to network and get themselves in front of other people. Those who are introverted and prefer to keep some aspects of themselves private, or those who don't feel the need to toot their own horn—who would rather do almost anything else than work a room at a cocktail party—seem to be disadvantaged when it comes to the rules of self-promotion. The number of networking groups that have popped up all over are testament to this. The general rule seems to be, "if you don't get out and network, you are going to be left behind."

This leads to another principle of whole mindset of personal branding, which is "brand yourself before others brand you." The whole idea of crafting an image that others use as a filter to see you resembles high school, where students are typecast into one clique and that stereotype stays with them forever. Having a personal brand, complete with catchphrase or motto, elevator pitch, and business card seems to be the right thing to do in this age of celebrity. But does it ultimately matter? Does it make a huge amount of difference compared to knuckling down and developing real career skills and honest credentials? No one seems to be able to answer this question.

But personal branding has entered society more than we'd like to admit. While positive branding may help someone get ahead in a career, it can also have unintended consequences that reach far beyond the workplace. Especially for younger people. Raised on the internet there is perhaps greater pressure to use social media to their advantage. However, there can also be the negative consequences when one unfortunate photo goes viral on Facebook or someone is filmed on a cell phone engaging in an activity that is definitely "off-brand." Companies admit that they look at a job candidate's online profile, including their social media posts, before deciding whether to hire them. The reality is that smartphone cameras are everywhere and the odds of being caught for posterity doing stupid stuff has risen dramatically because of them. But, unlike building a brand, there aren't a lot of tips out there to provide a remedy of rebuilding a reputation when it somehow goes wrong.

So rather than getting carried away with the whole self-marketing trend, a step back and a word of caution might be necessary to liberate people from the tyranny of feeling like they are not getting seen or heard by the "right" people.

The flip side of branding is that it can end up being its own form of imprisonment; something that restricts people from living the life they want and having the freedom to stretch themselves because it might go against the manufactured image. The whole point of growing and developing as a person is that it takes gumption to stick one's neck out, to try new things, to make mistakes, and ultimately learn from those life experiences. If a personal brand prevents someone from living life because of the underlying fear of appearing foolish or outside their comfort zone, then branding is the opposite to reaching for growth and development. Ironically, the ultimate effect may lead to the dull, one-dimensional CV that branding was trying to avoid to begin with.

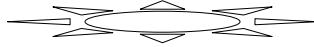
While personal branding is the new corporate game that all the cool kids are expected to play, the skills or resources—such as having at least one advisor, a personal agent of sorts—isn't something that comes naturally, or that everyone has access to. Advertising companies employ whole teams to do this sort of thing, after all. Is personal branding something that will be taught in high school career education classes as a life skill along with resume writing and how to survive a job interview? And where will personal branding end? Will it lead to a "trickle-down effect"—something that is not just for corporate high-flyers but also a necessity for everyone, even retail sales assistants or restaurant wait staff?

Creating a brand, rather than highlighting different aspects of a personality, might be restricting and limiting more than it liberates. The brand becomes an ever-present boogie man that lives in the subconscious, no matter whether you are at work or enjoying some leisure time. Imagine, if you will, you become someone like those celebrity couples who cannot pop out for a jug of milk or enjoy a meal out with friends without being photographed.

It is difficult to tell whether branding is here to stay or if it will be one of those trends that will peak and then just fade away into obscurity, just as it remains to be seen what happens to Brangelina (or, more accurately, is

it, BRANDgelina?). Meanwhile, the people seeking clear career advice are perhaps being left more in limbo than ever before.

*Carla is a Calgary-based writer and an AU student on the homestretch of completing her BA in English can be found hanging out on Twitter @Lunchbuster.*



## The Art of the Resume

Deanna Roney



Writing a resume and cover is about as much fun as going to the dentist. There is a delicate balance between showing your skillset, and coming off as conceited. You need to show confidence but also humility. We have been taught that it is best to be humble, to downplay our strengths and not appear to be bragging. The resume however, tosses all that aside.

Writing a resume and cover letter is an art in and of itself. What do you include? Exclude? Embellish or downplay? It depends on the job you are seeking as to what you include. If you are seeking a job in service you probably do not

need to include publishing history, and vice versa. A publisher will not be interested in the time you spent painting houses. A resume must be geared specifically for the position you are trying to secure. It was often taught in the early "learning to write a resume" days that you were to include all the jobs and volunteer information. However, no one cares if you volunteered at a foodbank 13 years ago.

It was thought that the cover letter is where you personalize your address. And, while it is, the resume itself needs to be personalized. The cover letter is personalized to each and every job you're applying to. Find out *who* is going to be reading it and address the letter to them. In the letter itself be sure it is not reading like a standard cover letter and make them feel like it has been personalized, this will stand out for plenty of employers. Even if you only personalize a few lines and recycle the rest, you will stand out from the rest in doing this; and the employer will feel like you are actively seeking their job and not just a job.

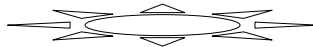
There are many resume and cover letter templates out there. I have found that the template chosen also depends on the job you are seeking. For example, an office job resume should appear clean and concise; there is no need for extra headers/footers. It should show that you have an understanding of how to use word, which means that each heading and subheading should be appropriately formed. For a more creative job using the header and footer can prove an asset, especially for a job where they are seeking someone with skills in digital advertising, media, etc. By using these other functions you are using the body of the resume to show off your skills; there are the spelled out jobs, skills, and experiences, but the resume itself, how it is laid out and crafted, will show that you are also proficient in creating an appealing web-design.

I have always found though, that when in doubt, clean and simple is the best. Always (always) use a standard font. It is simple to read and comes across as professional. Comic sans, while it may be acceptable for some

jobs, will put off employers for other jobs (I have seen this first hand). A standard font that will not get tossed aside is Times New Roman: regardless of the job. TNR is like the word "said" in creative writing, the mind does not register it. However, replace "said" with "screamed" and suddenly it is seen, just like TNR and comic sans. If a resume looks messy or busy it will come across as unprofessional and, regardless of the information on the pages, it may be set aside for these reasons alone.

One final piece of advice; as with any written work, have a second set of eyes read over both the resume and the cover letter before submission. After you read something numerous times the errors are skimmed over and go unseen, but fresh eyes have the ability to pick out misspelled words (such as asses instead of assess—not that I am speaking from experience).

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



## Canadian Education News

**Scott Jacobsen**



### **'Generations lost' due to low funding for Indigenous schools**

According to [\*CBC News: Manitoba\*](#), "generations" are being lost due to the underfunded Indigenous schools. There are "persistent" shortages "faced by" First Nations students, which the article says requires school divisions to demand a federal government fix for the underfunding.

Sherri Rollins, Winnipeg School Division Chair, sees this as an unfortunate possibility for students because of "chronic underfunding" on reserves. Rollins estimates underfunding of \$4,000 to \$6,000 per student on reserves.

"We have many reserves in Manitoba that don't have high schools. People are unable to complete their education that we've agreed for decades and decades and decades in this country that that's the bar, a high school education," she said.

### **Statistics Canada to examine the number of part-time, and contract professors**

Statistics Canada will be tallying the number of part-time, contract professors in Canada. According to [\*The Globe and Mail\*](#), Kirsty Duncan, the Minister of Science in the Government of Canada, announced plans for this as being "essential" information to gather for the Statistics Canada database.

She notes that this will assist in the development of more diverse and inclusive universities. There have been statements from faculty unions across North America who have noted the decrease in the number of tenure-track positions for academics.

This is especially true for young academics. This might harm a generation of young researchers. Michael Martin, Chief of the Education Finance and Indicators Division of Statistics Canada, said, "There has been an evolution in the system, to part-time or not regular faculty-type members teaching."

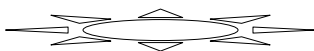
## Infrastructure investment into The University of British Columbia

And from Market Wired, we find there has been a \$51.5 million investment into The University of British Columbia, which is part of an total investment of about \$100 million. Universities help the young of Canada become prepared for the future, which can "help them join a strong, healthy middle class."

The money comes a combined federal-provincial monetary fund announced by the Hon. Navdeep Bains, Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, and the Hon. Andrew Wilkinson, British Columbia's Minister of Advanced Education, on September 19.

"This once-in-a-generation investment by the Government of Canada is a historic down payment on the government's vision to position Canada as a global centre for innovation. That means making Canada a world leader in turning ideas into solutions..." Bains said.

*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.*



## Music Review Bear Mountain

**Samantha Stevens**



**Band:** Bear Mountain

**Album:** *Badu*

Vancouver's Bear Mountain is back with their sophomore album *Badu*. Released September 9th, *Badu* is the much anticipated follow-up to Bear Mountain's critically acclaimed debut XO, and fans of the band's unique electronic-indie sound will love this album.

Founded in 2011, Bear Mountain has steadily been turning heads with their catchy beats and captivating vocals. Even their live shows have been referred to as "daring performances" and "seeing them live is a unique, whirlwind experience"

(<http://www.indoorrecess.com/bear-mountain-premieres-new-track/>). Bear Mountain has been involved in several music festivals, including The Governor's Ball, Lollapalooza, The Fader Fort at SXSW, Austin City Limits, and Sasquatch. Consisting of

singer/songwriter Ian Bevis, guitarist Kyle Statham, Ian's twin brother on the drums Greg Bevis, and creative director Kenji Rodriguez, Bear Mountain is a band without compare in the world of music today.

While their music brings to mind beats from the 80s and reverberated vocals like that once heard from Fine Young Cannibals, the music varies so widely from track to track that it is difficult to pin down.

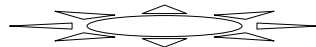
Take, for example, *Badu's* opening track "Badu." While you might be thinking that you're seeing double, this album arrangement is a brilliant move. "Badu" sums up the album perfectly. This electronically driven number is an eclectic blend of tribal drums, simple choppy vocals, fizzling electric effects, and sultry jazz. Mainly, "Badu" is made up of sounds that you would never expect to hear together, yet the brilliant minds behind Bear Mountain made it work.

The remainder of the album is a similar jumble of sounds and musical elements. "Always Been You" is primarily an electronic ballad with pop-music vocals. Yet, because of the upbeat dance rhythm, it isn't bogged down by the mainstream feel, that is, it doesn't feel like every other pop song out there.

"Hopeful" is another track worth mentioning. The lighthearted beats and melodies are perfectly juxtaposed with the more dramatic lyrics. Then the inclusion of vocals that bring to mind powerful 80s love songs makes "Hopeful" an impressive and well-composed track. In a world where music sometimes feels like it has been haphazardly tossed together, like a cookie-cutter version of the song before it, it is clear on *Badu* that every note that the boys of Bear Mountain play is a purposeful attempt to create something new, beautiful, fun, and magical.

In essence, *Badu* is an electronic album with fantastic dance beats. However, if you are looking for great abstract sounds to listen to while studying or reading, *Badu* is the album for you. Just be sure to keep your feet in check for they may catch the rhythm and get carried away on the epic beats.

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



## Canadian Science News

**Scott Jacobsen**

### Canadians fall short and long on scientific literacy

Science Literacy Week was from September 19th to September 25th, and according to *Radio Canada International's* Marc Montgomery, Canadians topped one list of science literates in a 2014 survey. But another survey by the Ontario Science Centre showed significant gaps in the science knowledge of Canadians.

"19 percent of Canadians still think there is a link between vaccinations and autism," Montgomery said. There is no connection between vaccinations and autism. 47% of Canadians can understand basic news

reports, which means the rest cannot in full.

Montgomery said, "The 2014 findings were gathered from 2,000 Canadians polled in 2013, [the results] left Canada on top." Even though the majority do not understand basic news science reports.



### Canadians face tough competition for the Nobel Prizes

According to *The Globe and Mail*, Canada's international reputation as a leader in research might get a boost through Nobel Prizes being won "back to back." Art McDonald, based on a neutrino experiment close to Sudbury Ontario, won a Nobel Prize in Physics last year.

And although Governor-General David Johnston's has worked to "ensure Canada's research institutions are nominating their most worthy scientists for the Nobels," Canadian scientists have tough competition this year based on data produced by Thomson Reuters.

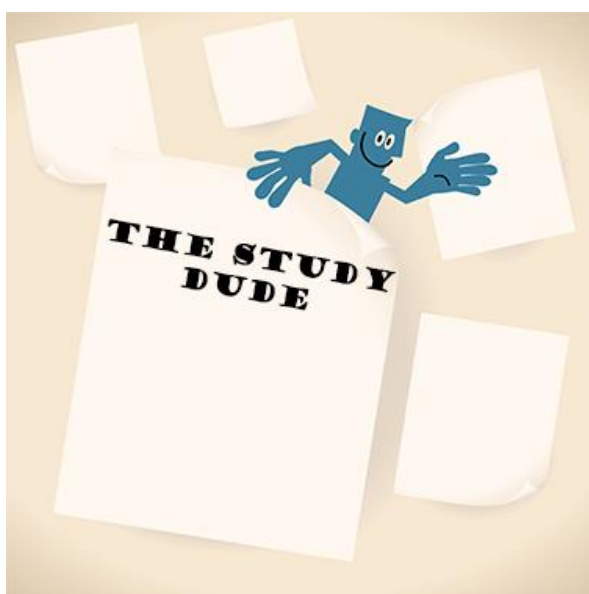
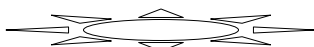
The list of nominees is meant to see the researchers with the greatest "achievements and impacts most closely" matched with prior awardees. October 3<sup>rd</sup> will be the date of the announcement for the 2016 Nobel Prize winners.

### Canadian pharmacies and natural health.

According to an article by Ubaka Ocbogu and Candace Necyk in *The Globe and Mail*, your pharmacist and Health Canada might have approved the sale of conclusively disproven 'health products' such as "fancy homeopathic children's cough medicine," which is "nothing more than expensive water."

In spite of the Health Canada 'seal of approval', "many of the natural health products Canadians buy and use are simply not backed by science," Ocbogu and Necyk said. In a survey of 400 pharmacists in Alberta, most recommend natural health products. Some rely on Health Canada only for approvals.

But the current state of approvals will change soon. Ocbogu and Necyk noted that, "The changes are largely motivated by loopholes in the existing regulatory framework, which allows the licensing of products that do not meet scientific standards for safety and efficacy."



### Study Tips from a Semi-Anonymous Friend

#### Top Ten Things You Don't Want to Hear from your Professor

**Number 10: "Once you see your grade, you'll get skills in debate."**

Debate requires skills in rhetorical devices. Do you know what a metaphor is? Assonance? Chiasmus? If yes, go craft a cunning argument.

**Number 9: "Your mnemonics remind me of early Alzheimer's."**

Make your mnemonics wildly visual. If you need to remember that a thesis has a topic and three parts, imagine a nice Calvin Klein top with three body parts jutting from it. Visualize it.

Use acronyms, too. Memorize the prof's favorite stars? Cash, Bono, Waters, and Cher could end up as "Cash wanted 4 bone chair." A Craigslist ad.

**Number 8: "When it comes to punishment, I prefer multiple choice."**

During exams, fully read all the multiple choice questions and answers as you come across them. Put an x beside each choice you eliminate. If uncertain between two or more choices, put a question mark beside the question. return to it later. Let your subliminal lightbulb flash when you least expect it.

**Number 7: "If you can't read the board, I can't afford bifocals."**

When reading textbooks, first skim the table of contents and index. Then peer at chapter intros and conclusions. Figure out how the info will boost your wellbeing: make it your own.

**Number 6: "I moonlight as a library barista."**

When faced with a paper, visit the library the instant you receive a due date. Scour the indexes and table of contents of books you locate. Seek out Amazon tables of contents. Ask your librarian for reference books.

**Number 5: "Your class notes will be published in *Memoirs of a Dictator*."**

When taking notes, use shorthand. Use arrows, equal signs, abbreviated words—anything simple *U cn rmber*.

**Number 4: "To make marking easier, I recycle F papers as feminine hygiene pads."**

Avoid that F. When planning your essays, use cue cards, outlines, and mind maps to sort your ideas. Add categories. Lots of quotes, too: one per card. Source.

**Number 3: "The E in 'Exams' looks like the letter F with a sunken minus."**

Before writing your exam, read the instructions in full and scan the entire exam. Allot a time limit for each section. Watch the clock like a hawk.

**Number 2: The FDA approved my final exam as a mock-up for electric shock therapy.**

Shake off exam jitters. Wear a rubber band on your wrist you snap to stay focused. Chew gum to relax your muscles. Heave breaths in and out for five second each. Find reassuring words: "*as long as I'm alive, I can tolerate this*"; "*there are at least ten-thousand-and-ten worse things than an F*." Now, does that sound reassuring? If not, blame the cognitive behavioral scientists, not me.

**Number 1: "I'm like your thesis: overworked."**

When writing a thesis, start with a general topic. Scour books on the topic, paying particular attention to the index and table of contents. Try to narrow down your topic to something with tons of coverage. But add a spin. Maybe focus on your biggest fears. Your passions. Or a spin that would humble you.

Then research and make cue cards or outlines, citing your references. Group cue cards according to subtopics. An argument will emerge.

Break your thesis into three general subtopics. The rule of threes means that two or four or five subtopics just don't feel right. Somehow the human brain salivates at the thought of *three*.

Now, don't underwork or overwork that thesis: tie your topic's shoelaces with the rule of three.

*So there you have the top ten things you don't want your professor to say. And if I'm ever your professor, drop or give me 10.*



## Council Connection

### September 13, 2016 Meeting

Karl Low

At 5:31pm, the last meeting of the seven member AUSU Council was convened. By the next meeting, the by-elections will be complete, and the council will be back to its full strength of nine. In addition to the seven councillors, Emily Bonia and Carly Gallant attended as guests.

However, before the meeting even began, council was already present and engaged. With Brandon Simmons stepping down as the Vice-President External (VPEx), there was a vacancy on the executive that needed to be filled by the next council meeting, according to the policies. This internal election was conducted shortly before the meeting, and as I arrived, council was just congratulating the newly elected VPEx, Julian Tetrenko.

The agenda was then amended to include the resignation and subsequent election results.

Action items from the previous meeting were quickly reviewed, and the only one that remained outstanding was a consideration of calendar orders, which was referred to the Member Engagement and Communications Committee, and their new chair, Julian Tetrenko.

Three motions had been previously passed by email, and this meeting saw their ratification. The motions were to approve and create the new awards that AUSU has already been advertising, the Health Care Bursary, and the Single Parent Bursary, and also to reallocate unused travel bursary funds into the emergency computer bursary program, thus creating room for up to five more students in financial need to have a computer purchased by AUSU for them. See the AUSU [awards page](#) for more details.

Finally, the old business concluded with a review of the 2015/2016 goals list, which this Council managed to complete with the exception of receiving recommendations from the Voice/AUSU joint committee that is still ongoing.

Council then moved on to new business, the first item of which was the aforementioned acceptance of changes in position from and to the VPEx position. A new goal list was then proposed and presented, with it noted that the goals were developed largely from information that came from the member services survey AUSU conducted. The new list can be found on the AUSU strategic documents [page](#).

Also submitted was a report and transcript from the 2016 AUSU Council Retreat (and a copy of the report can be found on that same strategic documents page). These motions all passed unanimously without contention.

The next item on the agenda? A recommendation from the Finance Committee that AUSU approve up to \$10,000 to be used from an internally restricted funds for legal fees and administrative costs related to attempting to address the retro-active change in degree policy brought forward by the Faculty of Health Disciplines. It was noted that while AUSU has been very successful with complaints from individual students, as any student AUSU has advocated for with the Faculty of Health Disciplines has had adjustments made for them from the newly imposed degree requirements, there is still the larger concern of the precedent this sets to Athabasca University being able to significantly alter degree requirements of students currently in a degree program, possibly adding additional expense or severely hampering the chances of student attaining a degree. In support of this, AUSU has put forward a number of freedom of information (FOIP) requests and consulted legal counsel who informed them that they may seek to pursue a judicial review if no satisfaction is received from the administration of the university. The restricted funds would be used to cover the costs incurred by the FOIP requests and, if necessary, to pursue the judicial review.

It was noted that there is some concern that Athabasca University has become complacent when it comes to dealing with the effects that their decisions and actions may have on the broader population of students. While when dealing with individual students AU tries hard to assist (and again it was noted that any students coming to AUSU for individual advocacy has subsequently had their concerns addressed by the Faculty of Health Disciplines), this issue

was mentioned as an opportunity to show that AUSU is going to be "strong advocates for students, and ... will encourage them to remember to put student consideration first and foremost" when formulating larger policies.

The motion to approve the \$10,000 for further action was approved unanimously and heartily by council.

Councillor Dixie Toliver was then appointed to a vacant seat on the AUSU Member Engagement and Communications Committee, and we moved on to policy revisions.

Of note in the policies this month was the creation of a policy outlining exactly how a member could be voted to be "not in good standing". AUSU bylaws state that in order to run for a position on Council, a member must be in good standing, which essentially meant not owing money or being involved in a lawsuit against AUSU, and not having been voted as not in good standing through a normal motion of Council. The addition of this policy adds several safeguards to allow a member an opportunity to defend themselves in the event of such a motion.

Council also discussed the Scholarships, Awards, and Bursaries program policy, and there was a good amount of discussion about the student service award where it was noted that the wording might cause some to think that only contributions to the AU community and AU students would be considered, whereas the intent of the award is to examine volunteerism beyond the AU community as well.

Finally, AUSU approved the terms of reference for the first regular Executive Compensation Review Committee, following up on the report and recommendation from the special committee of the same name brought in place following the AGM of 2015.

Of note in the reports was the hiring of Dr. Neil Fassina as university president, that the issue of student emails has not died but rather is just waiting the approval of the AU executive to finalize the business rules around creating official Athabasca University email accounts for students, and that there is now a proposal to update and upgrade the MyAU Portal (but that probably won't happen this year)

A few more standard reports, and the meeting adjourned at about 7:30pm.

### Women Of Interest

**Patsy O'Connell Sherman**, was born September 15, 1930, in Minnesota and died on February 11, 2008. Sherman was the inventor of Scotchgard, the fabric protector. In 1989 Sherman was the first woman inducted into the Minnesota Inventors Hall of Fame, and in 2001 into the National Inventors Hall of Fame. Sherman achieved many firsts in her lifetime, beginning in 1952 when she was the first woman to graduate from Adolphus College with a Bachelor of Science in chemistry and mathematics. Following graduation, she was hired by 3M on a temporary contract basis because, at that time, women were not hired as permanent employees; it was assumed they would eventually get married and leave the company. Sherman did marry but continued to work at 3M until her retirement in 1992. Patsy Sherman went on to achieve many awards during her career. In 1974 she was the first woman inducted into 3M's Carlton Society, which honors the company's top scientists; also in 2002 she was asked to speak at the United States Patent and Trademark Offices 200th birthday celebrations. Patsy's invention of Scotchgard is considered one of the top fifteen accidental inventions.

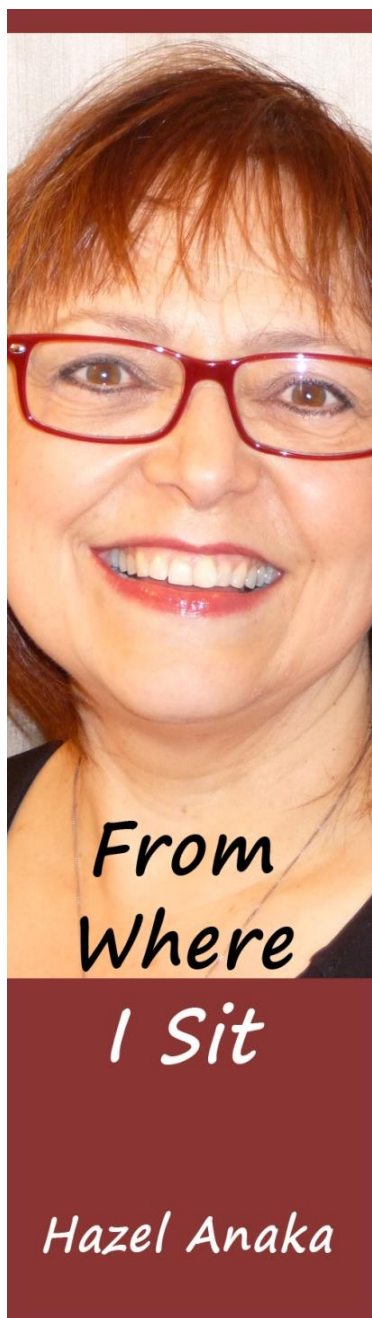
Further information about this ingenious woman can be found at the following websites:

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scotchgard>

<http://www.women-inventors.com/Patsy-Sherman.asp>

<http://www.minnesotainventors.org/inductees/patsy-o-sherman.html>

compiled by Barb Godin



## Play the Game

Hilary came to the farm last weekend so she could help us with harvest 2016. Because of the crappy weather, no combining was possible. So, as we caught up on Homeland episodes on Netflix, we also planned a trip.

In November, Hilary's convocation from Royal Roads University in Victoria will see her receive a Master of Arts in Professional Communications degree. Kind of a big deal in our family. Or any family, for that matter. We recognize how much hard work it took to accomplish this while working full-time. We know how many family activities she missed or cut short because of papers to write or group work to do. We know she used vacation time to attend the required in-class sessions. We know this necessitated two-years of focused commitment. She wants to go. So, we'll go too.

But oh, my God, the planning required to do this short junket. Some parameters to consider: use WestJet because we all had a credit soon to expire; allow enough time to do something besides attend the ceremony and dinner; be conscious of costs both in time and money. Make it all happen within the limitations of flight and ferry schedules.

So Hilary began researching the flight options. We've never been to Seattle so thought that would be a nice side trip. Do the side trip before or after the Tuesday convocation? Fly on a weekend or weekday? Rent a car or use cabs?

What about hotels? Can we use any of the loyalty cards we already have? Not because we have enough points for *anything* but to collect some more! Starwood Preferred Guest covers the Marriott properties plus Westin, Four Points, Sheraton, and more; Best Western Rewards; and Priority Club for Holiday Inns, Crowne Plazas, and more. Check out Trivago I say. Does the seniors' discount or for AMA members help? Try AirBNB I say. I can't believe none of our kids have ever even heard of it never mind used it. Apparently she booked the Victoria hotel using the university's block of rooms and is treating us to the (unnamed) Seattle hotel.

How can we save money on the ferry? By riding as pedestrians or crossing with a rental car? Do we save anything by flying home from Seattle instead of Victoria? Damn near need a spreadsheet and a degree in Economics to figure all this out. Initially I was using a photocopy of a month-at-a-glance calendar page so we could visualize the week. Then a few days later Hilary sent an itinerary and 'invitation to edit' email using Google sheets. Huh? I tried opening it because yet again, it was too miserable out to run a combine. Seems I need permission. Now I wait for that.

When did traveling get so complicated? In most situations, lots of choice is a good thing. You just have to have the right temperament or you can lose your mind in the process. Having a daughter willing to play the game helps, from where I sit.



Dear  
Barb

Barbara Godin

## Lives Erased—or Not.

**Dear Barb:**

*Recently my 18-year-old cat passed away. I have two dogs at home, and, since Tabby has passed, they seem to be grieving. I am surprised as I didn't notice them hanging out much together. The dogs are hardly eating and keep checking Tabby's bed. Often they lay on the sofa with their heads down looking very sad. It almost seems like the loss is affecting them more than it is me. I have heard that animals grieve but I've never really witnessed it. Does this seem normal? Thanks, Kara.*

Hi Kara,

Sorry for your loss. Losing a pet is a very traumatic event, even though we are always aware that it will happen one day, it doesn't make it any easier. Yes, your dogs are acting normally. They have lost a companion. Even though you may not have noticed too much interaction between your cat and the dogs, the cat was part of the daily routine and now he/she is gone. There are a few things you can do, though. Keep the daily routine the same and don't overprotect the surviving pets. Sometimes when people are very hurt by the loss of a pet they become fearful of bonding to the other pets they have. Give it time, as with any loss, time heals. This is a normal part of the life cycle. Thanks for writing in Kara.

**Dear Barb:**

*I look forward to reading your column every week. I have a friend who has a three-year-old daughter who has been posting her pictures on social media since before the daughter was born. I say before she was born because she put her daughter's ultrasounds on face book and instagram. Basically this child's whole life has been posted for the world to see. Also when she was a baby naked pictures were posted. I understand that a chubby little baby is cute, but usually it's only the family that wants to see these pictures. I just don't understand why people are doing this. How are these children going to feel when they get older and their whole life is online, never to be erased! Brenda.*

Hey Brenda:

Thanks for taking the time to read my columns. I tend to agree with you, but this seems to be the way of the world now. According to statistics, most parents post over 1000 pictures of their children. People choose to document every event in their lives and their children's lives, even relationship issues, bad and good, are out there for everyone to witness. Parents frequently take pictures or video tape their children's activities, all the while they end up missing the present moment. Frequently as these children grow up they are embarrassed and ask their parents to take these pictures down, but by then they may have been viewed thousands of times. Great topic Brenda.

*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.

Read the series from the beginning.



Fifth panel by Susan Malmstrom ("Lucky Rabbit")



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## Don't Forget to Vote!

The AUSU By-Election starts today! All AUSU members have been mailed their official ballot through the Simply Voting system as of today (Sept 30)!

The winning candidates will be representing you on AUSU council for 18 months, so make sure to get informed about the candidates and cast your vote! **Ballots are open from September 30 to October 3.**

Join our [Election Forum](#) to find out more about the candidates and ask them questions, or check out the candidate biographies on the AUSU website [here](#).

The results will be announced at a special meeting of council on **October 5 at 4:30pm MT**. The meeting is by teleconference and all members are welcome. The agenda and teleconference instructions are online [here](#).

Make note, the ballots are sent to AUSU members only. Visit the AUSU website [here](#) for membership criteria.

If you have any concerns about the election, contact the Chief Returning Officer at [cro@ausu.org](mailto:cro@ausu.org).



## IMPORTANT DATES

- **Sept 30:** October course extension deadline
- **Sept 30 – Oct 3:** AUSU By-Election Ballots Open
- **Oct 5:** [By-Election Results announced](#) (4:30pm MT)
- **Oct 5:** [AU Open House Webinar](#)
- **Oct 10:** [Deadline to register in a course starting Nov 1](#)
- **Oct 13:** AUSU Council Meeting
- **Oct 15:** November degree requirements deadline

## Enter to Win a FREE AU COURSE!

Get more involved with AUSU in our [#igo2AU contest](#) for a chance to win a **FREE UNDERGRADUATE COURSE** at AU!

Up to 5 entries per person! Visit our website [here](#) to find out how to enter and read the official contest rules!

Enter to Win a **FREE**  
**UNDERGRADUATE COURSE**  
at  
**Athabasca University**



## Peter MacKinnon Student Service Award

In honor of the outgoing Athabasca University President, Peter MacKinnon, and his leadership contributions to AU, AUSU is going to offer an additional Student Service Award in his name during our November awards cycle.

This award will be granted to an AUSU member who shows leadership in their service contributions to the community. The value of this award is \$1000.

To apply for the **Peter MacKinnon Student Service Award**, simply fill out a regular "Student Service Award" application. All other awards criteria and requirements are the same as our existing Student Service Award.

Apply for this or any of our other awards or bursaries on our website [here](#).

**Deadline to Apply: November 1**

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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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