

# THE VOICE

## MAGAZINE

Vol 24 Issue 45 2016-11-25

### Rethinking the Mom Economy

Behind the Numbers

### You Gotta Start Somewhere

Small Steps to a Writing Career

### UBC and CanLit

The Aftermath of an Event

*Plus:*

*The Creative Spark!*

*AU-Thentic Events*

*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](#)?***

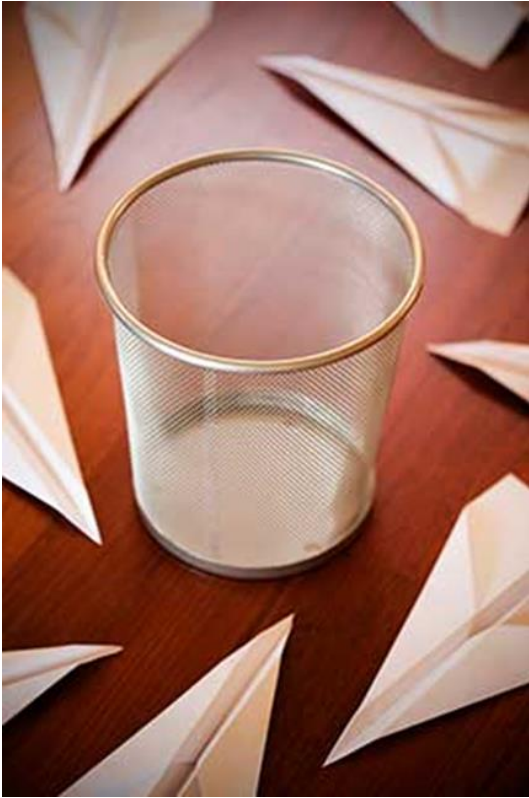
No kidding! We also do the [twitter](#) thing once in a while if you're into that.



## EDITORIAL

### The Final Stretch

Karl Low



Today is officially one month away from Christmas. That means, among other things, that it's time to start deciding what should be in the Annual Best of *The Voice* issue that we print to start each year.

Now is a great time to look back at some of the articles over the past 45 issues and see if any of them twig your memory as something that more students need to read. I've already got a selection of my favorites, but I'm curious to see what yours are. Was there a particular music review that made you seek out the album? Did one of our articles help you get a better mark on one of your courses, or look at things from a different perspective? Did you get a scholarship or award that *The Voice* let you know about? If so, then let me know at [karl@voicemagazine.org](mailto:karl@voicemagazine.org), and not only do I want to hear which articles you think stand out, but I'm really interested in why they stood out to you.

And while I don't want your decisions to be any more difficult than they have to be, I'm afraid this issue isn't going to make it any easier, as we've got a lot of good stuff in here, starting with our feature

article by Carla Knipe. She digs in behind the statistics of the mom economy and looks at what that term means when it comes to the real world. How are real women and moms coping with the additional demands, choices, and difficulties that having kids can bring with them? Carla interviews various women to try to bring us an answer and an idea of where we can go from here.

This also happens to mark the third year that writer Barbara Lehtiniemi has been with us. We commemorate it with her article looking at what brought her to *The Voice Magazine* and where it's helped her to get to. If you're curious about how to start making writing into your career, the first step is simply to write me and ask, I'm always happy to encourage new writers. And as Barb says, "You gotta start somewhere."

Our third article this week brings to light an issue that's been going on at the University of British Columbia by Deanna Roney. It starts with an accusation of misconduct, followed by an open letter from Canada's writing community, and then the reaction that spawned. Deanna focusses on that reaction. On how a single event can ripple out to ever wider communities and what we can learn from it.

And of course we also have our regular columns, whether it's using advertising techniques to increase your chances of being published, interviews with musicians, news and events specifically for AU students, or just advice, information, and articles to give you a bit of respite from the normal news cycle and something to think about while you wait for inspiration to strike for your next essay. It's all here.

Enjoy the read!

## Rethinking the Mom Economy

Carla Knipe



One aspect of employment not often discussed is how work affects family life. Parents often say it is stressful and exhausting trying to balance the different roles that modern life requires. Parenting also seems to come with a hefty side-order of guilt; a feeling that no matter what decision is made, it could be the wrong one. With all the conflicting advice, deciding whether one should "lean in" to a career or take a step back to focus on family becomes extremely difficult.

Modern moms are especially feeling the pull between raising children, running a household, and contributing to a family's income. Moms want—and often need—to work outside the home to make ends meet for their family. The Mom Economy, as it has become known, is becoming increasingly important, but is an aspect of work that is not often discussed. And the role of women as a contributor to the overall health of an economy isn't factored into current models. Trying to pinpoint the exact picture of women's work isn't easy, either. Statistics are not updated frequently, and many studies are American-based, not Canadian.

But the most recent Canadian overview of the picture of working women in Canada from Statistics Canada provides some interesting data. The biggest trend in the workplace during the past century, other than the rise of technology, has been the entrance of women into the workforce. Statistics Canada calculates that the rate of women in the workforce grew in the mid to late twentieth century from 24% in 1953 to 76% in 1990, but the overall pace of growth has slowed since then. More women are entering traditionally male-dominated careers and embracing entrepreneurial jobs than ever before.

These statistics are positive, but Statistics Canada also reports that there remains an earnings gap between men and women in general, as well as a wage gap between women who have dependent children and those who do not. Women who take an extended career break to raise children also experience a decrease in career advancement opportunities. This gap is even more pronounced for single mothers, recent immigrants, and aboriginal women. Women tend to work part-time. And the most common occupations for women are retail sales assistants, followed by administration assistants, nurses, and teachers at the preschool or elementary levels.

Statistics, however, are ultimately just numbers. To try to get a sense of what work is like for women, several women, including Athabasca University student moms, candidly spoke to *The Voice* about their experiences.

Most of them agreed that there was an expectation to leave high school and either immediately enter the workforce, or head to post-secondary education. But this did not always equate to a definite career plan. Vicki Parnell, an AU student mom who lives in Vancouver, said that she honestly didn't have a clue what she wanted to do with her life once she finished high school. After three semesters of university and "a staggering amount

of student loans," she left university to really evaluate what she wanted to do next but, like many women, found herself in a different situation when she met her partner and started a family. She said "when my daughter was born, I didn't want to trade those first few years of her life...so we made the decision to be a one-income family and focused on building my husband's career in the IT industry."

Gaylene Weidlich, another AU student mom who lives in Spruce Grove, Alberta, experienced something similar. She took a photography course through NAIT after high school but decided that, ultimately, photography as a career wasn't for her. She ended up in sales, and, after she was married, operated a business with her husband. At the time she became a mother she was selling real-estate but admits that "with three young children, it was too much. The kids needed me and juggling parenthood and a high-intensity career was difficult. Both my husband and myself felt that having a stay at home parent is worth the trade in the extra income."

Women also said that their attitude toward work changed when they became parents. Erin Chrusch works as an advisor to the City of Calgary. She completed her law degree and began her career in the legal field, but found her priorities shifted after she became a parent. She remembers that she tried to make choices related to her career that would support balance. "This meant working at a smaller firm instead of chasing down a more lucrative partnership at a big downtown firm. Eventually it meant leaving the law firm for a more fulfilling career in government. I understand that by doing so I became part of the diaspora of women leaving the private practice of law because it is so difficult, but it was a choice that has worked very well for both my personal career and for my family."

The shift in mindset also affected Isabella Ferritto, an AU student from Ottawa, Ontario, in another way. While she always wanted to have a career in teaching, she is reaching her goal gradually, fitting in her university studies between raising her children and working as an education assistant in an elementary school so that she can go on to complete her teacher training. She says that her slow-but-steady progress has served her well. "Before I had children I was able to relate to kids, but after having children of my own, I am able to understand children more. I am able to relate to parents and the busyness of life. I was very fortunate that I was able to go to part time work and get to have the best of both worlds."

While being able to handle multiple roles seems to be expected of the younger generations, women who are now older and can look back on their working lives caution others that it is not always easy—or possible—to do everything well. Anita Coulson, a retired BBC journalist who worked as a foreign news correspondent for many years says that she did not have the luxury of choosing her work patterns and wasn't offered flexible shifts, not even once she became a mother. She said "having children definitely set back any career advancement for me. I was identified as a 'high flier' before having children, but afterwards I was relegated to awful jobs and routinely denied exciting opportunities."

The modern world of work has opened up new opportunities for women, such as for recent AU graduate Jessica Avery, who is now working in communications for non-profit settings and has also done freelance blogging and social media work, which has allowed her to be flexible and work from home around her family's schedules. But she also worries about her work future because of the economically depressed area of Ontario she lives in.

Although there is a shift in the types of work opening up to today's workers—both men and women—the shift in society itself and how it defines the role of work and what it means for families is much slower to change. Erin Chrusch observes that "we have to stop looking at this as only being a "Mom" issue. It is a family issue that should involve dads as equally as moms. Our household works because my husband takes an equal role in picking up the kids from school and daycare, contributing to household chores, and taking them to activities.

Women are already behind the proverbial 8-ball because we have to factor in when we have our children (if we can control it at all) and see how that fits within our career plans. It's only fair that once the children are here, the other person responsible for their existence takes an equal role in helping look after them. Women are now a greater percentage of college and university graduates than men and more and more households have primarily female breadwinners. It is shifting from the automatic assumption that 'the Mom' looks after everything at home...slowly."

Anita Coulson agrees. "It is an uphill battle to enforce the kind of parent-friendly changes in our working lives that would hugely benefit not only mothers, but all parents, and, above all, their children too. We need more feminists, and by this I mean both male and female activists who promote equal status for all human beings regardless of gender, in positions of authority in the workplace so that parent-friendly options become commonplace. Every single workplace should have part-time and flex-time options and make allowances for the realities of life, whether we care for a child or an elderly or sick relative."

The interviewed moms expressed wishes for increased childcare options and more opportunities to use their talents in the workplace. What this will look like for the future world of work remains to be seen. But as Gaylene Weidlich points out, a bigger challenge for women is to "stop feeling so inadequate and comparing themselves to others. Working from home would be a great option but when there are small kids around, it is nearly quite impossible when you've got kids pulling at you...but I'm so glad I made the choice to stay at home with them. Work will always be there in some form. I think we in society tend to forget that. And just because I choose a career path, it doesn't mean it will be my career forever—that goes for men as well."

Links to the Statistics Canada reports on Women in the Workplace:

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11-630-x/11-630-x2015009-eng.htm>

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/89-503-x/2010001/article/11387-eng.htm>

*Carla is a proud AU student mom to an 11-year old son. Her occasional indulgence, in between working part time and slowly completing her English degree, is catching up with her favourite British television shows.*

### Women of Interest

**Elizabeth Magie** was born in Macomb, Illinois, in 1866, and died in Arlington, Virginia, in 1948. Magie developed The Landlord's Game, a board game which was said to be the stimulus for the Monopoly game. The game was based on the economic philosophy of Georgism, with the goal being to show how rents enrich property owners and deprive tenants. Magie received a patent for The Landlord's Game in 1904. In 1909, she approached Parker Brothers to publish The Landlord's game as well as another game, the other game was accepted, but the Landlord's game was deemed too complex and was rejected. As the first patent was expiring Magie applied for a second patent and it was issued in 1924. She held this patent until 1935 and she then sold it to Parker Brothers for \$500. Meanwhile Parker Brothers was approached by Charles Darrow who claimed he invented the Monopoly game and they accepted his version of the game. Ultimately, in 1973 the truth was uncovered by Ralph Anspach, an economics professor, during research to defend himself for a trial against Parker Brothers, which was instigated over his game, Anti-Monopoly.

Additional information about Elizabeth Magie can be found at the following sites:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elizabeth\\_Magie](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elizabeth_Magie)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Landlord%27s\\_Game](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Landlord%27s_Game)

*compiled by Barb Godin*



## You Gotta Start Somewhere

Barbara Lehtiniemi



Where to start?

I always wanted to be a writer, which is why I spent 25 years in accounting. Does that make sense? No, it doesn't. But that's what happens sometimes when life happens and what we *want* to do gets pushed aside—again and again—in favour of what we think we *need* to do.

When I finally gave up my career of juggling numbers a few years ago, I decided to give juggling words a try. It's wasn't easy picking up the pen when all I'd written for decades were reports, manuals, and inter-office e-mails.

First I started at AU. One of my first courses was *ENGL 255 Introductory Composition*. That course put me on the write track (forgive the writerly pun) to pursue the written word. Most of my AU courses require essays, and I put ENGL 255 to good use right away.

The next step was small markets. I belong to a few organizations and most of them publish newsletters for their members. Soon I had book reviews, articles, and photographs in several newsletters. This was great practice and it was gratifying to get feedback from readers. The only downside was these organizations don't pay their writers. Time to explore other markets.

*The Voice Magazine* became the next step—my first foray into paid writing. Timing was on my side here: I was just about to inquire about submitting articles to *The Voice*, when then-new editor Karl Low advertised for new writers. When my first article, *Essay Avoidance—The Fine Art of Procrastination*, was published in November 2013, I was elated. Not only was my writing reaching a larger audience, but I was—at last—getting paid.

Wanting the practice and the discipline (oh, also the money,) I decided to submit an article to *The Voice* every week. And for three years, I have not missed one issue. With weekly practice, my writing has improved. And that includes the writing I do elsewhere, especially essays. The more I write, the easier it flows.

With little effort on my part, writing for *The Voice* brought me to another market: *Maclean's*. *Maclean's* was seeking an AU student to write about AU campus life; they contacted the editor of *The Voice*, who referred them to one of his writers—me. That article was published in March in *Maclean's 2016 University Guidebook*; it later appeared online.

The steady weekly writing practice at *The Voice* gave me the confidence to tackle a bigger market. And the confidence to say "yes" when another writing assignment was offered to me. This article, not yet published, was on an unfamiliar topic and had a short deadline. Could I do it? Absolutely. Another writing credit and a bit more money in the bank.

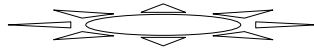
Although it's enchanting to think that a writer's first project will turn out to be a best-seller worth millions, most writers don't begin that way. Most writers start small and close to home. I'm still growing as a writer. I have



more projects to tackle and more markets to explore. But I would have been nowhere with my writing without that first step. You gotta start somewhere.

*Ready to make the step into paid writing? The Voice Magazine is ready for you! Contact the editor at [voice@voicemagazine.org](mailto:voice@voicemagazine.org).*

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



## In Conversation with Lakes of Canada

## Wanda Waterman



*Interviewee Jake Smith pictured here with sword.*

Lakes of Canada is a Montreal-based band of musical wizards with a sound inspired by a host of influences, including folk, gospel, soul, early sixties folk, and prog rock. On October 25th, they launched the album *Transgressions Acoustic*, a live acoustic recording of songs based on *Transgressions*, the sophomore studio album they'd released last year. The songs on this album were inspired by Margaret Atwoods's *The Handmaid's Tale*, a dystopian speculative fiction novel about what might happen in a Canterbury tale told by a young woman enslaved within a totalitarian theocracy. Jake Smith, the band's lead singer and one of the main songwriters, is a tenor section

leader in Montreal's Shaar Hashomayim Synagogue Choir; this position recently won him an opportunity to be a part of Leonard Cohen's final album, *You Want it Darker* (Cohen himself had asked for singers from his childhood synagogue). Recently, Jake Smith took the time to answer Wanda Waterman's questions about his own childhood and what brought him to where he is now.

### Where did it all begin?

I was born in New Jersey and moved to New York when I was a year old. From there, I moved to Hudson, outside of Montreal. when I was two, I think. My family is actually Canadian.

Then I lived briefly in Point Saint Charles in Montreal until I was nine, then back to New Jersey for a year, and then Burlington, Vermont, until I was eighteen, and then I did my undergrad in New York City, studied in London briefly, and then went back to Vermont for like a summer, and then moved back to Montreal about ten years ago.

In terms of how music was involved in my early life, I've been singing in the choir ever since I was about five or six, started singing solo stuff when I was about eight or nine, then actually started studying singing around age fourteen. I continued doing that and started doing it professionally in my twenties. I studied musical theatre in school, so that obviously had a big musical influence on me.

For a long time I kind of wanted do both music and acting but then realized that in order to get anywhere with either one of them I would have to pick only one.

**So, why did you pick singing?**

Well, I didn't pick singing, exactly, so much as music. I was doing a lot of theatre and film and playing in bands at the same time. While I was writing for theatre and film and writing for music I found that music was affording me a lot more opportunity to write and interpret other people's work.

**The Lakes of Canada has kind of a hymn-like sound about it—the strong vocals and the harmonies and so on. I was just thinking that if you did that much in theatre and sang in the Synagogue then that's probably where it came from. I can hear summer camp songs in there, as well.**

For sure. I was actually a camp counselor for many years. The drummer, Connor O'Neil, and I are the primary songwriters. I have a background in musical theatre, Connor has a background in film touring, and then we met in Synagogue choir, where we had both been for ten plus years. So, combine that with the subject matter of the book that we based the album on, and yeah, obviously there would be a lot of hymn-like elements and theatrical things through it.

**Can you describe to me one of the most mesmerising musical experiences of your life?**

Sure. I'll go with performances that really shook me, I guess, because to me it's a completely different process being on the performer's end of it. Seeing Stevie Wonder play was definitely that for me. I saw him play at the Jazz Festival, right after Michael Jackson died. It was raining, and he played for three and a half hours straight and he improvised and worked with the crowd and there were fireworks and tears. It was one of the most natural shows I had ever seen in my life.

Also, recently, the band got to play at the Festival de Musique Émergente, and that was really special as well, actually. They put up every artist and feed them throughout. We had this really crazy experience there; not only did our show take place in a big beautiful church, but all the artists thought that it was just like earth-shatteringly incredible.

I've been to a lot of festivals, but that one in particular was a really incredible experience. Every artist there was just like, "What is with this place? It's just crazy!" So, yeah, I would say that those are two of my biggest influential musical moments. I'm sure there are countless others, it's just that those were the two that I could think of right off the top of my head.

**Do you have any stories to tell about creating, performing, or recording *Transgressions*, or the new album, *Transgressions Acoustic*?**

Yes, it was a really interesting process. Not only did we spend a long time on the record, but we also went to a cabin with all of our gear, workshopped it for four days straight, and worked in pre-production a lot.

The acoustic concert afterwards was really special. Some of the song origins are kind of funny. Like, *Transgressions* I started writing on my cousin's piano in Florida over Christmas, when I was baked out of my gourd at like five a.m. In the fall when my wife and I first started seeing each other, she had a really noise-sensitive neighbour, so I was tapping the drum rhythms because I did both the drums and the vocals for that song. I was tapping the rhythm on the floor at nine p.m. and he started harassing us about it.

### What was it like being part of the new Leonard Cohen album?

Oh, that was a real trip. It was really weird. When Connor and I first got approached about it we both completely freaked out and immediately said yes. After all, how could you say no to that?

Once we actually got to writing the music and recording stuff I had to constantly tell myself that I was just doing something for a friend. I couldn't actively think about the fact that I was recording music for Leonard Cohen, so I got to this Zen place where I could pretend that it wasn't really happening. I didn't properly freak out about it until months later when I finally got to tell people and then people freaked out about it on my behalf.

It was a real compliment as well that our choir director approached me to write music, that he had that much confidence in me.

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



## UBC and CanLit

## Deanna Roney



The University of British Columbia's (UBC) creative writing program has been faced with scrutiny in the last while. Steven Galloway was accused of misconduct with students, the charges range from bullying to sexual harassment. How UBC handled the situation has since come under fire, and many of Canada's top writers have signed an [open letter to UBC](#) criticizing how they dealt with this. There was, according to the letter, a breach of privacy toward Galloway and the complainants, but many read the letter as an act of silencing the victims who had stepped forward and made the

initial complaints about Galloway. There has been outrage from both sides, and yet the details of exactly what Galloway was accused of, or what transpired, has been kept mostly silent. The signees of the letter say that their intention was not to silence the victims, but to call for "due process" for all. However, many took issue with how the letter addresses Galloway specifically.

I have gone back and forth on if this is a subject I want to address, because the information is scant at best. However, after observing the discussions on social media about how this was handled. I decided it is something that should be talked about. What has been flooding my social media feeds is not what happened at UBC to cause all of this, but the letter; and after reading various articles about the case the details remain hazy. A student accused Galloway of something (what that something is is never made clear in the articles about it) and others stepped forward to back up her statement with their own stories. I have heard that those who spoke were told their words would remain confidential, and yet they were approached, outside of the investigation,

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by friends of Galloway with detailed knowledge of what they reported. But what seems to be the issue is this open letter. People are feeling silenced by it.

I don't believe the intent of the letter was to silence the victims. I believe the motivation behind the letter was fear, fear for a friend. However, our society tends to silence women, especially in situations like this. I believe this is the reason so many are speaking out against the writers, even those who have previously written on topics of abuse and inequality, who signed this letter. We can't just blindly believe, however, and this must go for all parties involved.

The thing that is scary about the letter is that, for many, it told them to remain silent. That's their interpretation. The impact of our words is important to consider, and as writers, those who signed the letter should understand that. However, fear is a powerful motivator, and as I have read through the discussions there was an intense fear about the impact this was having on both Galloway and the students involved. I don't believe the intent was to cause harm, and there has been some open discussion between parties and this is what is important: the ability to discuss and to understand the other side.

Unfortunately, I also saw a lot of harsh words directed at those who signed the letter. There was no room for understanding in these words, no room for discussion. There was only hatred and assertions that they would be removing every book by every author on that list from their bookshelves and adding them to a "do not buy list". This reaction is not helpful, it will not open a path for understanding and a want to change, it will cause heels to dig in and hackles to rise.

So, perhaps the letter was written in a moment of passion or fear, fear for a friend. Maybe those responses, which can only be described as bullying, were similarly out of fear, fear for the victims, or fear for those reading the letter and choosing to remain silent in an unrelated situation. In the writing community, there needs to be open discourse. It is a small community, and those within it can make mistakes, act in passion, or misword a letter. Those that read the letter are similarly allowed to respond in the same manner, motivated by the same feelings. But one thing I have noticed is that some of the signatories have taken note of how the letter made others feel, they have pulled their name and apologized; others have taken the time to have discussions and explain their motivation.

I think the most important thing I have taken from this is that you need to stand for what you believe in, but you also need to be considerate and take the time to have open and frank discussions with those who may take exception to your stance. Whatever side of the fence you are on, I've found it heartwarming to see so many take pause and want to understand the other side. The letter itself may have had a negative impact on many, and the situation itself surely has, but these conversations are the opportunity for change. Everyone needs to pause and consider the other side, consider the words, and stop from lashing out. Belittling someone's opinion is not the answer, and will not change their perspective, but talking honestly, openly, and free from judgement will be what effects change.

Change does need to happen. Change in the questionable treatment of those who came forward, speaking against the faculty member, and likewise in the treatment of the faculty member. A situation like this should never come to the point it has, especially when it is within an institution like UBC. I believe we can do better.

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



## The Creative Spark

### Old-Spiced Academics

Marie Well



At one point, you wanted fame, didn't you? At some point, we all did. Well, would you play the role of the Kellogg's mom? The Nyquil snoring dad? Personally, I'd cast well as Danica Patrick on steroids. But Go Daddy dropped her once she hulked.

And, as a child, I fumed during Barbie commercials. I had long pigtails just like the little girls on TV. But, they, not me, starred. But we're grown up now, aren't we?

Yes, and now, as academics, there's something else we desire. Desperately. Something that brings us cushy government jobs, hefty scholarships—even tenure. As academics, we pine to publish. And to get that, we need to poise our pen, turn on the TV, and pretend. Pretend we're the next star of Old Spice.

W. L. Jenkins in *How to Audition for TV Commercials* says how to study commercials (below in bold). I say study journal articles like you're the star of Pepto Bismol. Yes, pop and fizz:

**TV commercials offer free education.** Journal articles offer free education, too. But, undergrads, beware articles that have sections called "methodology." That is, unless you plan on a future as a grad student. Instead, mimic lit reviews.

**Study lots of commercials to figure out the trends.** And the more journal articles you study, the more you'll know what's hot, who's big, and what's worth stealing. (I mean, mimicking.)

**Study commercials that thrill you.** For fun, read journal articles on topics that make you froth. For example, study quarks if they make you go wild.

**Find your role in commercials.** Find your role in academic writing. Study whatever topic peaks your interests, taps your talents, and lets loose your life experiences. Yes, you matter.

**Pretend you're the target market for the commercial.** Pretend you're the target market for your dream topic. If you wish to write about comics, seek journals catering to comic fans.

**Record the exciting stuff.** When reading articles, ask, *Are they fun? Wild? Crazy?* If so, store them.

**Read product companies' Websites.** Read up on your professors' research interests, articles and bibliographies.

Why? Because if you're going to grad studies, you'll know which professor's topics make you tingle. Then you can line-up a supervisor at the get-go and the courses you wisely choose will write your thesis. No time wasted.

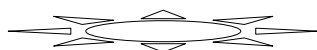
**Discover the actor's brand personality—and where yours shines.** What are your discipline's authors' brand personalities? Are they arrogant? Conservative? Wordy?

Now, what is your brand personality? Your brand can fill a gap.

Look at tone and manner, says Jenkins, and fill-in gaps with your own style.

**Watch music videos.** As a side gig, read philosophers and theorists. Most disciplines hunger for theory.

*So, let the games begin: study a spot on McDonalds, KFC—Ex-Lax. Publish not perish. A paradox? I call it a Creative Spark!*



## Scholarship of the Week

**Digging up scholarship treasure for AU students.**

**Scholarship name:** Working Parent College Scholarship Program

**Sponsored by:** job-applications.ca

**Deadline:** December 10, 2016

**Potential payout:** \$1000

**Eligibility restriction:** Applicants must be employed, have at least one minor-age child at home, and have a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0.

**What's required:** A 600- to 1000-word essay to : "Discuss your experience as a parent working your way through school and explain three pieces of advice you would give to someone in a similar situation." See full requirements [here](#).

**Tips:** Despite "college" in the name, this scholarship is open to university and trade-school students, too.

**Where to get info:** [www.job-applications.ca/scholarships](http://www.job-applications.ca/scholarships)





## Study Tips from a Semi-Anonymous Friend

### Santa's Sweet Surprise

*There is nothing more that The Study Dude wants than to make your clause erupt in claps and whistles.*

*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 takes notes from *It Was the Best of Sentences, It Was the Worst of Sentences: A Writer's Guide to Crafting Killer Sentences* by June Casagrande. This book slams

most long sentences. Most. Except the book's own nineteen-word title—and other classics.

### Star of Subordinate Clauses

Do you want an A for Christmas? Well, the Study Dude's got you a gift: secrets of subordinate clauses—from Casagrande's book.

Read this: *When taking a selfie while standing on the Grand Canyon's edge, if you scream freefalling due to carelessness, you may miss your ride.*

Doesn't that suck? The sentence, that is. You see, your subordinate clauses build up to the dull ending: "you may miss your ride." When your subordinate clauses reek more excitement than your main clause, go see a psycholinguist.

Or better yet, fix your sentence. Change it to *When taking a selfie while standing on the Grand Canyon's edge as your ride approaches, you might freefall to a final scream.*

Save the best for the main clause.

Casagrande gives all kinds of tips for subordinate clauses. Here's some:

- Subordinate clauses appear like full sentences, but start with words like "because," "although," "after," and "while." For instance, here's a subordinate clause, "Because he loved to train ... ." Attach that subordinate clause to an independent clause, and you get, "Because he loved to train, Cuddles ate the fridge bare."
- (In the last example, we're not sure whether Cuddles was bare or the fridge was bare, but Cuddles is handsome, so I kept the sentence. Typically, you'd rewrite the sentences: "Cuddles devoured the fridge's gut." A metaphor.)
- Put in a strong verb and a clear subject in the main clause.
- Put the strongest action in the main clause; the dullest, the subordinate clause.
- Try not to use the word "while" in place of the word "although." *While* is time-based; *although* is not. It confuses us.

- Try not to use the word "since" for "because." *Since* is time-based; *because* is not.
- The word "than" in comparison leads to confusion. For instance, when you say, "I love you more than Grandma," spell it out. Say either "I love you more than I love Grandma" or "I love you more than Grandma loves you."

### The Clash of the Relative Clauses

Did you ever write a paper that had long sickly sentences? I did. My thesis.

I crammed in relative clauses like cramming pudding into a Christmas stocking. A stocking that was a used sock: one with a hole in the big-toe. And then I fed it to the prof. But I passed. Not first-class, not second-class, but classless.

Now I write in phrases; incomplete sentences. I call it style. You call it stammer?

But there's a happy medium. Casagrande gives us rules for relative clauses:

- What's a relative clause? It starts with a relative pronoun, such as "who," "whom," "which," or "that." Relative clauses modify nouns. For instance, spot the relative clause here: "Cuddles, *who writes fiction*, deserves a million-dollar book-contract for Christmas." Here's another relative clause: "To pass first class, *which is every grad student's dream*, I need a wall-high stack of the Study Dude." Spot the relative clauses? (Note: In the examples immediately above, I rewrote the main clauses so that they were more exciting than the relative clauses.)
- Yes, relative clauses are a special type of subordinate clause. Relative clauses are also like adjectives.
- Some relative clauses (called sentential (or connective) relative clauses) can modify not just nouns, but also clauses: "I loved him, which everyone can see."
- Have no more than one relative clause per sentence. Don't do like this next sentence: "To pass first class, which is every grad student's dream, and comes true for undeserving elitists, I need a stack of Study Dudes as tall as the ivory tower." Okay, so I might get away with more than one relative clause, but typically you want to

## AU-thentic events

### Upcoming AU Events

#### AU Faculty of Graduate Studies Presentation: "The Doctoral Dissertation—Purpose, Content, Structure & Assessment"

Tuesday, November 29, 12:00 to 1:00pm MST  
Online, Adobe Connect

Hosted by Athabasca University's Faculty of Graduate Studies

[fgs.athabascau.ca/news/presentations/](https://fgs.athabascau.ca/news/presentations/)

e-mail [fgseducation@athabascau.ca](mailto:fgseducation@athabascau.ca) to register

#### AU Faculty of Business London Seasonal Cheer

Tuesday, November 29, 5:30 to 7:30pm EST  
Idlewyld Inn & Spa, 36 Grand Ave, London, Ontario

In-person only.

Hosted by Athabasca University's Faculty of Business

[business.athabascau.ca/event-](https://business.athabascau.ca/event-details/athabasca-university-and-au-faculty-of-business-london-seasonal-cheer/)

[details/athabasca-university-and-au-faculty-of-business-london-seasonal-cheer/](https://business.athabascau.ca/event-details/athabasca-university-and-au-faculty-of-business-london-seasonal-cheer/)

Register online at above address

#### AU Faculty of Business Barrie Seasonal Cheer

Wednesday, November 30, 5:30 to 7:30pm EST  
Michael and Marions, 89 Bayfield St, Barrie, Ontario

In-person only.

Hosted by Athabasca University's Faculty of Business

[business.athabascau.ca/event-](https://business.athabascau.ca/event-details/au-faculty-of-business-barrie-seasonal-cheer-2/)

[details/au-faculty-of-business-barrie-seasonal-cheer-2/](https://business.athabascau.ca/event-details/au-faculty-of-business-barrie-seasonal-cheer-2/)

Register online at above address

#### AU Faculty of Business Kitchener-Waterloo Seasonal Cheer

Wednesday, November 30, 5:30 to 7:30pm EST  
Wildcraft Grill Bar, 425 King St North, Waterloo, Ontario

In-person only.

Hosted by Athabasca University's Faculty of Business

[business.athabascau.ca/event-](https://business.athabascau.ca/event-details/athabasca-university-and-au-faculty-of-business-kitchener-waterloo-seasonal-cheer/)

[details/athabasca-university-and-au-faculty-of-business-kitchener-waterloo-seasonal-cheer/](https://business.athabascau.ca/event-details/athabasca-university-and-au-faculty-of-business-kitchener-waterloo-seasonal-cheer/)

Register online at above address



combine the two relative clauses—or cut one out altogether.

- You can even have what is called a "zero relative" where the relative pronoun is deleted. For instance, you could say, "The Study Dude is the article I would pay for if given the chance." In that sentence, you left out the word "that": "The Study Dude is the article *that* I would pay for if given the chance." If you want, you can leave out the word "that" in any relative clause. Up to you. But, zero-relative clauses use up less space. I like 'em.
- While I knew a zero-relative clause could delete the relative pronouns "that" and "whom." I wasn't sure, though, whether a zero relative would delete "which" or "who." But, I found the answer: yes, zero relatives can delete "which" and "who" as well. You see, zero relative clauses happen a lot in sentences starting with "there" or containing "[have] got." For instance, you could say, "*There* are the books [which] I never read anyway," leaving out the "which". You could also say, "I *got* the book [which] I never planned to read anyway," again leaving out the "which."
- Make your relative clauses brief and few. Don't swamp your sentences with those nasties. Also, avoid using relative clauses to slip in backstory or history. Confuses us.

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

Casagrande, June. (2010). *It Was the Best of Sentences, It Was the Worst of Sentences: A Writer's Guide to Crafting Killer Sentences*. Ten Speed Press.

## Student Sizzle AU's Hot Social Media Topics

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



### AthaU Facebook Group

Niki asks for information about how exam re-writes work while Erin celebrates her degree and thanks the group for their support and encouragement.

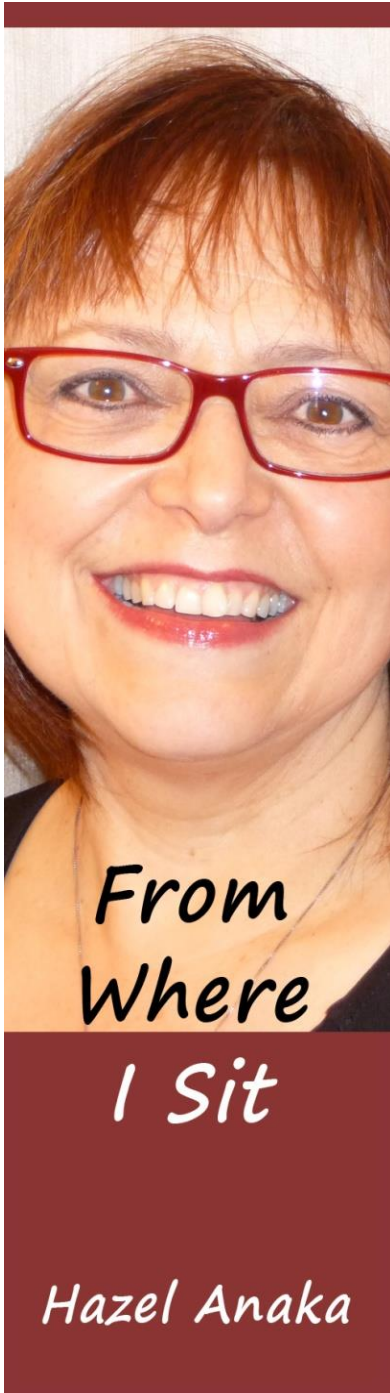
She's not alone, as Mark is also celebrating his degree, pointing out that, with full time work and kids, even though the degree took over a decade, it can still be done.

Carla looks for information as to why cyber-bullying is so normalized in connection with MLA Sandra Jansen's move across the floor in the Alberta Legislature.

### Twitter

@AthabascaU tweets: "Enjoy the savings on #AthaU gear! 15% off everything in the online store. <http://ow.ly/tBT8306wqzb> #BlackFriday" and "Please RT: Any Toronto #AthaU current student or alum available to volunteer Saturday the #GreyCup festivities? Perk? Tix for the big game!"

@AthabascaUSU (AUSU) tweets: Check out the NEW courses from <http://lynda.com> at <http://bit.ly/2gHejLB> ! Subscribe for FREE from AUSU at <http://bit.ly/1Qvg8pb> .



## Hope that Changes

I live about one hundred kilometres from Edmonton. We could also say Edmontonians live one hundred kilometres from my rural property. Metaphorically the distance is far, far greater I fear.

A hundred years ago I attended Grant McEwan College and worked in Edmonton as a CNIB caseworker for blind adults. We lived in a basement apartment suite half a block north of 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue at 108 Street. Today that stretch is called the Avenue of Nations and is home to Somalis and other immigrants. Before long, Roy got the call of the land and we moved to a tiny house in the Village of Andrew. We farmed part-time as he commuted daily for *seven* years to a job in Edmonton as an architectural draftsman.

So over the years we've made a few miles between home and Edmonton.

I think I've done a fine job of knowing Edmonton, following her big stories, understanding her issues, caring about her people, loving her assets. I watch city news, read city papers. I follow her politics. I know the locals are ticked about fire pits, potholes, and loud motorcycles. I know they worry about the economy, paying the new higher minimum wage, paying rising property taxes. Frankly, I like being in the know. Because, it's my city, makes me a skilled conversationalist, creates empathy.

But, as I drove a combine on the tenth and eleventh of November (!) in what is arguably the worst harvest season in memory, I wonder if those city people know anything about me, us.

Does anyone, who isn't directly involved in farming, understand what is at stake? Does anyone give a damn? As city slickers drive down the provinces' highways do they look into the fields? Do they understand what they are seeing? Do they know the difference between a field covered in swaths and one that's been combined and perhaps cultivated? Can they identify the type of crops standing or lodged or lying in swaths since August? Do they understand the catastrophic financial loss to farm families and everyone they owe money to: lenders; insurers; machinery dealers; not to mention the chemical, fuel,

fertilizer, and seed sellers?

The canola we combined is not dry, meaning the moisture in the kernels is too high to safely store the grain or sell it. Simply put, if we don't dry it, the grain will 'heat' and rot. So we fill 100 pound bottles of propane (at a hundred bucks a crack) to run 60,000 or 100,000 BTU heaters twenty-four hours a day for weeks. A bottle lasts about two days. Electricity powers the huge aeration fans. These are huge additional dollars spent in the hopes of getting ten dollars per bushel if and when it's finally dry enough for a grain company to buy it.

The lack of understanding about the life and work and importance of farmers is appalling. I don't think it's too much to hope that changes soon, from where I sit.

Hazel Anaka's first novel is *Lucky Dog*. Visit her [website](#) for more information or follow her on Twitter @anakawrites.



Dear  
Barb

Barbara Godin

## Positively Negative

Dear Barb:

*I have a friend who is very difficult to get along with. She finds fault with everything and everyone. When my husband and I go out for dinner with her and her husband it is always a big production. To begin with, she refuses to wear glasses and she can't read the menu, so instead she asks our server if they have this or that. If the server says yes they do, she then asks if it is good, or does the chef know how to cook it, or is it dried out, is it homemade etc. This friend has had a few traumatic events in her life, so I have always tried to be understanding. We have mutual friends and she finds fault with all of them. It seems that at first she likes them but then she starts with the negative comments. I can only assume she talks to other friends about me in the same manner, but again I have tried to be tolerant, after all we are supposed to try to see the best in others.*

*Recently I have reached my limit with her. I hadn't heard from her for a while and then ran into in a restaurant and she totally ignored me. Then last week we both attended a funeral for a mutual friend and she was so rude, I couldn't believe it. When we walked into the chapel we saw her and her husband sitting at the back, so we went to sit with them but she did not want us to sit with them. She said she needed to get out to go to the washroom, but we could have sat on the other side of them. To this point she had not looked at me or acknowledged me in any way. So my husband and I sat in the pew in front of them. I thought I would be the bigger person and turned around and said hello, but she ignored me, then I said it again and*

*she still ignored me. At this point my husband said are you just going to ignore Pat? Then she said hello, but no another words were exchanged between us for the rest of the time. I feel quite angry and really don't want anything to do with this person. How do I just let something like this go?*

*Thanks, Patricia.*

Hi Patricia:

Thanks for sharing your experience with us. I think your friend has some serious issues that she needs to work out. She seems to be projecting her anger and negativity onto you and others, rather than face it within herself. There really is not a lot you can do about it. You cannot allow yourself to be abused or treated as she is treating you. Perhaps avoiding contact with her for a while may help. In the meantime, she may reach a point where she knows she needs some professional help and eventually you and her may be able to reconcile your relationship. I 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.



See the story from the beginning

Objects are defined in part by their proper environments, to which they're always drawn to return.



At the same time objects must move between environments because they don't truly "belong" anywhere.



So . . . I belong with Alan. He defines me. But I'm not content.



You don't feel completely "at home" with him, so to speak.



Nor He with me, apparently.

Why do you say that?

There's a crewmember here. Serena. He looks at her like he used to look at me.



According to pekkanen's theory, fidelity is easy to maintain.



But it has to be maintained.



Yes.



Emma, our session is about to expire, so I'd like to give you your homework now.

OKAY.

Think of something you gave up when you married Alan. Then devote an hour a day to that.





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## IMPORTANT DATES

- **Nov 30:** December course extension deadline
- **Dec 10:** [Deadline to register in a course starting Jan 1](#)
- **Dec 13:** [AUSU Council Meeting](#)
- **Dec 15:** January degree requirements deadline
- **Dec 25 – Jan 3:** Holiday Closure (AUSU and AU)
- **Jan 10:** [Deadline to register in a course starting Feb 1](#)
- **Jan 10:** [AUSU Council Meeting](#)

## Enter to Win a FREE AU COURSE!

Only one week left to enter AUSU's [#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**



## AUSU Career Resources

AUSU's Careers page includes links for resume building, interview preparation, career fairs across Canada, national and provincial job search engines and more!

Check out AUSU's Career Resources page [here](#).



## Edmonton Meet & Greet

AUSU is hosting a Meet & Greet in Edmonton on December 8. This is a great opportunity to meet AUSU council, get to know other AU students, and get some free AUSU swag!

**When:** Thursday, December 8 at 4:00pm MT

**Where:** Boston Pizza, 11320 Groat Road, Edmonton

Help us plan - please RSVP to [president@ausu.org](mailto:president@ausu.org).



## AU Quick Links

AUSU wants to make sure all our members can easily find the resources and services available to them. We know sometimes it can be difficult to navigate the AU website, so we launched an "[AU Quick Links](#)" page, with links to AU services, department, policies, and other commonly accessed pages.

Check out the AU Quick Links page [here](#).



**Athabasca University**  
**Quick Links**

*Courtesy of AUSU*

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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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