

# THE VOICE

## MAGAZINE

Vol 24 Issue 39 2016-10-07

## Holly Golightly of Montreal

On the Need for a Cat called Poor Slob

## My Dog the Rock Star

It's Complicated

## Boots

Old Friends.

*Plus:  
Woman's Best Friend  
The Creative Spark  
and much more!*



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[www.voicemagazine.org](http://www.voicemagazine.org)

500 Energy Square  
10109 – 106 ST NW  
Edmonton AB  
T5J 3L7

800.788.9041 ext. 2905

Email  
[voice@voicemagazine.org](mailto:voice@voicemagazine.org)

**Publisher**

AU Students' Union

**Editor-In-Chief**

Sarah Cornett

**Managing Editor**

Karl Low

**Regular Contributors**

Hazel Anaka  
Christina M. Frey  
Barb Godin  
Barbara Lehtiniemi  
Samantha Stevens  
Wanda Waterman  
Carla Knipe

Views and articles presented  
here are those of the  
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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](#)?***

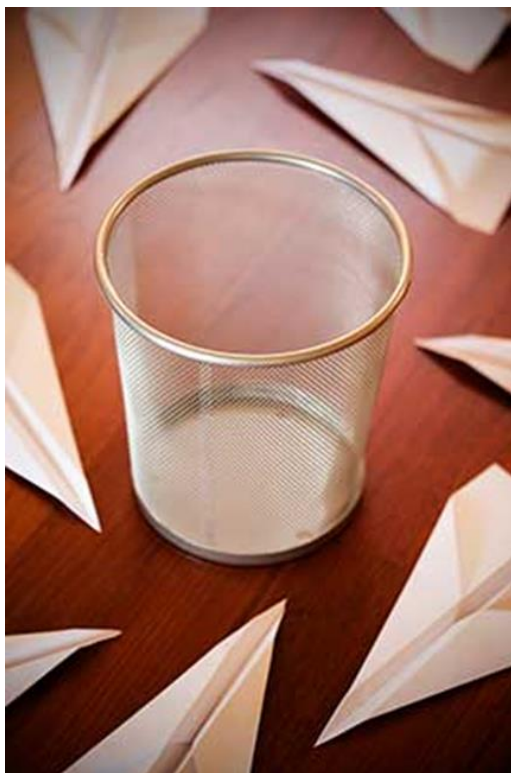
No kidding! We also do the [twitter](#) thing once in a while if you're into that.



## EDITORIAL

### Election Surprise

Karl Low



Sometimes you get a hint of just how many isolated silos there are around AU.

Take, for instance, the recent AUSU by-election. The person who received the highest number of votes was student Amanda Lipinski. "Who?" you might ask, and you'd not be alone. Amanda Lipinski did not do any campaigning, so far as I can see, in any of the usual places. She provided no extended candidate bio on the AUSU provided forums, answered none of the questions students asked in those forums (even though she was the only candidate who had a question posed directly to her), provided no candidate poster, and had no involvement in the unofficial Facebook group for Athabasca University students and staff.

So how did she win? Some students have even wondered about the integrity of the elections process because of this. Personally, however, I don't think that's an issue. With just under a thousand voters, the total votes each candidate received are all close enough to each other that it seems unlikely there was any foul play involved. A cheater, after all, wouldn't know how few votes would gain them the win, and with over 26,000 eligible voters, would be very likely to over-vote for their

chosen candidate by a great amount. Instead, this is just a reminder that AU is comprised of very many communities, some smaller, some larger. As a business student, it's possible she campaigned in forums and on pages that are only frequented by AUSU business students. There is also an AU Student Mom's page on Facebook that I understand has a lot of activity still, so her campaigning could have been done on that site. It's also possible she received some benefit from having the same name as the star of the short lived series *Desperate Measures*. Or she could be a student who is also attending a traditional university, and campaigned in real space. Or all of the above.

The take away from this is that we don't know how many people around us are AU students. With over 26,000 eligible voters, the bulk of them Canadian, that means that for every 1,500 people in our country, one of them is probably an AU student. That doesn't sound like many until you think about how many people are in your town or community. You're not alone.

At any rate, congratulations to the winners, Amanda Lipinski and Robin Bleich, and thanks to all the candidates who were willing to step forward. Even if you didn't get elected, your participation in the process, especially as you campaigned and answered questions, gives us all ideas for possible ways that the student experience can be improved.

Meanwhile, this week in *The Voice Magazine*, many of our writers have taken the notion of thanksgiving and how it typically brings family together to bring us a glimpse (both written and visual) of their family members. Specifically, the furry (or scaly) four footed variety. We also find our own Holly Golightly, look at how to bring creative writing tricks into your normal essays, and of course our selection of news, reviews, advice, and other entertainment to keep you busy while the turkey cooks. Enjoy the read!

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karl".

## Holly Golightly of Montreal

Wanda Waterman



The fire escape where the author played guitar

On the afternoon in question I've been living in the City of Saints for four months. I'm outside on a small balcony that faces a back alley and softly strumming my guitar. Without thinking I start playing and humming the illustrious Mancini theme from *Breakfast at Tiffany's*.

I look back into my apartment. I have no furniture. I'm sitting on a fire escape playing a guitar and singing "Moon River" with a heart full of tender longing.

I've become Holly Golightly, the poor, rural southern gal who's come to New York in *Breakfast at Tiffany's* to become a fine lady.

Except that instead of being a glamorous escort girl hitting up rich men for milk money I'm a jeans-and-baggy-sweater wearing digital nomad, working online to earn my groceries. Instead of a writer living upstairs there's a jolly elderly Greek named George, who can't remember my name but who crushes me painfully to his bosom every time he sees me on the street. And instead of being a delicate little waif daintily munching croissants I'm a big husky Maritimer with a taste for dulce, rappie pie, and Solomon Gundy.

Of course, Holly Golightly (spoiler alert) isn't her real name. Her real name is Lula Mae Barnes, and, as her new name suggests, she's done well: Her diction is flawless, and she successfully apes the speech, dress, and comportment of a 5th Avenue debutante. All she needs now is a rich husband to make it all legit. Technically.

In spite of all the artifice, Holly is an amazing human being. As her agent says: "She's a phony, but she's a *real* phony." It's a line that resonates with meaning on several levels, saying as much about the nature of art— of film in particular— as it does about the character of this poor rube who's miraculously managed to remake her persona in the image of her ideal woman.

Dare I stretch the comparison? Okay, I do hail from Boondocks, Nova Scotia, where I grew up milking cows, hauling water, and throwing in wood, all while wearing my dad's buffalo plaid jacket. (During my preteen years I would often bitterly ask myself, "Would Barbie ever dress like this? Is this some work Barbie would do? *Ever?*")

Of course I got away as soon as I could. Halifax wasn't Glamour Central but it was a leap. Eventually home called me back and I settled there.

Neighbors remarked, "Jumpin,' always thought ya'd move away. Too smart fer here."

Later I left again— for another small rural town.

One day a friend asked, "Why are you always living in *terra incognita*? Look at yourself! You're an intellectual, a poet! You love jazz and art films! You wear too much black eyeliner! Go to a big city!"

The writing was on the wall. I was Jed Clampett, and kinfolk were saying, "Move away from there." (By the way, Buddy Ebsen, the actor who played Jed Clampett on *The Beverly Hillbillies*, also played Doc, Holly's estranged husband, in *Breakfast at Tiffany's*. See how the universe all gloms together sometimes?)

Montreal had always been my poetic dreamscape, my fantasy planet. I imagined walking down a wintry Sherbrooke street in a pea coat with the collar turned up, feeling cold and hungry and glad to be alive, "Bird on the Wire" playing on the soundtrack, on my way to a coffeehouse rendezvous with kindred spirits, fellow creative monsters with their fingers on the pulse o' what's happenin' now.

I make it happen. Six months later I'm in Mark Twain's "City of a Hundred Steeples," trying to make a mark for myself as a poet in the town that had spawned my hero, Leonard Cohen, and wishing I had his money so I could afford to join the intelligentsia at a bohemian café.

One day I scrape together a little espresso money and head out to visit a local hangout, a place where all the pipes are showing, the cement floor bears scratched paint of varying hues, and the clients wear outfits no mother could love.

I run into my building's handyman, Yves, and invite him to join me.

"I do not go to dat cafe," he says disapprovingly. "Dey are red communist! Dey want separate!"

It's just before the provincial election and his habitual ire against reds, separatists, and red separatists has peaked. He starts pointing out signs, remarking that those that were once bilingual are now in French only. Yves's father is Hungarian, his mother Quebecoise and a separatist. The marriage hadn't lasted long.

"I am sick of dis!" he spits. "Damn separatist ruin de Quebec. I want go to Toronto!"

Soon I finally get to perform my poems in public. The event is at a chic jazz club during Nuit Blanche, Montreal's famous annual all-night citywide arts event.

The francophone poets get the first shot. We anglophones arrive early and sit there for hours trying to decipher what they're saying. They're done at 2:00 a.m., and it's our turn to go on, at which point all the francophone poets and audience members get up and leave *en masse*.

There are only about ten people left, and they're all performers. It's just as well; I've picked poetic poems, not angry, ranting poems like everyone else, and my reading goes over like a lead balloon.

Back home it's *poor me*, sprawled on the new *chaise longue*, the back of my hand resting on my forehead, bewailing the fact that here, *even here* I can't win the adulation I so richly merit. I must be just too precious, too brilliant, too gifted for *anywhere*.

It's all their fault—everyone has devolved into philistines, no one's cultured anymore, everyone's wandering around gabbing on hidden cellphones, like Bedlam escapees jibbering away to themselves, oblivious to the beauty around them, beauty that includes my radiant presence on the same street.

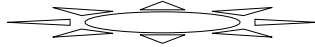


Then I remember the husky gal in buffalo plaid. I squeeze my eyes shut and wince.

And then I remember Holly. What I need is a pet cat called "Poor Slob," a beast onto which I can project my humble origins and my loser persona. That will make everything better. I can then get on with trying to fake my way through life.

Perhaps one day I'll even get to be a "real phony."

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



## Boots



## Barb Godin

I can't believe it's been twenty years since I first saw those two little green eyes peering out at me through the bars of the cage. I tried to look away, but my eyes were locked and I knew I had been "picked." The paperwork was completed and the next day we picked up our six month old black and white kitten. Boots seemed the logical name since her tiny paws were all white. It didn't take long for Boots to put our sixty-three pound Collie Sheppard in her rightful place. I have had many cats throughout my life, but Boots was unique. She has never jumped on a countertop, ripped a curtain or clawed at the furniture. She was truly a dream come true.

Boots and I have shared many life events, as well as a home, over longer than with anyone else in my entire life. She is an indoor cat who, fortunately, believes the only way to go outside is with a leash on. At times I believe she actually thinks she is a dog. Boots has never been a lap cat, she is content to sit on her chosen perch and watch the world go by, in her own majestic way. Through the years Boots and I have always had an unspoken respect for each other, while maintaining a courteous distance.

But Boots and my husband Ed, on the other hand, were much more intimate. Every morning as Ed got ready for work Boots would join him in the bathroom and after twenty minutes they would both emerge bright eyed and ready to begin their day. I have to admit at times I was a bit jealous of their relationship.

When my grandchildren joined the family Boots knew to stay clear of flaying hands and wobbly feet. Boots travelled well in the car and also in the camper, which is a rarity for felines. By the time Boots was eight years old, she developed a cancerous tumour in one eye. The vet assured us it was not serious and is contained within the eye. Through the years Boots and I began to grow closer and occasionally she would lie beside me on the sofa. By the time she was ten years old, our lives had changed drastically as Ed had been diagnosed with terminal cancer. Boots seemed to sense his illness and began cuddling beside him in bed and on the sofa following a long

day of chemotherapy treatments, while Rusty lay nearby on the floor. Our pets provided much needed comfort as we struggled through the trauma of our daily lives.

A few months later we noticed a weakness in Rusty's back legs. A trip to the vet revealed she had a deadly cancer too, and would probably die within weeks; sadly we chose to put her down. When we arrived home Boots was waiting for us, perched on the back of the sofa, looking as if she already knew Rusty wouldn't be coming home again. During the months ahead Boots was our ray of sunshine, always beside us providing warmth and tenderness to the very end of Ed's life. After Ed's passing Boots and I grew closer as we consoled each other during tear filled days and nights.

Eventually the dreadful day came when I knew it was time to go through Ed's things. Through the blur of tear filled eyes I gently folded Ed's clothing into piles. Initially Boots sat off to the side watching, then she sauntered over and began sniffing and rolling herself on top of the clothing. I knew this was her way of saying goodbye to a much loved friend. People say cats are aloof but I knew this wasn't true.

After much healing Boots and I moved on and developed a new life journey which now included Stan. Boots was happy to have another man in her life, as she readily snuggled up for chin rubs. When I began writing this story I feared it might have a different ending as Boot's health continues to decline having more bad than good days. Boots is a special cat and her and I will always share an exceptional part of each other's lives.

*After-word:* The story was supposed to end there, but since I first wrote this, Boot's health continued to deteriorate and, recently, she stopped eating. Sadly, I knew it was time to say goodbye to my loyal, faithful companion of twenty years. Boots peacefully closed her eyes moved on to the journey that ultimately awaits us all. Till we meet again my dear sweet girl.

*Barbara Godin is a graduate of AU and writes the "Dear Barb" column. She lives in London, Ontario with her husband, and two dogs.*

## Student Sizzle AU's Hot Social Media Topics

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

#### AthaU Facebook Group

Manuela wants to know if it's possible to amend a scholarship application after submitting it. Erin seeks info on citing a case study in APA format. Kevin is curious if a final course grade will be computed if he's missing an assignment at the course end date.

Other posts include writing AU exams from home, essay formatting, feedback from tutors, accessing course materials, and the AUSU by-election.

#### reddit

Seabhac1 asks for feedback on which undergrad program is best if the ultimate goal is to practice Environmental Law.

#### Twitter

@AthabascaU tweets: "#AthaU is #NowHiring Employment Services #Administrator responsible for providing client service to internal clients <https://goo.gl/2XCBSQ>."

@AthabascaUSU (AUSU) tweets: "The Student Lifeline Newsletter is out with lots of great tips for good #mentalhealth <http://bit.ly/2dealiY>."





## My Dog The Rock Star

Barbara Lehtiniemi



It's complicated.

I don't have a dog. I don't even like dogs. I fear dogs.

My fear and dislike of dogs stems from my childhood. A neighbour's Miniature Dachshund, a gentle old sausage named Cindy, inexplicably panicked one day and bit me. Cindy gashed my pants and my leg, and shredded my attitude toward dogs forever.

From that time, I've given dogs a wide berth. I choose walking routes that are dog-free. Nothing grips my innards with icy fear

like the approach of a strange dog or even the jingle of a chain. After all, if I couldn't trust a friendly neighbourhood dog, what dog could I trust?

Over the years I've managed to grudgingly accept a few dogs. I've tolerated the dogs of friends and family members, gradually getting used to their presence—under close supervision by their owners, naturally. I've scratched Taffy's ears, let Max sleep on my feet, and even dog-sat Noble (his owners promised to give me substantial compensation if their dog ever bit me, which made it worth the risk.) I remained aloof, however, and generally avoided dogs—and dog owners.

Then I met Rocky.

It was after I moved to the country several years ago. I received permission to walk on a neighbour's property, a mix of forest and crop land. When I expressed my city-bred nervousness about wild animals—coyotes especially, who are just nasty wild dog relatives—my neighbour said, "Take Rocky." I wasn't convinced Rocky—a large mixed-breed dog with the body of a German Shepherd and the colouring of a Golden Retriever—would reduce my general animal anxiety, but I was willing to give him a try.

We didn't get off to a great start. Rocky barked menacingly at me as I walked up "his" driveway, his standard reaction to unfamiliar people or vehicles. But, once I got close enough to be recognized and to call his name, he switched from guard dog to pet dog. He grinned apologetically and swished his tail to wave away ill will.

"Wanna go for a walk?" I asked. Oh yeah, he did. Rocky led the way to the trail, casting glances over his shoulder to make sure I was following. With the energy of three dogs, he ran up the trail, back to me, then zig-zagged from side to side to inspect—and sometimes contribute to—the scents of nature.

As a protector, he excelled. The faintest rustling sent him into chase frenzy. Whatever animals could possibly threaten surely had second thoughts when Rocky was on duty. Even non-threatening animals were flushed from the forest. Rocky routinely treed outraged squirrels and drove off perplexed partridges and panicked turkeys.

After a few walks, Rocky and I were friends. Now when I go up the driveway, he does not bark. He wags his tail and bounds over to greet me. When I ask, "Wanna go for a walk?", Rocky bounces and twirls in his enthusiasm.

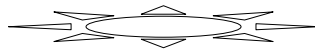
Rocky has become my devoted friend. He is always upbeat and enthusiastic, and happy to let me make the decisions on which trail to take and how far to walk. He's become a confidant, never judgemental or prone to interrupting; he never tells my secrets to a soul. He walks when I walk, stops when I stop, and—mostly—comes when called. Rocky answers to "Rocky", "puppy", and—his favourite—"Rock Star."

Rocky is patient, too. He understands that my walking schedule is subject to whim and weather. Sometimes we walk daily and other times—in the deer fly season especially—not for weeks. Rocky waits patiently on his front porch, ready to swish his tail in recognition the minute he sees me walking up his driveway.

My relationship with dogs is still complicated. I don't think I'll ever be a dog person or completely shake my deep-rooted fear of dogs. But I'm devoted to one dog and I'm grateful to be one of Rocky's people.

Since I moved to the country, I've never encountered a menacing wild animal when out walking. Perhaps that's because there aren't any out there. But I think it's because I'm walking with a Rock Star.

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



## The Creative Spark

### You're the Star

**Marie Well**



A lotto-winner who tosses her winnings into the trash and covers it with dog scats? What if that was you? You might not know how that person feels, but you've felt burdened before, haven't you? We all have.

When writing stories, your own feelings and experiences can breathe life into characters you normally wouldn't understand. Through story-writing, you could live the life of a Prime Minister, a CEO, an astronaut, even a hit-man. However far-fetched this may seem, your emotional range can capture all of these people's experiences. But what about building characters through essay-writing? Characters do happen in essays, after all.

Writing about Plato? A character. Writing about a non-character? You serve as a third-person narrator: another character. And you cite academics: more characters.

And some of the authors you cite disagree: villains and heroes clashing swords. The heroes agree with your views, of course. And in essays, you and your allies always win. And if your characters' arguments all advance your thesis, you've bagged an A.

(As a disclaimer—and these *Creative Spark!* articles beg for disclaimers— you need the buy-in from your prof before stirring in the fun. After all, original ideas ignite the *Creative Spark!*)

Nancy Kress in her book *Characters, Emotion, & Viewpoint* reveals character secrets. I stretch her truth into an original idea: building story-like characters in essay-writing. (Kress's views are in bold. All parallels to essay writing are my attempts at synthesis.)

**Fascinate with your characters.** Sometimes an author you cite has a Wikipedia or Facebook bio. Note the author's biases or any cutting-edge ideas. Any intrigue. The more familiar you get with the "big players" who warrant Wikipedia pages, the better off you'll be come grad school time. Add depth to your cited authors with relevant biographical info.

**Your Story Structure Depends on Your Characters.** Similarly, your narrator point-of-view, the people you discuss, and the authors you cite—they all shape the direction of your essay. Pick them wisely. Make it a story, sorry, essay, that you can't wait to write. Who you choose to cite alters your essay.

**Characters React to Setting.** If you're talking about Plato, know something about Ancient Greece. Ancient Greece made Plato who he was. If it were modern times, Plato might be a former philosophy major hit hard by the economy, now employed by *The Voice Magazine*. Your setting has significance for your essay's cited authors and historical figures. Reveal that significance.

**Be the Writer, the Reader, and the Character.** Write away. Then imagine how the reader (your prof) responds to your narration, your cited authors: your characters. Then imagine yourself as the authors you cite or as the Plato's you discuss. Switch from writer to reader to character: become all three.

Even imagine yourself as the people who oppose your views. Become them. As if their blood warms your heart. Cry when you defeat them.

**Emotionally Become them.** To identify with the authors you cite, or the central people you discuss, emotionally become them. If Plato marvels about humankind's limited awareness of beauty, imagine a time when beauty welled emotion in you and you longed for more. What did you feel?

Identify with your characters emotionally. By doing so, you'll up your pathos. But don't distort the truth.

**Wow with Your Stars; Spend Less Time on Your Extras.** Some of the researchers you cite will form the crux of your argument: your stars. Laud them. Give them high word count.

If you can, weave in bits of their bios that move your argument forward. Do you cite a star author—a Jewish Holocaust survivor—who argues against oppression?

Sometime in your life, you felt oppressed. Call up that experience. Relive it. Then write on behalf of your Jewish Holocaust survivor author. Give him not just a voice, but your inner world.

And make sure your star author has some *wow!* Ideas. Who you choose as your star will create a different story; choose wisely.



You'll have bit players, too: the unknowns, the ones with thin arguments—the ones you don't develop beyond one or two citations. These bit players serve as your extras. No emotional arc needed.

So, stun with your stars but lower the lip-service on your extras.

**Are Your Stars Fascinating? Relevant?** If not, search the literature for better stuff to cite. If you're not excited about the ideas, neither is your prof. Seek to sizzle.

So, become every author you cite—become even your prof. Puff up your pathos, but don't distort the truth. A paradox? I say, a *creative spark*.



## Exotic Pets Have Gone Mainstream

Carla Knipe



I never dreamed I'd be a reptile owner. But I guess it could be considered fate when I found myself agreeing to adopt two middle aged bearded dragons. A teacher at the school I work at brought the beardies to live there after her son went to university. He couldn't take his pets with him. This new arrangement wasn't the best for the lizards, but my son couldn't tear himself away from their tank in the corridor. The teacher approached me with a proposition, and after a lot of thought, I agreed to adopt them. So, one cold winter day, we bundled up our new pets in blankets and a hot water bottle and moved them to their new home.

Surprisingly, the two scaly siblings grew on all of us. I started talking to them when I passed by the tank, and we found they were quite social. A favourite spot for them was to sit on my son's shoulder while he watched television. Even my husband couldn't help but check up on them every once in a while. Feeding them crickets was kind of amusing and not as "icky" as I thought it would be, but, thankfully, we found out they ate mostly salad. I read every book I could get my hands on to make sure I was doing the right things for them. And we quickly found out that, despite the fact that bearded dragons have become a popular pet and require less maintenance than other reptiles, they have their own specialized care needs.

The popularity of exotic pets has been rising over the last two decades and shows no sign of slowing down. Exotic pets are defined by veterinarians and animal welfare organizations as anything other than a dog or cat, and that is deemed unusual and cannot be fully domesticated. This definition includes birds, reptiles, fish, small mammals such as rodents, rabbits and ferrets, and pets of the bug variety such as scorpions and tarantulas. According to the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council of Canada, the most recent statistics estimate that 2,850,000 households in Canada have an exotic pet and of that, 543,000 households own a reptile. There are,

however, limits to what can and cannot be kept as pets, and these regulations vary provincially; such as no venomous snakes, no primates, no endangered animals, and even no domestic farm animals when kept inside a dwelling. But, judging by the variety of pets now found in pet stores and bred by private breeders, the list of out of the ordinary pets is growing and becoming commonplace.

This does not mean that caring for one of these critters is simple. It is so easy to pick out and purchase one from a pet store or breeder, but all too often people do so without knowing what is really involved in caring for a particular species. Often, people do not do much research and, at worst, these animals are an impulse buy where the owners have no idea how to care for them. Consequently, rescue organizations are seeing a rise in exotic pets surrendered to them, and there are ads for exotic pets on buy and sell sites where the owners admit that they can no longer give their pets the time or care they require.

So if you are thinking about welcoming an unusual pet into your life, here are some things to consider before you do so.

The most important aspect of pet ownership is to research the basic care needs of the particular species before making the commitment. Not just for one generic type such as "saltwater fish", but that animal in particular (such as "clown fish") because the care needs can vary widely within the type of pet. This includes diet and nutrition, housing needs such as the amount of space they require, as well as any particular heating, lighting, or humidity requirements. It is also important to be aware of how long the pet will live and how large it will be when it is fully grown. Another point to consider is whether that species needs to be kept in pairs or groups, or if it prefers solitude. Also remember that many exotic pets need to be taken out of their enclosure for daily exercise, or bathed on occasion. And if you have young children or other pets, such as a dog or cat, it is very important to research how that exotic pet might react to loud noises or potential rough handling or other disturbances. For example, rabbits may appear docile but they actually need daily interaction with their owners and daily exercise out of their hutch. Ferrets are an increasingly popular pet, but they need regular medical checkups and immunizations. Hedgehogs and some lizards are prone to hibernation in the wild, but check with a vet whether this behavior at home should be encouraged. Vets recommend yearly checkups for exotic pets, even for reptiles such as snakes and bearded dragons, to check for infections and parasites. There is an increasing number of veterinarians that specialize in the care of exotic pets, but these medical practices are often more common in urban centres rather than rural areas, so it is a good idea to also research whether specialized vet care is readily available.

While the information found on the internet can be helpful, pet forums can give a lot of conflicting information. If you can't get advice from a medical professional, another great source of information is an experienced pet society. There are many breed-specific groups being formed all over and it is always great to learn about your chosen animal and share the trials as well as the funny side of owning your pet.

There are new varieties of exotic pets that are available in the pet trade and becoming more acceptable as pets, such as sugar gliders, giant African land snails, hermit crabs and "new" species of tortoises and lizards. But while these pets can be a conversation starter for their owners, the most important thing to remember that, despite the novelty factor that an exotic pet provides, any pet is a huge responsibility. The commitment in providing care should not be taken lightly. But there are so many great things about pet ownership—no matter whether your ideal choice is furry, scaly, prickly or even a bit slimy. With the right care, exotic pets can be a great addition to your family.

*Carla has been known to bounce article ideas off her bearded dragons. She says they make great study partners.*

## Woman's Best Friend

Deanna Roney



I'm not sure where the phrase, "man's best friend" came from. Perhaps it was meant in a wider view of the term "man" as in huMANKind? I am an animal lover; I have always had pets of some variety. Even when I lived in an apartment that didn't allow animals I got a hamster. Though, a hamster is really not the same as a cat or dog. When I was only a few months old we got a dog. It was a running commentary that he and I shared the same birthday. At seven years old my first kitten, and since those days the house, as I say, has almost always contained the warmth of these animals.

I now have two large dogs who are 75 pounds of love wrapped in a fur coat and

slobber. They sit at my feet while I study, read, or write. They are persistent in urging me to get my butt out of the chair and get some fresh air with them. They guard the house ferociously against crows, ravens, and stray cats; with wet kisses against people. We had a pack of three, the third was a hundred pounds of intimidation, though, if he knew you, he would simply wiggle in excitement. We lost him over a year ago; he was the one who would lay under my desk for hours while I studied and worked on papers. It was his domain. With his still-felt absence the other two have had to step into his role as the alpha and take turns keeping my feet warm while I work.

There is a debate over which is better, cats or dogs? I believe it depends on the circumstance and both have their role. For myself, I will always have dogs, and, if I lived somewhere else perhaps cats too. Where I am now there are too many cats roaming the neighbourhood; so many that I wouldn't be able to let my cat outside, and that hardly seems fair. Well, that, and my dogs have gained a disdain for cats, which torment them through the fence. Dogs have an ability to sense when their owner is upset, or stressed, and they believe that their love will solve anything and everything, and sometimes it does. When I pushed myself to my limits to get through courses in a timely manner I felt like I was falling behind and my resilience was breaking., I would inevitably feel a nose push through my arms and demand attention; I would feel a paw reaching out for me, landing on my knee and begging to be held. Their eyes would pout and they would look at me as if they could take the stress for me they would. As if they wanted me to just be happy. They would let me hug them and bury my face into their fur, curling their chin around my neck and hugging me back: how can you stay upset when this happens?

Their excitement for me to join them outside in the yard, even for a few minutes, and throw their toy is infectious, and that short break away from the desk, away from stress, would be enough to rejuvenate and reignite the fire within to get the project done, to get through the road block, and carry on. There are downsides to dogs, sometimes they bark and disturb the neighbours, the most notable one though is the yard in spring time, when all the poop that melted through the snow and gathered all winter reveals itself, but these are things I gladly tend to. These are things that I don't bat an eye at because they mean my house is full, my dogs are happy, and by taking care of them they will return the favour tenfold.

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



## Music Review

### Haj i Ji and Sariah Idan

**Samantha Stevens**



*Photo by Sequoia Emmanuelle*

**Artists:** Haj i Ji and Sariah Idan

**Single:** "Where Will I Go (feat. Sariah Idan)"

Haj i Ji and Sariah Idan just released their beautiful collaborative track "Where Will I Go." Part of Haj i Ji's latest EP, *Reports of My Demise*, released September 20th, "Where Will I Go" is an amazing single that is sure to have you grooving to the sultry beats.

The artist Haj i Ji (formerly Sub Swara, Freek Factory, Nyxyss) is known for his unpredictable creative nature and willingness to push the boundaries of music and genres. Starting out as a DJ in New York, Haj has had an exciting career that has spanned from New York to San Francisco. *Reports of My Demise* is the second album that Haj has released on his label On The Perch Records.

Hailing originally from New York, and having relocated to Los Angeles, singer/songwriter Sariah Idan has recently been creating waves in the Los Angeles music scene. Known for her ability to blend a variety of musical genres like soul, reggae, jazz, and hip hop, Sariah's voice brings to mind memories of beautiful songstresses like Sade.

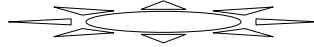
As a child, Sariah was part of the Vanaver Caravan dance and music company in New York, and it was there that she was first introduced to the sounds of the world. Now, Sariah aims to blend sounds from all over the world as a way to express her social activism. Sariah has shared the stage with Peter Seeger, Lee "Scratch" Perry, and Yusef Lateef, and in 2014, Sariah released her debut EP Deeper Than Skin.

"Where Will I Go" is an amazing collaboration between artists which demonstrates that music should not be confined by the notion of genre. The track was written by both Haj and Sariah, with Sariah providing the vocals and acoustic guitar. Sariah's part was recorded at On The Perch Studios in Sonoma, California, and the track was mixed by Jon Margulies of Hobo Technologies in Los Angeles, and mastered by Audible Oddities in Oakland, California.

If you are looking for a song that will lull you, relax you, and still make you move, then "Where Will I Go" is the song for you. The steady rhythm and sensual guitar creates an entrancing melody, and Sariah's voice is majestic. Yet, the reggae and flamenco-feeling beats will get anyone's hips swaying and feet shuffling, making this song not a "sit back and relax" track. Therefore, "Where Will I Go" is best listened to when taking a break from reading or studying, times when you need to get your body up and moving.

"Where Will I Go" is available on iTunes, Soundcloud, and through [Raven Recording](#), where fans can also find the rest of Haj's EP *Reports of My Demise*.

*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**



### Nobel Prizes for the smallest of things

Nobel Prizes were awarded to three scientists for the development of the "world's smallest machines" that might have applications in revolutionizing computers and batteries.

The winners, according to [Canadian Manufacturing](#), were three men. "Frenchman Jean-Pierre Sauvage, British-born Fraser Stoddart, and Dutch scientist Bernard 'Ben' Feringa" earned the Nobel Prizes for machines "1,000<sup>th</sup> the width of a human hair."

The winners were provided a monetary award as well totalling eight million kronor, or \$930,000. These will "will most likely be used in the development of things such as new materials, sensors and energy storage systems."

### Translation of competence into consistent interest

[The Varsity](#) reports that science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) are very important for the everyday concerns and revolutionary discoveries. These can assist in the development of new knowledge and the advancement of fields.

Fortunately, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) found "Canada scoring well above international averages for mathematics, reading, and science literacy."

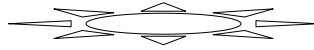
In turn, these competencies that facilitate discoveries "lead to improvements in our standards of living and quality of life." However, an Ipsos Reid found an "inverse relationship between STEM interest and age." That is, people lose interest in STEM with age.

### Overfishing threatens stocks, again

And from [The Tyee](#), an article about how the Canadian fishing industry is "at risk of major stock collapse." Canada's fishing is a \$6 billion industry. Environment and Sustainable development commissioner, Julie Gelfand, warned of the possible collapse of the industry.

Gelfand warning came in her Fall report. In it, she stated 15 of the major Canadian fish stocks are "critically at risk." Even so, they continued to fished. 12 of the 15 have no plans for reconstruction by the government. Gelfand was not aware of this number until the audit for the Fall report.

"We're at potential risk for another stock to potentially collapse. It's disconcerting that the department wasn't aware of this, couldn't wrap it up," Gelfand said.



## Study Tips from a Semi-Anonymous Friend

### The Innocent Bully

*There is nothing more that The Study Dude wants for you than to figure out why, statistically, 37 people report being bullied for every single person who reports being a bully, says Robert I. Sutton (as cited in Stone and Heen). Sounds like the stat of self-proclaimed excellent drivers versus bad drivers? Let's face it, we rock; everyone else sucks.*

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 sinks deeper into Douglas Stone and Sheila Heen's book *Thanks for the Feedback: The Science and Art of Receiving Feedback Well*. A gap will slap your face: the gap between how others view you and how you view yourself. Gave me nightmares.

What about that mismatch between your work and how your professor views your work? We all think we deserve an A when we get a B, don't we?

### Fickle Feedback: Praise, Coaching, and the A or F Grade

We might want praise, but sometimes our TA wants death.

You see, I wanted an A in an AU course. Previously, my undergrad GPA skyrocketed but my master's GPA plummeted back to earth. I wanted a second chance. A chance to re-enter a master's program and finally get that doctorate degree.

Recently, in the AU class, I got on the TA's bad side. He fumed when I contacted staff about a three-week delay to his introductory email reply. "It hasn't been three weeks!" he wrote. He was right: it had been a mere two-and-half weeks. 1/8<sup>th</sup> a semester.

On the Landing, his comments to other students stirred pity. He scorned. Belittled.



And now, I was on his bad list. A certain F for A work.

What did I do? I withdrew.

Then reapplied.

I waited for the best TA to return from sabbatical and then continued the course and got that A.

The ogre retired. He was my bully; the world was his.

Stone and Heen say feedback comes in three forms: praise, coaching and evaluation. I say there's a fourth: no feedback. Here's their view on these three types of feedback. All fickle forms of feedback.

- Coaching is for learning; praise is for appreciation; evaluation lets us know our grade or rank. The world needs all three.
- Sometimes we want one type of feedback but get another. We may want evaluation (kind of like a grade) but get praise. We might want coaching but get evaluation. And so on. Fickle feedback.
- Sometimes praise sucks. You might want to know about your progress in a course that assigns grades at the end: an evaluation. Instead, midway through, you get a pat on the back. So, is your work an A, an F, or a WF: warm fuzzy?
- Many different ways to praise exists: a gift, a favor, the WF.
- Sometimes coaching can twist into evaluation. For example, red ink corrections covering your page like bad acne: we get defensive when we don't want it.
- The solution? Coach first; evaluate later. Separate each task by three or more days. Start with the mark; later on, splatter the red ink.
- Another solution? Clarify what kind of feedback you want. Ask what kind of feedback the receiver wants.

### **Why we're so awesome and deserve a better grade**

Did you ever get bullied by someone who hated you—when you had no ill-will toward her?

A piece of advice: When a prof gets "J" (jealousy), then avoid. At all costs.

Once, I wanted an A in chemistry so that I could study physics. My prof loathed me, though. Like the AU TA above. Never called on for an answer by her, my arm ached as I raised it high, often the only one in the class with an arm raised to her unanswered question.

Yet, at the start, I was the top student.

My friend had top student potential, too, and the prof adored her.

My friend bombed the first exam because, well, she thought multiple guess meant close her eyes and circle whatever. So, the prof allowed us to replace our grade with a rewrite, but rigged the terms in favor of my friend.

I coached my friend on how to write A exams. Neck-in-neck, we battled for that top spot. My friend commented many times on how poorly the prof treated me. I replied, torn, "But her lectures are good."

In the end, I got the top grade.

In spite of that, and the great lectures, the prof's perception of me ended my pursuit of physics.

But, if I could go back in time, I would ask the prof one thing: what was it she despised about me? No holding back. Maybe she would have shown me a blind-spot.

Here's what Stone and Heen say about our blind-spots. Like the droves of bullied people and the scarcity of actual bullies, we've all got blind-spots:

- We hate feedback that criticizes us, don't we?
- Sometimes the feedback just doesn't fit: it's wrong, outdated, biased, unhelpful.
- But wait, we see our saintliness; others see our failings. Often, both sides have merit. So, learn from it.
- First, try to understand the person's criticism. Seek out clarity on unclear words. For instance, you might say to me, "You suck." I should ask, "In what ways do I suck?" If the feedback makes sense, find out how you can improve. You might see a blind-spot.
- When responding to negative feedback, validate the other person's views while slipping your own view in between. Don't disagree; don't agree. Understand. Keep probing until something sounds right. You'll learn in the end.
- Get the data behind a criticism even though the interpretation of the criticism often involves emotion. Seek just the facts.
- When we disagree, each of our arguments have merits. So why the difference in views? Our experiences, our priorities—our lives—are different. To me, I'm the hero and you're the villain; to you, you're the hero and I'm the villain—that is, when we clash.
- Sometimes people see our obvious faults, but we can't.
- We see our emotional reactions as contingent outcomes of a situation; other people see our emotional reactions as permanent parts of our character.
- When we face a scandal, we blame it on the situation; others blame it on our character.
- When something goes wrong, we look to our intentions; others look to our impacts.
- Some people labeled as bullies are unintentionally bullies. Only 1% of people claim to be bullies, according to Stutton (as cited in Stone and Heen). They might feel they have good intentions. They might blame the person claiming to be bullied: *he's so sensitive*. Let the bully know the impact he or she has on you.
- Ask the person, "What did I do wrong?" See your blindspot.

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

Stone, Douglas, & Heen, Sheila. (2014). *Thanks for the Feedback*. NY: Penguin Books.

## Canadian Education News

Scott Jacobsen



### Canada spends more on some education.

Canada spends more on primary education than other countries, but does not produce similar strong results of some other countries, according to Global News. This translates into poorer performance for employment prospects.

According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Canada "isn't doing a great job of keeping post-secondary graduates employed." Canada spends more on the average primary school student and produces worse results than Belgium, for instance.

"Canadian public expenditure on education" comes to 2.3% of total spending (OECD mean).

However, in spite of the poor employment prospects, Canadians have more "post-secondary education than anywhere else."

### Canadian professor criticizes "political correctness"

According to Times Higher Education, one Canadian professor criticised university policy based on "political correctness" and objected to legislation by government. The government legislation would "prohibit discrimination based on gender identity and gender expression."

Psychology Professor at the University of Toronto, Jordan Peterson, considered mandatory anti-racism and anti-bias training for human resources staff as "political training." Peterson sees these as "associated with radical Left ideology."

He added that it assumes that racism and bias exists at the university and that training is the best way to address this. Peterson stated human resources staff should "refuse to subject themselves to re-education regarding their putative racism and bias, unless they want to convict themselves."

### Kids being informed of the risks of sexting

Grade 4 Nova Scotia students are learning about the intricacies being safe on the internet. A story on CBC News: Canada reports how "teachers and schoolboards across Canada" are working to have students knowledgeable of online safety.

There is a growing concern around sexting amongst young people. For example, six teenage boys in the community of Bridgewater, Nova Scotia, are in the midst of child pornography criminal charges for the non-consensual sharing of "intimate images."

A 14-year-old student at Bluenose Academy in nearby Lunenburg, Eva Purcell-MacIntyre, says, "You definitely have to think about the future, and you have to think about the situation. If you are under peer pressure, take yourself away from that peer pressure."

*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.*





Dear  
Barb

Barbara Godin

## Dating 00101(011) – Binary Response

*Dear Barb:*

*I am in my late twenties and I have a one-year-old daughter. My daughter's father is not with us, we tried to stay together but it just didn't work. Before I got pregnant I was in university and now I want to spend time with my daughter so I decided to get my degree online. I recently began taking courses through AU and saw your column while I was reading The Voice. My biggest problem is that I'm so lonely and really miss the university lifestyle. The only place I can meet anyone is in a bar, and all I've met are jerks, so I decided to try online dating sites. I have been on a few dates, but it never developed into anything. I have to admit the meetings end up being sexual and maybe that's why I never got a call back. This is my first experience with online dating and I'm wondering if all the guys on these sites are just looking for sex. I feel pretty bad after these dates. I have talked to other people who have met through online dating and they are now in relationships. I'm wondering if it's something I'm doing that is causing all my dates to end this way. What do you think? Thanks, Jennifer.*

Hi Jennifer:

Online dating is definitely here to stay and I also know a lot of people who have met their significant other online and are in successful relationships. How your dates end is completely up to you. I don't know what your profile looks like, but you may be attracting the wrong type of

guy. Make sure that you present yourself as more than a pretty face and a body. If you want a person of substance you have to be a person of substance. Also be careful not to present yourself as a perfect person, as that will cause guys to be skeptical or feel they are not good enough. Be honest and present yourself as you really are. Don't make up stuff that you think guys like to hear or see. If you do this, then you not going to end up with the person you truly want to be with, since you did not present yourself as the person you truly are. Also be careful of the photos you put on, if they are all selfies and boob shots, then that is what you are selling. Include pictures of you doing things that you enjoy, perhaps out hiking, biking or whatever it is you like to do. Genuine pictures are going to attract genuine guys. I'm sure there are guys on dating sites who are looking strictly for sex and ultimately they are going to gravitate to the profiles that fit in with what that criteria. Another important fact is not to complain about your exes on your profile, as that will turn off most men. Write about the attributes you have to offer and what you are looking for in a potential partner. The best advice I can give you is to present yourself in a true and genuine manner and for the most part you will attract the kind of responses you are looking for. Thanks for writing Jennifer, hope this was helpful.

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.

*I try to explain to Dr. Reuben what it feels like not knowing what my inner void craves . . .*



*. . . To feel that what I need is so close.*



*Meanwhile, I've started something. Most of the Flotsam's crew members also have holo-shrinks now.*



*But Alan thinks psychotherapy is just bourgeois self-indulgence.*

*Doctor Dewey's shrink is called Doctor Ekberg.*



*If you'll excuse me, I have a therapy session.*



*Besides, he's on edge because earth is now at war.*



*Aren't you the least bit curious about the war?*



*No. Tell me about the dreams.*







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## IMPORTANT DATES

- **Oct 10:** [Deadline to register in a course starting Nov 1](#)
- **Oct 13:** AUSU Council Meeting
- **Oct 15:** November degree requirements deadline
- **Oct 30:** November course extension deadline
- **Nov 3:** [AU Open House Webinar](#)
- **Nov 8:** [AUSU Council Meeting](#) (tentative)
- **Nov 10:** [Deadline to register in a course starting Dec 1](#)

## Welcome New Councillors!

The votes are in and we had a good turnout with 988 voters! Thank you to all AUSU members who voted in the AUSU by-election!

The new council members elected in the 2016 AUSU By-Election are **ROBIN BLEICH** and **AMANDA LIPINKSI**.

You can access the complete vote tally on our website [here](#), or you can view the certified results from the Simply Voting system through your ballot.

The appeals period runs until **October 12, 2016**. Contact the Chief Returning Officer, Melissa McBeth, at [cro@ausu.org](mailto:cro@ausu.org) with any questions or concerns.



## 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! Visit our website [here](#) to find out how to enter!

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



## Student Awards – Apply Now!

Applications are now being accepted for AUSU's November cycle awards and bursaries. Each award is worth **\$1000**.

**Academic Achievement Award** (2 available): For students who have achieved academic excellence.

**AUSU Bursaries** (5 available): For students in financial need and/or with exceptional life circumstances.

**Balanced Student Awards** (2 available): For students who balance multiple commitments.

**Returning Student Awards** (2 available): For students who have returned to studies after a long break of two or more years.

**Peter McKinnon Student Service Award**: (1 available): For a student who shows leadership in their service contributions to the community.

**Student Service Awards** (2 available): For students who do volunteer work.

**Single Parent Bursary** (1 available): For single parents in financial need.

Apply online [here](#). **Deadline November 1.**



**AUSU**  
**Awards &**  
**Bursaries**  
  
**Deadline**  
**NOV 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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500 Energy Square - 10109 – 106 St NW - Edmonton AB - T5J 3L7  
Ph: 855.497.7003 - Fax: 780.497.7003 attn: Voice Editor

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