

THE VOICE

MAGAZINE

Vol 25 Issue 12 2017-03-24

Meeting the Minds

Reviewing the Reviewer

The Incalculable Cost of a Vowel

Somthing's Missing Hr

The Perception of Busy

Do Friends Come First?

Plus:

Technical Observations

Three Things for Canada

and much more!



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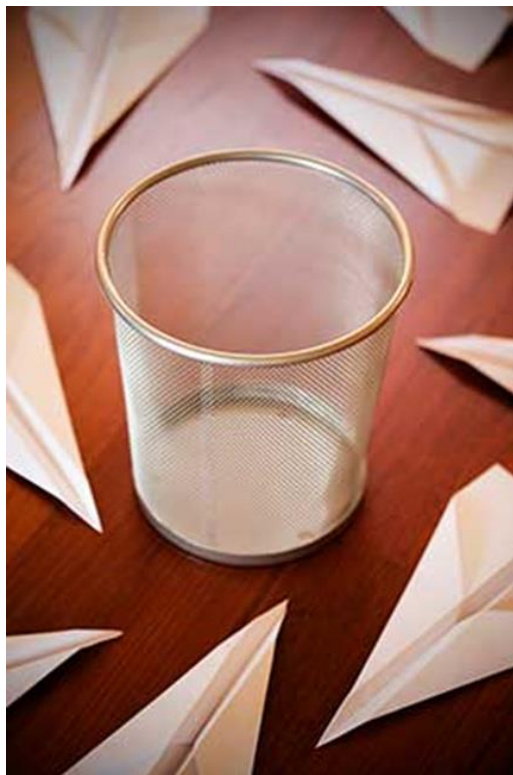
Hey! Did you know the Voice Magazine has a [Facebook](#) page?

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

EDITORIAL

Karl Low

An Issue of Importance



There's a lot of important stuff in this issue. The feature article is the result of attending the various teleconferences and my own interview with Dr. Kenneth Coates, the man leading the third-party review of Athabasca University to help chart a path to sustainability. Longer than I'd typically include (after all, you've been studying all day, so I expect if you're here it's because you want a short break from that while still staying in touch with what's going on at AU) it was important it all come out this week, because you only have one more week to get your opinions in to Dr. Coates to help inform his report. And those opinions will matter.

However, if you've already sent your ideas to Dr. Coates, then you'll definitely want to read our second article, "The Incalculable Cost of a Vowel", as writer Barb Lehtiniemi found a problem that could mean your opinion was sent to the wind, or at least to the wrong place.

Another important milestone in this issue is the end of our graphic novel "The Doppelgänger Cure". Over the past 29 weeks (more than that if you count in the Christmas break) we've been publishing this science fiction graphic novel at a page per week. I'm in the process

now of trying to link all the pages on the website, but you can find the first page in our [archives](#) at volume 24, issue 32, back in August of 2016. You might want to try it out, once you put it all together, it's an interesting story of a revolution, in consciousness and in life.

We also have a Council Connection which looks at the last meeting of the former Executive Director, Sarah Cornett. Sarah has now moved on and AUSU Council is in the [process of looking for a new Executive Director](#), and needed to budget extra money for the hire. This meeting was also important because it revealed details of a possible plan of Athabasca University to begin providing a subscription to Microsoft Office 365 to AU students, along with, at long last, properly branded AU email addresses.

Tying in with that, a call from a student to revive the idea of student clubs, with a game-plan on how students might be able to make that happen.

Then a look at what you can do to help Canada for its upcoming 150th birthday celebrations. We give three simple steps that, if followed, could make this country better for everyone. There can be little that's more important than that.

But we also have some lighter fare, including a look at the how the rumors of vinyls' death may have been greatly exaggerated, a plea for balance within busy-ness, an examination of the recent film "Get Out!" and what it can teach us about racism, the second part of Technical Observations (this time looking at the web's most popular browser, Chrome), and of course our listings of events, scholarships, Canadian education and post-secondary news, and our regular columns to give advice or something to think about as you wait for the muse to strike for your next essay. Enjoy the read!

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

MEETING THE MINDS

INTERVIEWS with AU's EDUCATORS



As part of the process to help AU determine a route to stability, the Alberta Government required a third-party review be conducted, and hired Dr. Kenneth Coates, public policy professor and the Canada Research Chair in Regional Innovation at the University of Saskatchewan, to conduct the review. Dr. Coates was also the Dean of Arts at Waterloo and is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada.

He has been interviewing and consulting with all levels of AU and the provincial government, including meetings with members at all four Alberta AU locations (if you're wondering what the fourth is, it's probably the Faculty of Business' location in St. Albert that you're missing). He's held three teleconference meetings with AU students and has received hundreds of emails from interested undergrad and graduate students, as well as alumni of AU, and is looking for even more (hopefully before the end of March). He is particularly interested in what you've found that works, and what doesn't at AU, and, if you have a comment, you're encouraged to get in touch with him at kennethcoates@gmail.com.

I took the opportunity to attend all three student sessions and then later spoke with him myself to find out what's going on.

One of the questions I had for him was what the "Canada Research Chair for Regional Innovation" actually means, and Dr. Coates explained it by noting that the Chair comes with funding devoted to a specific research question. In his case, the question he brought was "Can we use scientific and technological innovation to improve the quality of life in rural areas and small towns, including the north and indigenous communities." Judging by some of the stories I heard in the teleconference meetings, the answer to this is a definite yes.

However, in all of the meetings, one of the first things he emphasized is that AU is under no immediate threat of closure. The Minister of Advanced Education in Alberta, Marlin Schmidt, has made very clear to him that the Minister hoped that the report would point to a way for AU to survive not just in the short term, but also for the long term. In the teleconferences, Dr. Coates specifically asked people what they thought or hoped AU would look like in 2030, 2040, or beyond, so this is not planning for just a short-term fix.

This is important to re-iterate because the idea that AU might close was distressing both for students and for alumni who were present at the meetings. Dr. Coates provided further reassurance, noting how even if that were on the table, governments and universities accept a certain responsibility when a student starts a program

to be able to see students through to completion of that program, even if it means finding other options that allow them to do so.

Another theme that seemed to come through during the teleconferences was that students were concerned about the effects of competition on AU, and worried that AU had not been keeping up with technology and other institutions as they develop their own online courses. When I asked him about this in our interview, he pointed out that competition does not necessarily imply a single winner and a loss for everybody else, it merely means competition. And while other institutions have some advantages over AU when creating their distance offerings (because they've been able to watch how AU develops and emulate the successful techniques while not pursuing the ones that haven't worked as well) AU is one of only a very few in Canada that offer the opportunity for a substantial set of accredited degree programs to be taken fully by distance. This is something that gives AU a competitive edge, so it's a matter of finding a way to fully leverage that advantage.

We spoke a lot about the effects of competition, with Dr. Coates noting that "You have to deal with the reality that everybody will be learning online at some point in the future, and may be working online or at least in a mixed modal format. There's a huge investment coming down the line in learning objects—someone develops an app that shows up on your computer to demonstrate photosynthesis or some other concept. The competition is just going to get more intense and will be coming from a variety of areas. AU is going to have to live with this, has been living with this, for the past 10-15 years already."

But with the idea that this need for change is a constant across all universities, I had to ask whether it would be possible for Alberta, then, to be able to make AU sustainable on its own. One of the comments made during the interviews was that, in many ways, AU is almost a gift that Alberta is giving to the rest of the country, and there was a question as to whether that should still be the case.

Dr. Coates noted that, depending on how AU is positioned, it can provide excellent service to its own (Alberta) audience, but because of how it operates, that service can also be provided globally easily, and does it really make sense if it has a model of great service that can be provided anywhere to simply deny access to it for people who happen to live in Manitoba, or Nunavut. He pointed out that we all have to be constant innovators, and gave an example of how the first Faculty of Environment opened in the 1970s at the University of Waterloo, but soon found itself facing increasing competition, eventually even from within different faculties at Waterloo. It took a re-imagining of the faculty to create a school of environment and economic development to bring back the level of interest and the students, which revitalized the Faculty, and how it takes that kind of constant change to keep raising yourself to the new environment, which is something that Alberta itself also needs.

This made sense to me, because consider that other universities welcome out of province students, but are required, simply by the nature of their institution, to have those students come to their location. The innovation of AU is that it doesn't have that requirement built in. But when you consider non-Alberta students coming to other Alberta universities, how much are they contributing to the government coffers that support their institution? They may not even be working while taking courses, yet, because they are in Alberta, they are treated as Alberta students, regardless of what province they hail from or will return to after their studies. Post-secondary institutions in Alberta receive less total funding for a student who studies online from Ontario as opposed to a student from Alberta – but the cost of providing the course are essentially the same, and there are no assurances that the Alberta graduate will remain and work in Alberta, or that the Ontario graduate will not move to Alberta to find work after graduating.

I also wanted to dig into what Dr. Coates had found out so far with his reviews. As he noted during his teleconferences, all universities are dealing, in some fashion or another, with many of the same problems that AU is currently facing. All universities are having financial issues. All universities have a small number of courses or instructors that are not providing good value. So was there anything specific about the concerns he's hearing from AU students that are unique to Athabasca University.

He pointed out that he's had hundreds of people commenting, with some of those comments being very specific about certain courses or specific problems, and people are of course being presenting each issue as being unique to them—and to each person it is absolutely a unique situation with its own unique challenges, but the interesting thing is to look at the trends. Are there any areas where there seem to be a preponderance of complaints? And while the results aren't at all complete yet, he noted that lots of students are having difficulties with various aspects but the number one concern he's seen is the fear that the opportunities AU provides will be lost to them and to future students. Many of the students have told him, "I'd never be able to do any of the things that I wanted to do academically," and this is entirely unique to Athabasca University.

He suggested that if you were to ask a University of Calgary student what they'd do if the U of C shut down, the answer would likely be that they'd find another institution to go to. At the end of the day, all brick and mortar institutions that deliver a degree are quite similar. They differ in details, not in kind. Athabasca University stands out, in that respect, that it delivers an education which, in years past, couldn't be obtained otherwise. Now, of course, there are more institutions offering courses online.

As we're all well aware, AU makes it possible for people who wouldn't be able to attain a university education, whether that's because they're place-bound, or have time constraints that keep the traditional classroom setting from being an option.

Of course, when speaking of how AU opens up opportunities for more people to pursue post-secondary, I asked him about the thesis that comes through in some of his books and [previous interviews](#) that a university education really isn't for everyone. I was curious if he still stood by this, and what kind of effect this belief might have on his reporting about AU.

"Yes," he said. "30% of students who start programs don't finish. This tells us that we're letting people in who aren't ready, motivated, or interested. Or perhaps that we aren't serving them properly. For example, some of the big universities have difficulty dealing with certain types of learning challenges. And often we're not preparing students properly for what they'll encounter when they start taking university courses and that can be really damaging. In my work in northern communities, I found that if you're clear and up front with students about the challenges they'll be facing, and take steps to modify the academic programs to address some of the learning styles they can successfully start taking the programs in an incremental fashion."

"Second," Dr. Coates continued, "we have a situation where the university becomes a default. You finish high school and go into university. Period. But I'm a huge fan of the whole range of post-secondary: apprenticeships, colleges, poly-technics, and what we need to do is match people with their abilities, motivations, and life expectations.

So if someone wants to be a professional and have a white collar career, there are strategies to do that, and perhaps university is among those.

If you like working outdoors or with machinery, though, there's a different direction that would better serve you.

But in our current system, we're incautious about how we direct people. We're not very good at it in high school, and parents are even worse. Ask parents about the trades. Is being a plumber or an electrician a high paying job? Yes. Is it a stable job, will it provide steady work? Yes. Do you want your kids there? Oh no."

But why not? It's not done with an assessment of their children or anything else, it's more just a lifestyle expectation. The impression they have of a university graduate is they end up working in a Google campus-like environment, with ping-pong tables down the hall and great benefits, and not only are most white-collar jobs not like that, but without evaluation, is that even what their kids are suited for?

And this is where I'm impressed with AU because it gives people who made a wrong decision earlier on in their lives, or who found they can't handle the campus based education or the large classes a chance to dip their toe into university. Open means they can take a single course when they have the time, and that gives them the best chance to do well, which may lead to taking a second course. And they do well in that one too, and then seven years down the line they're finishing a master's degree.

And on the other side of this, of those who drop out, many are completely capable of doing university when the time and interest is right. And AU provides an opportunity for these people to ease themselves into a system that they may not have been ready for before. It gives these people the chance to exercise the intellectual itch they may have.

We're moving into an era of really quite dramatic change, with AI and automation. People are going to have to be learning and re-learning. Training and retraining on a regular basis. AU knows this is a big portion of its marketing opportunity. Say somebody working in the oil-patch, just to bring it home to Alberta, just got laid off. They're looking around saying, 'Okay, I had a good run, I've done well, but I still have a house, a mortgage, a family, obligations I've got to meet. I've got to find a job but I'm going to have to retrain for something that will last for the next several years.' This is a great opportunity for AU, and with AU's potential and practices, it's impossible to say that there isn't a role for an online university in the future."

I wondered, given that most of what we talked about seemed to be related toward professional employment, if he thought that there was room for AU to be running Liberal Arts education with the constant push, from both parents and government, for education that moved directly toward careers.

His answer? Absolutely. "There is an absolute clear role for liberal arts, it's something that's critically needed now as much as, if not more than, before. But there's a problem with it. In Ontario, the humanities faculties have seen a 30% decline in enrolment over the last few years. You can't force students to go obviously. But then Waterloo humanities faculties got together and created a new program: Digital Arts and Global Business. It was an entirely social science and humanities program, and turned out to be the largest first year launch in the history of Waterloo."

Isn't that just a case of repackaging though, I asked, of making the course sound palatable to parents. And while he conceded that partially this was the case, parents (and students) are certainly interested in things that sound like they're career ready paths, he noted it was also the kind of innovation that needs to be happening throughout post-secondary – of creating programs that have application today.

While all this is interesting stuff, none of it speaks directly to what he might be thinking of for the third-party review that he'll soon be presenting to government. So, I asked. I asked if he's already developed some ideas for what he'll be writing about how AU should proceed into the future. He demurred, noting that he's still receiving (and looking for) more responses from AU students and other stakeholders.

Since many of the things we spoke of, however, seemed to be larger concerns, and because the Alberta government has recently started a review of the funding model it uses, I wondered if the task would have been a bit easier if he'd been given the scope to be part of that funding model review.

He noted that funding is, of course, the easy answer. But his review is about more than that. It's about sustainability and quality as well. And part of that plays into the idea of external accreditation organizations that evaluate the job universities are doing. It also plays into the idea that there needs to be a larger strategy for Canadian education, skills, and training in general, because eventually he sees a situation occurring where people will not be thinking of education as tied to a specific institution, but one where people will be able to move back and forth to other institutions, and in fact should do that, but that we have a problem in that we don't look at the idea of student success across the entire system. There's no real incentive for a university to recommend a student might do better with a different teaching model that's used at a different university. If a student doesn't cut it in their model, they just fail the student and move on.

And he also noted that while people, especially those in the university system, are very impressed with what AU does, and is doing, there's also a broad knowledge that the future doesn't look like the past. "The Ontario government", he pointed out, "is still trying to expand its post-secondary system. But we're reaching the end of the millennial generation," he said, and pointed out how the bricks and mortar schools, that are dependant on the students coming straight from high school, are going to be experiencing a form of generational shock in short order. Meanwhile, in northern Ontario, the universities there are already short of students. In the Maritimes, they're desperately short of students, so do we build a new institution that may soon be empty or do we move the students between provinces? But parents also usually want their kids close to home.

All told, it means that "There's no easy answer. After all, there are a lot of smart people looking for one, so if it existed, it probably would have been found already."

From the PSE News Desk

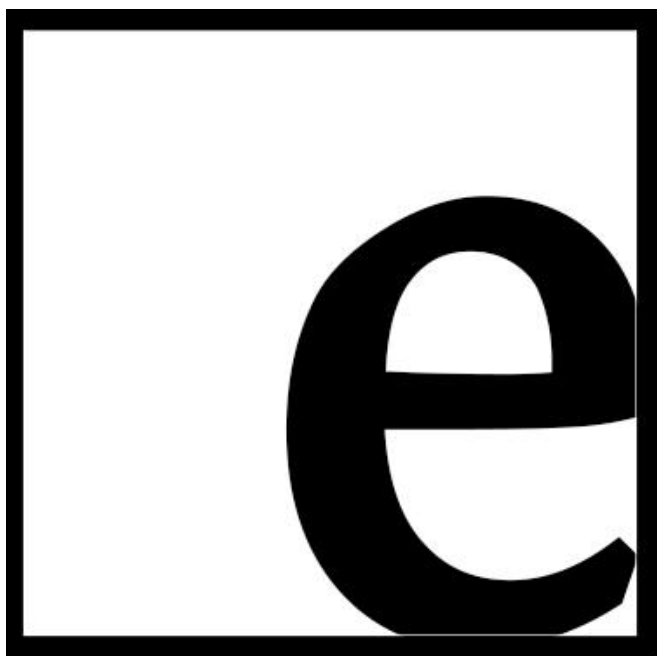
What's making the news in Post-Secondary Education.



If everyone hates hazing, why is it still a thing? Canadian university students are still subject to the often-cruel ritual of hazing. In a recent article, "[How to break the vicious cycle of hazing](#)", Maclean's examines the current state of hazing rituals in Canadian universities and the efforts to abolish the practice. The problem? Students who have suffered through hazing rituals may have hated it, but they feel compelled to inflict it on a fresh crop of students years later in a twisted act of vengeance. That's why mature students go to AU, where hazing is so unheard of, the university doesn't even have a policy on it.

The Incalculable Cost of a Vowel

Barbara Lehtiniemi



Did you send an e-mail to Dr. Ken Coates this month? You'd better read this:

On the game show "Wheel of Fortune" vowels were so critical to solving the puzzle that contestants had to purchase them. As soon as the letter "e" appeared on the board, the solution often became obvious.

The value of the letter "e" was demonstrated recently during AU's third-party review. The reviewer, Dr. Ken Coates, sent out an e-mail invitation February 28 to every AU student—approximately 40,000 of them—soliciting comments about AU. This invitation offered students a unique opportunity to provide input into the future of AU.

I was one of the dozens of students who attended one of the teleconferences hosted by Dr. Coates. Then I followed

up with a lengthy e-mail with my perspective and suggestions for AU's way forward.

But my e-mail didn't go to Dr. Coates.

A week after sending the e-mail, I happened to notice the e-mail address I used omitted the letter "e" in Coates. I re-read Dr. Coates's original e-mail and discovered that the e-mail address provided in the body of that message was kennethcoats@gmail.com, which I had copied and pasted into the "To" line of my e-mail. Yet he had sent his e-mail message from kennethcoates@gmail.com. Very similar, but one has an "e" in "Coates" and one does not.

I quickly re-sent my e-mail to the correct address: kennethcoates@gmail.com. However, I wonder how many other students sent their e-mail to the address missing the vital "e"? AUSU replicated the e-less e-mail address by copying it directly from Dr. Coates's message and broadcasting it to AU students on their website and through e-mail to all AU undergrad students. Even *The Voice Magazine's* website displayed the wrong e-mail address for a time.

I contacted Dr. Coates about the discrepancy in the e-mail address provided, and he confirmed that the one without the "e" is not his address. Any e-mails sent to that address will not reach Dr. Coates.

Students who simply replied to the original e-mail have nothing to worry about, because replies would be directed to the originating (and correct) e-mail address. But students who, like me, composed a fresh e-mail and copied the address from the body of Dr. Coates's message have sent their valuable insights to someone else entirely.

Somewhere out there is an annoyed Kenneth Coates whose inbox has been flooded with meaningless—to him—material. Or maybe it's a long-forgotten e-mail address that is seldom checked. (Attempts to contact the other Kenneth Coates for this article have so far gone unanswered.)

In any case, if e-mails students sent aren't going to the correct Kenneth Coates, they're rendered worthless. If sent to the wrong e-mail address, the input students believed they were sending to Dr. Coates, at his invitation, has not gone to Dr. Coates at all and won't be considered during the third-party review.

What is the value of a vowel? An "e" in an e-mail doesn't cost anything. But, when it's required, the cost of its absence—and the loss of valuable student input—is incalculable.

If you sent an e-mail to Dr. Ken Coates for the third-party review, check to make sure you used kennethcoates@gmail.com. If you sent it to the address with the "Coats" spelling, you'll need to re-send it to the correct address so that your comments reach Dr. Coates.

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



The Creative Spark Secrets to Genius

Marie Well

Daydreams, Gaps, Errors—and Lies



Do you like to drift off into fantasy? If you do, you have an inner genius bursting through your belly—something like a fire in your belly. The difference is that your head is spacy, not angry.

Academics once thought psychedelic drugs led to breakthroughs. And medical marijuana consumers might take comfort in the notion of heightened creativity. But how do wild ideas, daydreams—even non-reality (aka lies)—lead to creativity?

Well, they all come from you. You've heard the view that you are unique. There's no-one like you. That's why you're so valuable. You have a world inside of you no-one else has. You know things no-one else knows. You feel things no-one else feels.

So, you're a walking closet of originality. Why not make school fun and open that closet—even just a crack?

Judith Weston, in her book *The Film Director's Intuition*, gives the scoop on script analysis and rehearsal techniques. I take her (bold font below) comments further to say how you can go wild with creativity in academia.

When an actor says, "Spit it out," imagine spit splattering on the cement. Create visuals for all imagery you read about in articles or write about in essays. By visualizing the imagery, you come closer to a more intimate connection with the subject matter. For instance, if you read up on protein molecules, then quickly Google an image of these critters. Imagine the molecules with big muscular arms doing their protein thing.

Furthermore, your visual for the muscular protein molecule will be different from mine—which makes your visuals unique and personal. (Mine is wearing a yellow muscle shirt and sporting a Sponge Bob smile.) Visualize all imagery for deeper, personal connections.

Turn all your associations (with imagery, etcetera) into a soup. Make your reactions to an article a hodgepodge of your inner world. React to an article's images, ideas, personalities, writing styles—you name it. But base your reactions on your experiences, your senses, or even your fuzzy memories. No-one is you. The more you call on your inner world when reading an article, the closer you come to a creative breakthrough. The bigger the soup of associations, the better the breakthrough.

Evaluate an author's motivation: (1) Does an author habitually act in ways that make his or her goal harder to get? (2) Do 50% of the author's efforts to improve things make things worse? (3) Does the author want something she or he will never get? (4) Does the author want something that would make his or her life worse? Or (5) does the author want something that he or she already has?

I thought Weston's above list of motivation-twists deserved a section of its own. If you can pinpoint one of these motivation-errors in an author you cite, you might have an interesting point-of-disagreement. Recently in the news, I saw a professor of an ivy school criticize the racism in a book. While her efforts were altruistic, it turned out she hadn't even read the book. In short, her efforts worsened her defense.

The solution? Criticize only the books you read. And, whatever you do, don't write a five-star book review with the following three words, "Delivered as expected."

As another example, advocates of converting-to-green-energy-overnight got hard hit when Wynne's Hydro Plan cost them monthly almost as much as rent. Poverty spiked as fast as Ontario had gone green. In short, what you want could sour when it comes time to drink up.

Motivation-errors suggest "gaps" in the literature. And gaps you fill lead to A's on your essays. So, pinpoint the motivation.

"So-called facts are really clues, because memory is so faulty," says Weston (p. 144). Even lies have some truth behind them—some association or image from our actual experiences. And our memories tell only a partial story (as the event lasts longer than our story of the event—so stuff's missing).

So, daydream about the partial, fuzzy facts for a deeper story, says Sanford Meisner (as quoted in Weston). Similarly, with your essays, take the facts and daydream. For instance, you'll come across a body of work on, say, a historical figure. Yet, pieces of the historical figure's biography might be missing. In other words, some of the facts (or clues) are missing. So, read up as much as you can on the historical figure—and then daydream about the missing pieces. Let your musings lead to speculations, suggestions—even thought-experiments. Daydream.

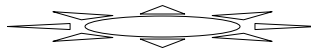
For instance, you could daydream about whether Einstein's theory of relativity was inspired by simple daily events. Perhaps Einstein watched shadows (cast by moving cars) shift relative to where (and when) he walked by the car. A case for relativity? Maybe Einstein felt shame reporting simple observations.

But we all know Newton's theory of gravity struck him with an apple to the skull. At least, that's how the media frames it. And who knows what downright simple things inspire Stephen Hawking's theories. (Maybe I should

read his book first—or discuss it on behalf of Princeton on CNN News.) Daydream about fuzzy facts to percolate your personal breakthroughs.

So, before you reach for your medical marijuana, consider how daydreams can lead to your inner genius. Daydreams, gaps, errors—even lies—can lead to inspiration. A paradox? I call it a Creative Spark!

**The author of this article advocates neither psychedelics nor illegal substances—nor lies. Instead, she calls for fun with daydreams and fuzzy facts.*



The Vinyl Revival Sentimental Journey or Path of Resistance?

Wanda Waterman



Last year sales of vinyl records were the highest they've been since, well, since compact disk sales first surpassed vinyl in 1988.

To better understand the complex of causes surrounding vinyl's death and resurrection, let's go back and look at the history of the writing pen.

Dip pens had been around for hundreds of years, but, in 1883, Lewis Waterman of New York developed the capillary feed fountain pen and created a special ink that could be stored in a cylinder, falling just fast enough so that you could

write evenly without having to dip the pen in an inkwell.

Ballpoints were invented not long afterward, and as time went on they replaced fountain pens. They were cheaper, and they had this wonderful new mechanism-- a tiny ball that turned, releasing just the right amount of ink. You didn't have to buy cartridges or refill them yourself. When they were empty you just threw them away.

It didn't matter that the early ballpoints were crap: They would leak out if left in your purse or pocket. They ran out of ink fast. Their slipperiness made it difficult to write neatly. It didn't matter; they were the new thing. They represented progress.

Progress was something we'd been lead to believe in so passionately that we were sitting ducks for marketing ploys, ever ready to chuck our valuable goods and open our wallets for the next milestone in a product's history. Which brings us to compact discs. As soon as they appeared it was widely acknowledged that this wonderful new technology would replace cassettes and vinyl. The CD was small and portable, as were its players. It didn't skip, supposedly. The sound was great, we were told, better than analog because it was made with digital

technology, which just had to be better, allegedly. Audiophiles who insisted the sound was different were held in derision.

In retrospect, it appears CDs and MP3s were not the wave of the future we'd imagined, but just more blips on the screen, like 8-tracks and cassettes. Because, according to discriminating listeners the word over, vinyl is still the real deal.

The wide acceptance of compact discs as the go-to musical format to the exclusion of all others shows how stupid we humans really are. (Okay, so it wasn't just our stupidity; the record companies jumped tall buildings to ensure that retailers sold more CDs than vinyl, but hey, we let it happen.)

The CDs skipped all over the place. There was no room in the jewel case for the posters, stickers or other paraphernalia that used to come with 12-inch disks. Worse, the plastic "hinges" broke apart on the third use. You couldn't sit and hold a CD, admiring the art and checking out the fine print (which on the 12-inches often contained brilliant nuggets of wisdom and humour). There was no delicious needle ritual or sacrosanct orders to all in the room not to bounce around.

And the sound was *not* as good as analog. Digital recording technology can never reproduce a whole soundwave the way analog does. Digital technology records soundwaves as a series of numbers, whereas analog records the soundwave as a continuous line, i.e. 1, 2, and 3 plus the infinite number of points between them.

Aside from the aesthetic attraction, listening to vinyl has slowly become seen as an act of resistance. It's a great way to yank a little power away from a music industry that's grown too big for its britches, an industry that's become more about the dollar than about creating beautiful sounds.

It took a while for the rebel spirit to wake up, and when it did the record companies were miffed. Compact disks were so much cheaper to make, and besides, most of the bigwigs had trashed their vinyl manufacturing gear. They would have moved on, as it were. Why were these punks, hip-hoppers, and neo-hippies clamouring for bygone technology?

Then came downloadable music, another act of resistance that the record companies fought like the dickens. It felt wonderful to download Anne Murray's "Buffalo in the Park" because it helped me relive the childhood experience of playing the album while holding the cover in my hands. It still feels good to know that if I want to check out a new band or album I can just go to iTunes and listen to previews.

But if I really like a new band, I want to hear it, if not live, then on vinyl. Not only do I want it on vinyl, I want to find it in a place where the buying experience itself is part of the joy.

There are things that an indie record store offers that you can't find online, the main one being the opportunity to go back through your favourite musical eons and find records you hadn't known existed. These recordings form an unparalleled arsenal of creative inspiration, and this is the only way you can get it because according to the estimation of the brilliant documentary *I Need That Record! The Death (Or Possible Survival) of the Independent Record Store*, 50% of all vinyl albums made have never made it to digital format. (True, music downloads have walloped CD sales—except for all that music that can't be downloaded because it's never been recorded to a digital format.)

Walking into a good record store is like entering a portal. Record store people (the nice ones mind you, not the condescending music Nazis) are among the coolest people on this planet. Take Steve Lüdviik, a tall drink of water with hair half his height and a serene spirit that practically spews positive energy, who co-owns Montreal's Death of Vinyl (*La Fin Du Vinyle*) with Dan Hadley. (The store was named after decades of predictions that vinyl was done. Pshaw to that.)

A friend of Steve's once described the store as "An oasis of cool in a world gone mad," which is completely apt. The place is dimly lit but somehow full of colour, atmosphere, and the most amazing collection of music—vinyl, cassettes, even CDs (no snotty purists here)—and books imaginable.

Steve is a veritable Alexandrian library of bygone pressings. When I ask him to show me something in late-'60s-early-'70s art rock he tells me all about Soft Machine, a band I'd never heard of despite loving this subgenre. I then test him for contempt by asking for old country music. He proudly brings out the Lefty Frizzell, Skeeter Davis, and Hank Snow, without a hint of a sneer.

Steve started collecting records in his teens, just before compact discs started outselling vinyl. "In '88 or '89," he recalls, "people were getting rid of their records, like they were a disease, to make way for CDs. I would go into all these record stores. It was almost like a golden age for buying and collecting records. I mean you could find multiple copies of super-rare records that we don't see today anymore."



Entering Death of Vinyl is like finding a door to Narnia, Wonderland, and Oz all at once.



Dan Hadley and Steve Lüdviik, owners of Montreal's Death of Vinyl (*La Fin Du Vinyle*)

There's so much to love here: the fact, for example, that artists are allowed to display their work with no commission asked, or that the decor is so bohemian, or that the place is a great resource for local musicians and DJs, or that it's just a great place to hang out. All because a couple of guys did what made sense to them alone instead of bowing to somebody else's idea of progress.

May Dan and Steve and their ilk—and vinyl—live long and prosper. Amen.

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

Technical Observations

Chrome—A Browser by Google

Dakota Soares



I am sure most of you know about Google Chrome. In its 57th version for public use, and published in 2008 as a direct attack on Microsoft's Internet Explorer dominant market share, Chrome was an instant hit to businesses and consumers alike. (Chrome is actually in its 59th version, however this is for developers. There are three betas: CB, CD, and CC. We will only touch on the public version.) Looking at the usage tracking site, StatCounter, Chrome leads the way by far—taking 62% of all current browsing usage.

Chrome has many features that have made it a hit in the past years- from plugins and extensions to privacy and security features. It will soon become apparent why many users and businesses find Chrome a home on their computers.

On its initial release, Chrome was fast. It beat out other popular web browsers in speed, load times, and functionality. Since then however, the gap has closed, and in one test showing how browsers effect battery lifetime, Chrome slipped into 2nd place. Chrome is very stable, using "process isolation" to run each open tab separately from the rest- so if one crashes, the others will not be effected. Though this gives greater stability, it also makes Chrome a resource hungry browser, and it constantly tops out as the browser that consumes the most system resources to use.

Chrome has several different add-ins that users can use to customize Chrome. Extensions (downloadable through the Chrome Web Store) can greatly enhance a user's experience. Popular extensions include Adblock Plus, Google Docs, Honey (an extension that helps you find coupons for online purchases), Lazarus Form Recovery (an auto save extension), Web of Trust (WOT) Reputation Ratings, Office Online, Google Hangouts, and LastPass (password manager), to name a few. Chrome also has plugins (these can only be disabled and new ones are added automatically), and can be customized via themes, which change the overall look of the browser. (You can get Chrome Themes on the Web Store).

Features that differ slightly from other browsers include the famed "Omnibox" search field, positioned in the middle of new tabs. And speaking of tabs, they make up the main portion of the interface, and are positioned, unlike some browsers, above the controls. They can be dragged around into new windows, duplicated, muted, pinned, and bookmarked. Another feature is "Incognito mode" which prevents the browser from storing browsing history and cookies from visited websites. Don't think you can get away with visiting sleazy sites though, developers can find ways to get into your browsing history despite having this mode enabled.

Last, Chrome is big on security within the browser. In a well-known hacking contest, Pwn2Own, held at the CanSecWest security conference, Chrome resisted hacks for three years. It did succumb to attacks in 2012, though, and has various times since. This was mainly due to the Adobe Flash element, a plugin Chrome has since disabled by default. Chrome uses two different updated blacklists to help protect itself against phishing and malware attacks. Users will also be warned if you visit a potentially malicious site.

As for what matters to AU students, for studies, and general research for studies, Chrome does very well. All tests with different websites within AU have been successful, and no errors were found in my experience. The IT helpdesk does support Chrome for various functions within the AU environment. Expect it to chew through your battery of your mobile device though; I would steer clear of this one for your phones and tablets, and mainly use it on the desktop.

PS: if you want to have some fun, disconnect yourself from the internet, fire up Chrome, and try to search something. An error will pop up with a little T-Rex (seriously!) Hit your space-bar and away you go on an infinite-running game!

Dakota Soares is an entrepreneur taking his BSc through AU, and has many interests including music, information technology, and chicken producing.



Do Three Things for Canada's 150th Birthday

Carla Knipe



Canada's 150th birthday year is gearing up for its big party on July 1. There are lots of celebrations planned in towns and cities across the country, but many Canadians still feel unsure about how they can get involved.

One Calgary-based initiative is hoping to change that. Called "3 Things for Canada", it is designed to let everyone have the chance to give Canada a personal birthday gift. That gift is not a tangible object and does not have a monetary value, but is priceless. It is giving the gift of self—through service.

The concept might sound lofty, but it's simple. The campaign urges every Canadian to share their time and talents to help others. If everyone gives three acts of service, then that adds up to 100 million birthday gifts for Canada!

The campaign grew out of the "3 Things for Calgary" project, which was created by the Mayor's Civic Engagement Committee. This committee was struck in 2010 after Naheed Nenshi was elected as mayor of Calgary, and was hugely successful in reaching its goal to get Calgarians out to volunteer, meet their neighbours, and take pride in their city. As Canada's sesquicentennial approached, the committee realized that the "Three Things" concept would be perfect for a national project. They worked hard to create and launch a national campaign in time for Canada's 150th birthday celebration.

Since the national launch, the committee has seen "3 Things for Canada" be embraced by individual Canadians as well as organizations. Cities and towns are supporting the campaign and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has

also pledged his support. Committee member Cheri Macauley said that as July 1st gets closer momentum is growing, but they would like to see more people spread the word.

So, how can you get on board with the project? Here are the three steps.

1. Think.

Think about three things you can do to make Canada better. These things could be for your street, your neighbourhood or for your entire city or town—or a combination of all three. What you decide to do it entirely your choice, based on your skills, passions, and what issues you feel are important. And, if you have an idea you'd like to put into action and a little money would make a difference, a grassroots grant might help. Check with your local town council or community association to see if you can obtain some seed money for a project.

2. Do your Three Things.

Whether they are large or small, every action you take to make Canada better makes a difference. And if you have more things you want to dive into, then do them!

3. Encourage (at least) three more people to do three things.

This part is so important. You might already do so much for your community, but others might not yet be living up to their potential. Spread the word to encourage others to make Canada better.

There is still lots of time before Canada Day to decide what you wish to do for Canada's birthday. But hopefully, the "Three Things" concept will also carry beyond this year and become a legacy project for Canada. If you as an AU student decide to do this, please let The Voice know! We can all make Canada's special birthday year extraordinary!

You can read more about 3 Things for Canada at <http://www.threethingsforcanada.ca> and the Official Government of Canada 150th Birthday page can be found at <http://canada.pch.gc.ca/eng/1468262573081>.

Carla Knipe is a Calgary writer who is completing her BA in English through AU. Come and say hi to her on Twitter @LunchBuster.

Student Sizzle AU's Hot Social Media Topics

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

AthaU Facebook Group

Ingo advises that a new Labour Studies course, LBST 200, is now open for registration. Samantha seeks input on choosing between HADM courses 321, 379, or 400. Jessica seeks feedback on COMP 230, Storyboard Design and Development. Other posts include Moodle problems, AU student town-hall sessions, and courses ACCT 253, MATH 215, PSYC 210, and WGST 200.

Twitter

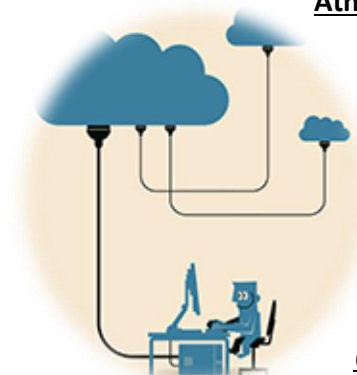
@AthabascaU tweets: "Prominent Edmonton architect to chair university board <http://ow.ly/7DeD309WG3h>."

@AthabascaUSU (AUSU) tweets: "Want some coaching for your writing assignments? Check out the @AthabascaU Write Site! <http://write-site.athabascau.ca/>."

@AthabascaUBiz tweets: "Congratulations Marilyn Strong, #AthaU MBA ITM '04 on being selected as one of Kelowna's Top 40 over 40: <https://t.co/fcaDnauBn1>."

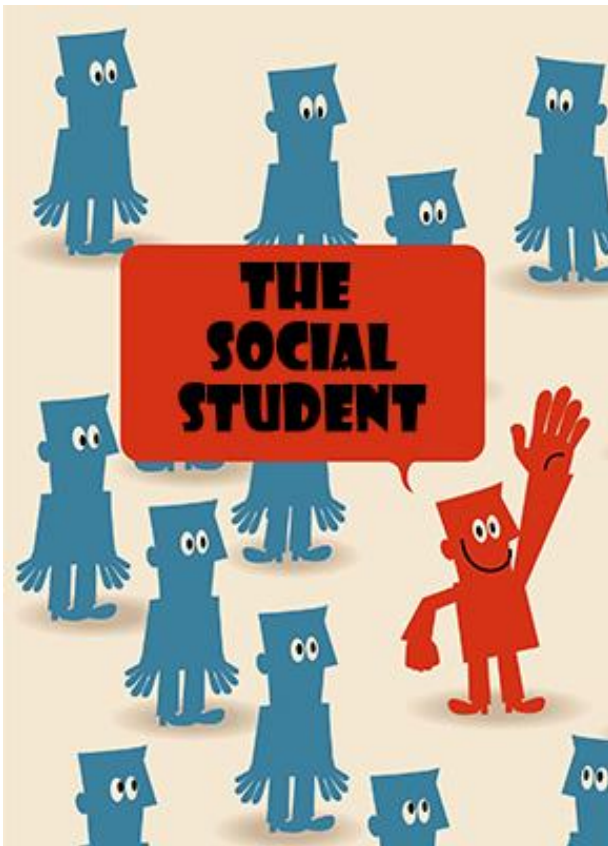
Youtube

Optimize your LinkedIn account with the [LinkedIn tips webinar](#) from the [AU Faculty of Business](#).



The Social Student Revive Student Clubs!

Marie Well



Did you ever dream of starting an AU club? I did. Or did you long to start a graduate student journal? I did. Or did you thrill at the thought of hosting an academic conference for grad students? I did. Did you want to start an AU radio or TV station? Yes, I did! But each dream led to a dead-end.

You see, not that long ago, I got excited about the idea of starting an AU debate team. I searched AUSU's site and saw a section about clubs. I was thrilled! But, there didn't seem to be any *active* clubs. To this day, the whole AUSU clubs' dead-end leaves me baffled. Where did the clubs listing go anyway? Why aren't there any clubs now?

Later I contacted AU's graduate student's union. I asked the president if she and I could publish a graduate student journal. At first, she said they had a journal, and she expressed interest in me contributing. She said she would talk to the Board, but she disappeared, never to resurface.

When I contacted the graduate student's union again—to see if I could publish articles on graduate student teaching—I was turned down. The administrator, a staff of one, didn't have the

resources to pursue a graduate level magazine or journal. He said he had no knowledge of such a publication. Another dead-end.

Later, I tried starting an AU radio station—an extension of The Voice. But student demand didn't seem to be there. And I think the AUSU budget might have been constrained. I also advocated for AU YouTube TV. Two more dead-ends.

Every now and then, I peer at AUSU's site for mention of clubs. Nothing surfaces. Yet, it's not the fault of AUSU—it's my fault. Yes, that's who to blame: me.

Thankfully, I write for *The Voice Magazine*. If not for The Voice, I'd have no student contact. At least as a Voice writer, I can pour my soul to anyone willing to listen. I've received only two responses: one a flattering reply, the other an angry letter. I cherish them both: they assure me that other AU humans do exist.

But more to the point, the Voice offers me a way to help bring AU clubs back to life. You see, I found a way to fund clubs: crowdfunding—for campuses. The crowdfunding site called Givecampus.com could help AU students fund conferences, launch clubs, create scholarships, buy equipment for clubs, fund websites for clubs, launch journals, start debate teams—you name it.

Givecampus.com caters to some Canadian universities with the condition that they are non-profit. I contacted Givecampus.com to send a request to Athabasca University to put our school in its database. I now ask that

you, too, contact Givecampus.com to request AU be added as a crowdfunding campus. The more requests, the more AU might agree.

If AU accepts the invite to crowdfund, then AU can specify how students use the funds, whether for club launches, equipment purchases, scholarships, travel expenses, sports team creations, conference expenses, journal overhead, radio station launches, YouTube TV start-ups, and more. Givecampus.com would hand over all raised funds to AU, who would then allocate the funds to the student initiatives. In other words, students *need* AU on board.

With that said, I now provide a brief sketch of givecampus.com:

- AU needs to get on board. Once AU's decision-makers get on board, these folks specify what you can and cannot raise funds for with crowdfunding.
- The crowdfunding campaign should have a target dollar amount or target number of people donating. If you don't reach your target, you don't get the funding. So, choose realistic targets.
- The campaign should go for about 30 days or so. You specify the duration.
- A 3-minute maximum length video should be included in your campaign.
- A 300-word description should be included.
- You need to promote your crowdfunding campaign through as many AU channels possible: AU social media, AUSU, The Voice, the Landing—anywhere you get a green light. Promote that campaign steadily during the time it's live.

So, let's lean on AU to give its students a spot on givecampus.com. Revive the clubs!

Voice TV anyone?



Council Connection
March 14, 2017 Council Meeting

Bonita Arbeau

The March 14 AUSU council meeting kicked off at 5:30 pm sharp. All of council was in attendance, except for Julian Teterenko who was away on AUSU business at the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations' (CASA) annual general meeting in Nova Scotia.

The meeting agenda and prior meetings' minutes were approved without delay. One of the set of meeting minutes was from a special council meeting held on March 7 to elect the AUSU Executive for the upcoming year. President Shawna Wasylyshyn and Vice President External Julian Teterenko were re-elected for another one-year term, and Councillor Scott Jacobsen was elected for the first time as Vice President Finance and Administration. Shawna, Julian, and Scott were the only councillors to put their names forward for these positions, and all votes were unanimous. The new AUSU Executive will officially take office at the next council meeting on April 11.

The first motion of the March 14 meeting was to implement bbPress as a discussion platform on AUSU's website, a recommendation made by the AUSU Member Engagement and Communications Committee. This feature will provide a forum for membership consultations on bylaw revisions, AUSU election discussions, and conversations among students on a variety of topics. The forum was recommended by AUSU's web developer, can be

integrated seamlessly into the AUSU website, allows for comment moderation, and is affordable, with only \$500 in setup costs and no additional maintenance fees. Shawna Wasylyshyn and Kim Newsome discussed uncertainties around the forum's long-term purpose and administration, and they agreed that the platform would be installed on a trial basis. No other councillors participated in this discussion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Next, council ratified a last-minute e-mail motion to approve a budget overage of up to \$14,000 for staffing fees to recruit a new executive director. Executive Director Sarah Cornett submitted her resignation on March 8, the day after the AUSU Executive elections, after a year and a half of working at AUSU. The timing was curious. If you read last month's Council Connection, you know that council, after much debate, recently voted to sign a relatively expensive lease (\$19,976 more per year than the cheapest alternative) to appease staff and to prevent AUSU's work from being disrupted by a potential loss of staff. AUSU's executive director's resignation was effective on March 22, just one day after AUSU moved into that new office space. Although council was conspicuously quiet at this point in the meeting, Shawna later acknowledged Sarah's resignation and thanked her for all of her contributions to AUSU.

The next item on the agenda was to approve the annual financial statements and audit findings for the 2015-16 fiscal year. VPFA Kim Newsome commented that the audit was routine and that AUSU's auditor, Kingston Ross Pasnak LLP, said positive things about AUSU's internal controls. AUSU received a solid return on its investments for the year, helping to turn a projected deficit of \$133,573 into a surplus of \$38,131. In addition, Kim praised AUSU staff for reducing expenses wherever possible. These cutbacks saved (when compared to 2015) \$62,263 on staff wages and benefits, \$12,448 on student planners, and \$7,040 on office and administration expenses. Council wages and benefits, however, increased by \$46,346. This increase was mostly due to a full AUSU Executive in 2016, after multiple councillor and AUSU Executive vacancies throughout 2015.

The AUSU Executive did not edit many AUSU policies in March. They did, however, make a few important changes to policy 4.06, *Planning and Council Schedule*, such as adding that the Projects and Goals Plan must be approved publicly by council each year, and that once approved, it cannot be amended. What happens if outside forces create a need for new plans and goals mid-way through the term was not discussed.

AU-thentic Events

Upcoming AU Related Events

Zotero and Mendeley Webinar: how to install and use these free tools to import references, organize your research, create bibliographies, and more.

Saturday, March 25, 12:00 to 1:00 pm MDT
Online

Hosted by AU Library

library.athabasca.ca/orientations.html

no pre-registration required

RISE: Actions and Words

Thursday, March 30, 6:00 to 8:00 pm MDT
Edmonton City Hall, 1 Sir Winston Churchill Square, Edmonton AB

In-person

Hosted by Reconciliation in Solidarity
Edmonton and sponsored by AU Press

www.aupressblog.ca/2017/02/15/rise-book-club/#.WNLYwqK1tGM

no pre-registration required

Looking ahead...

AU Student Town Hall with President Neil Fassina - Edmonton

Tuesday, April 11, 12:00 to 1:30 pm
Edmonton Chamber of Commerce, 600-9990 Jasper Avenue, Edmonton AB

In-person

Hosted by Athabasca University

news.athabasca.ca/news/student-town-hall-president-neil-fassina/

e-mail

EdmontonStudentRSVP@athabasca.ca by April 3 to RSVP

Also, the annual general meeting, regular standing committee meetings, and quarterly financial reports were removed from the list of tasks that council must schedule during the year. There was no discussion as to why the AUSU Executive felt they no longer needed to plan for an AGM, and council did not question the change. However, according to current AUSU bylaws, council is required to call an AGM each year, where the members appoint an auditor and receive the annual report and financial statements.

The AGM has been an important event in AUSU's calendar, and although it has occasionally been contentious, it provided an avenue for council to be held accountable to AUSU members. It was also the only meeting where AUSU members can make motions and speak freely throughout the meeting. However, in previous meetings, Council had noted that the Alberta Post-Secondary Learning Act requires that bylaws and rules for the students' unions be passed by the elected students' union councils and took the position, despite some opposition from students, that this meant that it was legally precluded from allowing students to have a binding say over any of the bylaws or policies of Council. All of the proposed policy changes were approved unanimously.

After a few technical motions relating to AUSU's accounting policy and investment account signatories, the AUSU Executive and staff presented their monthly reports. Shawna expressed excitement about a "pan-Canadian accord on post-secondary education" that she drafted as CASA advocacy document and that had just been approved at the CASA AGM. In her words, "Such an agreement would allow for increased mobility and transferability for credits and students between provinces and institutions, and the new, updated policy includes a point that suggests that students studying online or at a distance would be funded by the province of their residence to attend any Canadian institution." AU currently receives funding for Alberta students only, and considering the majority of its students are outside of that province, a pan-Canadian accord on post-secondary education could benefit AU greatly.

Kim Newsome also mentioned her work on the "AU lost exam policy," noting that she has had success in advocating for students' right to appeal and that students be given the power to decide how to move forward after a paper exam is lost. It was also mentioned that AU will be providing students access to Microsoft Office 365, free-of-charge, some time after students receive their AU e-mail addresses sometime in the months to come. No firm deadline for this has yet been set, however.

At the end of the meeting, we were joined by Dr. Ken Coates, who was appointed by the AU Board of Governors to perform an independent third party review of the university. Shawna invited him to the meeting so that those of us in attendance could contribute to his review by telling our personal AU stories. Dr. Coates commented on the incredible response received from students, including approximately five hundred emails, in addition to input received in three teleconferences. Dr. Coates asked what we liked about AU, what we would change, and what our vision was for AU's future. Several themes emerged from the discussion that followed. AU students want advancements in technology, choice between e-texts and physical textbooks, and more consistent service, course layouts, and course quality from AU. In addition to these criticisms, many of us praised AU's educational model and stressed the importance of the flexibility and accessibility that AU offers. Dr. Coates' final report is due to be submitted to AU by the end of April.

The next AUSU council meeting is scheduled for April 11 at 5:30 pm MST. If you would like to attend, simply send an e-mail to admin@ausu.org to obtain a copy of the meeting package. I hope to "see" you there!

Bonita is a 3rd year bachelor of commerce student at AU, a mom-of-three, a political junkie, and an impassioned tennis fan, who just so happens to enjoy attending AUSU council meetings in her "spare" time. You can follow her on twitter @BonitaRenee88.

Canadian Education News

Scott Jacobsen



Canadian Youth Underemployed or Unemployed

According to the Montreal Gazette, regardless of the state of the business cycle, there has been a significant decline in the full-time employment of young people, ages 17-24. This excludes those who aren't working because they're full-time students from the count.

Between 1990 and 2015, youth unemployment was about 12%. It is "well above national averages for adults." In fact, the underemployment rate was between 27 to 33%. And while youth are considered lazy, this does not match the statistics.

The jobs for youth are "temporary, contract, unstable and part-time – reflecting a trend present across other OECD countries." Solutions have been offered including investment from the federal government, youth employment initiatives, apprenticeships, and an "overhaul of the federal Youth Employment Strategy."

New Book on Education Innovator Avis Glaze

The Delta Optimist said, "Tsawwassen's Avis Glaze is one of Canada's top educators and an international leader in the field of education...Glaze has been a persistent voice in the belief there should be no 'throw-away kids.'"

There is a new book entitled *Avis Glaze: The Children Cannot Wait*. It is biography that also chronicles the achievements of Glaze. It was written by Roberick Bennis. Bennis said, "Avis is a remarkably effective leader."

Bennis describes her as an advocate of Canadian values as well as innovative in the education field. The book covers "student achievement and wellbeing, leadership development, equity, social justice and inclusive education, character building, career education and innovations..."

Canadian foundation donates \$12 million to Indigenous education

The Toronto Star reports that three Canadian teams are among the finalists in a competition with a \$1 million prize attached to it: the prestigious Hult Prize for business students. It has been called the "Nobel Prize" for business students.

The theme for the current year is "Refugees – The Reawakening of Human Potential" with an emphasis on "restoring the rights and dignity of people and societies who may be, or are forced into motion due to social injustices, politics, economic pressures, climate change and war."

2,000 teams competed and Canadian universities won 3 of the 6 top spots: York University, the University of Calgary, and the University of Waterloo. The competition is run by the Hult Prize Foundation, and amounts to the single largest international competition for the creation of the next generation of social entrepreneurs.

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

The Perception of Busy

Deanna Roney



There has been a debate circulating around social media in the last few months with people and articles seeking to answer the question: "is being 'busy' selfish?". A majority of these, be they quotes or articles, suggest that you should put your relationships before work. Which sounds good in theory, but the work will almost always need to get done. So, this translates to the idea that you should be putting your relationships before yourself.

Respectfully, I disagree. That isn't to say that you should neglect the relationships in your life, but there needs to be a balance so you aren't stretching yourself thin. When someone says they are busy and can't meet for coffee, they are not devaluing you, or avoiding you. It's not that they don't want to see you, it is just that they are busy. There are some things that can't be bumped back, course deadlines, for example. Maybe you have crafted yourself a schedule for getting through an AU course in a specific amount of time, sure those deadlines are self-imposed and could be pushed back, but then you're falling down the proverbial rabbit hole.

It is most important to be honest with your friends, your family, and yourself. Balance can be a tricky thing to find in the work/relationship front, sometimes friends feel brushed off and

hurt when you prioritize the work/school that is keeping you busy. I would rather be able to be caught up on "busy" so if a friend calls and needs something, I can drop and go; be there for my friends when they need me, but not forgetting to take care of myself. If a friend wants to meet for coffee, but you already have errands to run, work to do, or you just want to watch a movie and not think, it is okay to say so. It is okay to decline and reschedule. I have seen a quote floating around along the lines of "if a relationship matters you will make time for it", I think this is dangerous thinking, and it is what leads to misunderstanding and someone feeling pulled thin and burnt out.

The problem is that there is not a one answer fits all. Some days I am busy, some days I work from eight or nine in the morning until eleven at night. And some days (usually after one of these sprees) I putter away at work and take time to slow down, play with the dogs, visit a friend, or just find some quiet time. The quiet days are just as important to me as the productive days, they need to balance out; otherwise, I will burn myself out again, and again, and again. It is tough to tell a friend no, but I have found over the years that most of my friends understand when I decline. We have come to understand that we can't always make time when it suits the other, if they are busy I take no offence when they decline me and vice versa. Having this understanding and learning that it is okay to decline just because you don't have the energy is a freeing and wonderful thing.

In one article I read, the author commented that a text from a friend that declined getting together set her free, her plans were to run errands and chill, so it was not that she couldn't do coffee today, but needed some time for herself, so how about X day? It isn't that the relationship isn't important, and it isn't that work is taking priority over the friendship, there is no hierarchy, just things that need to be done, goals that need (or want) to be met, and friends that we want to visit. Each of these take time, and, while none should be neglected, no one should feel bad about declining because they need some time to themselves or need to finish a project.

Being busy doesn't mean you think you're important or trying to brag, it just means you're busy. If you don't have time to see a friend for awhile, it doesn't mean they aren't important to you, it just means your schedules haven't matched up yet. It just is what it is. I try to schedule blank days as catch up days so if something comes up and I want to be spontaneous then I know exactly where I will be able to catch up on the work I blow off to do so, but when those days are filled with work I wasn't able to get done (because I scheduled too much in a single day) then priorities shift.

Don't listen to the articles that say you should always be busy, and ignore the quote that tells you if your friends really matter to you you'll constantly put them first. Instead, strive to find balance—find a schedule that allows you to have an option for spontaneity, for friends, for work, and for yourself. Don't feel bad if you don't want to go out, don't take offence when a friend declines your invitation, because, just like you, they are probably only striving to find some balance in their life, to keep themselves sane.

Deanna is an AU graduate who loves adventure in life and literature. Follow her path on the writing journey at <https://deannaroney.wordpress.com/>

Scholarship of the Week

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Scholarship name: The Cover Guy Annual Scholarship

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Where to get info: www.thecoverguy.com/ca/the-cover-guy-annual-scholarship/



Celluloid Psychology

Get Out

Melanie Fuller-Brudersas

An Up-close Experience of Racism



The satirical horror film, *Get Out*, is written and directed by Jordan Peele, known for his skits involving the portrayal of minority stereotypes with *MADTV* and the recent popular comedy series, *KAY and PEELE*. This film contrasts his earlier comedy works with a more serious and terrifying look into the prevalent effects of modern racism.

In an interview with Kevin McCarthy from Fox DC 5, Jordan Peele explicitly states his intention to let his audience know *Get Out* is directed by a black man. He wants

his audience to know he intentionally layered hidden, subtle messages within the film to address how racism is not a feature of the past, but rather, an ever-present issue that is constantly skirted. That is, ignorance begets more racism and re-lived mistakes of the past. This is evident in the scene where the main character, the black man Chris meets white girlfriend Rose's relatives at the weekend family reunion. Most members remark on how they would vote Obama for a second, third, or fourth term, and how their favourite sports players are black, etcetera. Peele says this scene depicts how most people will use popular and well known people from his race as a way of "extending an olive branch", however, in reality, this is objectification. The premise for such action defies the point that we can all relate on the basis of being human. That is, Peele finds people try to connect with him on a racial basis first, rather than a person to person basis, signifying a discomfort with pre-perceived, latent, unidentified racial issues.

The film has its moments of satire and humor between Chris (Daniel Kaluuya) and his friend (Lil Rel Howery), however, the true nature of the film is horrifying, intense and suspenseful.

The story begins with Chris and Rose (Allison Williams), a young couple who embark on a trip to a remote, suburban town located outside the city to visit her parents, Missy and Dean (Catherine Keener and Bradley Whitford). At first, Chris has apprehensions of meeting Rose's parents because he expects there could be conflicts based on their interracial relationship. Despite Missy and Dean's seemingly warm and accommodating behaviour, as the weekend visit progresses, Chris's initial fears are realised with the progression of increasingly disturbing discoveries of Rose's familial attitudes toward racism.

The first 15 minutes of the film give you a taste for the severity of the racial experience as you view the racial harassment of a young black man in a suburban neighbourhood, the racial profiling of Chris's friend by an older woman, and then, at Chris's apartment where Rose meets him, he begins asking her whether her parents are ok with him being black and their relationship being interracial. The immediate saturation of racial topics and issues in these scenes push to give the viewer a perspective, or taste of what it is like to be a part of the *non-dominant*, or *target minority* within the population. It is my opinion that the consistent topic of race is meant to initiate viewers to question whether they know how it is for someone who is black in modern society. During my second year in the Counselling Psychology program I read an article by Peggy Macintosh titled *White*

Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Napsack. The article revealed how many areas of life can affect a person who either fits or does not fit the prescribed dominant populace, or racial *ideal*. That is, white, male, heterosexual, Christian, able-bodied, Anglo saxon, young, and so on. Not fitting the majority of these prescribed dominant ideals means suffering the loss of privilege within Western society, despite the current paradigmatic push for pro multi-cultural values. Indeed, this is why this film is so big, as it shows the prevalence of racist values counter to the progressive multicultural movement. Racial struggles and loss of privileged rights are depicted in the symbolism used in this film to convey the disabling and complex emotions of helplessness, internal conflict, personal violation, and so on.

Our life experiences can be so powerful at times that we may experience full-on *alexithymia* (trouble or inability of putting our experiences into words). Indeed, this is why such artistic modes of expression exist; to portray such experiences in ways that words cannot describe. *Get Out* exemplifies the realities of social injustices through the art form; embedded in human nature as a universal healing method that acts as a narrative to reveal subconscious material embedded within the mind (Tan, 2012). The characters involved in this film embody the powerful struggles one may experience in a racist societal context; the white girlfriend, and her professional parents, Missy and Dean; one a neurosurgeon (Dean), the other, a psychiatrist (Missy). Both powerful, both from professions that are historically feared by many as enforcers of societal norms; i.e., if you deviate outside the norm, there is a treatment/ prescription for that. Further, such professionals tend to be blind to their privilege as Norcross and Karpiak (2012) state that the percentage of clinical psychologists who identify as part of a racial or ethnic minority group is under 10 percent. This fear of others in higher social positions dictating the criteria for normal, is a fear embodied and realised by several contemporary films like *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, *A Dangerous Method*, *A Therapy*, *Side Effects*, and so on. Considering that the form of art provides meaning making, and the power to express without restriction or the oppressive refutation of others (Potash, Copland, & Stepney, 2015), I argue that this piece of art provides deep insight into the horror of what it is like to experience racism through symbolic portrayals of helplessness and assigned objectification.

Symbolism of the Deer and Racist Attitudes:

Peele uses deer throughout the film to symbolize helplessness and highlight effects of racism. For example, when Chris hits a deer he feels helpless and tortures himself over it. Conversely, Rose's parents believe the deer being hit as a victory as "Every deer I see dead on the road, I think, it's a start." Chris's care for a living animal contrasts Rose's parents' objectification of the animal as a *thing*. Missy and Dean's house is full of deer decorations and parts (including a mounted head on the wall). They use the deer even though they think the deer is worthless of any subjective value. Thus, the deer represents the objectification of a living being, similar to the banish of privileges obvious behind acts of racism.

The Meaning of that Sinking Feeling and The Surgery

Peele exemplifies how traumatic racism can be in his film by using Missy and Dean as key instigators. Missy dives into Chris's mind using involuntary hypnosis, making him paralyzed and unable to escape what seems like a dark hole in his mind (see movie to find out what it is). Dean elects to perform a different, but equally invasive act on Chris. This is poignant as these acts demonstrate the symbolic stripping of a person's identity and personal autonomy as a human being. They treat Chris and other black people the same way they treat the deer. I never imagined how being recognized as colour-first could be so terrifying. Why? Because I do not know what it is like, since I am privileged and fit the majority of the dominant traits. *Get Out* discloses layers to the experience of being a racial target that cannot be put into words. They must be put into portrayals of experiences on different planes as a means of involving the viewer.

Peele's premise as a black director is to take aim at people's tendencies to internalize racist concepts outside of their conscious awareness (Collins & Arthur, 2010). The content in *Get Out* signals traumatic experiences with the goal to integrate the unsolved into the conscious awareness so that it can be rationalized and resolved (Rosen et al., 2013). This is art, this is communication on a deeper level. Overall, the film is fantastic, and provides a close-up of racism on a personal level. An essential concept gaining great exposure within our current paradigm.

Difficult experiences may be the anti-thesis to art that draw the present into the darkness (illness), while creating art extracts the darkness (illness) from the person into the present (Rosen, Matic, Mardsen, 2013).

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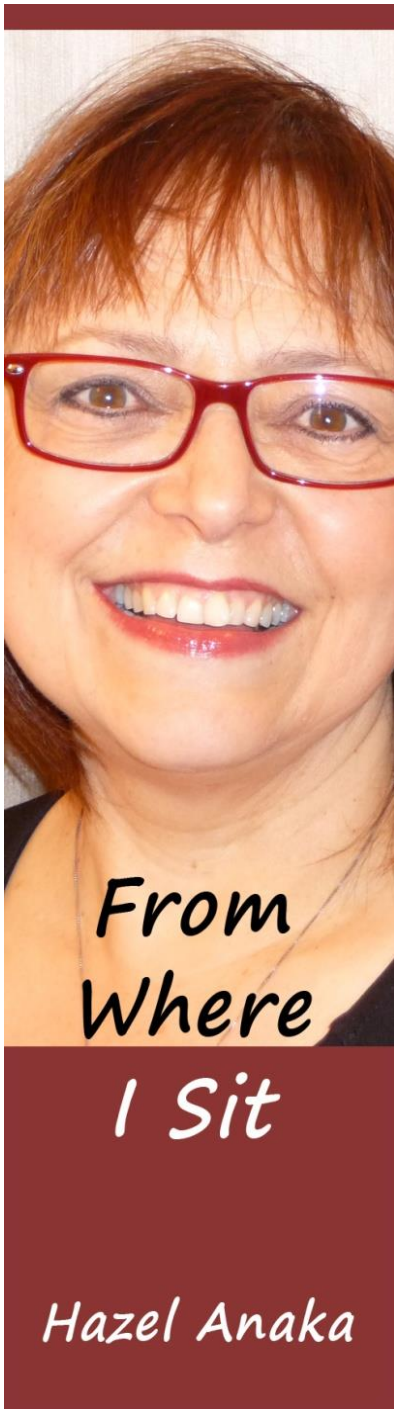
Melanie is a second-year Masters student studying Counselling Psychology at AU. She is fascinated by pop culture and uses a critical lens of examining its meaning in the context of modern psychology.

Women of Interest

"Women are liberated from the time they leave the womb." - Dr. Virginia Apgar

Dr. Virginia Apgar was born June 7, 1909, in Westfield, New Jersey and died August 7, 1974, in New York City. She was an obstetrical anesthesiologist who invented the APGAR score for newborns. The APGAR score is an acronym for Appearance, Pulse, Grimace, Activity, and Respiration. It is administered to newborns one minute after birth and again five minutes after birth. The scores are either a one (the lowest) or two (the highest.) As a result of the APGAR score a determination is made as to whether the baby needs immediate attention, and if required may be repeated every five minutes. Dr. Apgar worked for the March of Dimes from 1959 until 1974 and brought attention to the difficulties involved in premature births. She was influential during the rubella outbreak of 1964-65, as a promoter of widespread vaccination to prevent mother to child transmission of rubella. She lectured extensively about the need for research and the value of early detection of birth defects. During her lifetime, Dr. Apgar received many honors and awards including the Woman of the Year in Science, from the Ladies Home Journal (1973). She also coauthored a book with Joan Beck in 1972 "Is My Baby All Right?"

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Virginia_Apgar
<http://kidshealth.org/en/parents/apgar.html>
https://cfmedicine.nlm.nih.gov/physicians/biography_12.html



Why They Should Care

Decades ago I was asked to help write our community's history book, just one of a spate of such projects for Alberta's 75th anniversary in 1980. The books would chronicle community histories before they were forgotten.

Fast forward to today. Canada is celebrating its 150th as Ukrainians celebrate too. One hundred and twenty-five years ago the very first Ukrainians settlers to Canada put down roots not that many kilometres from where I live. That's big news for our County and the festival I coordinate.

To help mark the occasion, I'm putting together a PowerPoint presentation to run on a loop at the festival. The goal is to capture images that reflect the historic day-to-day reality of Ukrainian-Canadians. At first, I thought "the older the pictures, the better." Someone, a bona fide historian, says the scope should be broader than that. Because I live to serve, I began looking at photos with new interest.

Picture a little girl with bangs and doe eyes in a fancy dress standing solemnly before her first birthday cake. It's identified as 1964 and has that sickly colour that marks many older pics. The plainly decorated cake is on a round hassock that seems to have a grassy, silk flower arrangement visible in the body of it. There is the ubiquitous spider plant that *everyone* had back in the day. A plant stand with a doily on it sits in front of a window with the patterned 'fibreglass' drapes so popular at the time.

Depending on the viewer, that photo may evoke amusement, ridicule, curiosity, or nostalgic warmth. And the same can be said of the black and white ones from 1930 or yesterday's digital ones. I'll skip the whole sociological debate about the irony of people snapping pictures with their phones instead of living the experience they're so desperate to document. Or most people's seeming reluctance to actually print photos for posterity.

Many of the photos I'm now scanning for the project are from the history book. Someone had the presence of mind to print duplicates back then and now they are in my hot little hands. I have the privilege of looking back, way back, and selecting images for a comprehensive presentation.

I can pick ones with great old "gangster" cars or horse-drawn implements; ones with log buildings or Old West general store facades; ones with old country embroidered blouses or Mad Men era dresses; ones that capture people doing daily chores or those all decked out and stiff as mannequins. I can feature a one-year-old pixie or an eighty-year old *baba*.

This work reminds me that we should all do a better job of labeling photos because someday, someone will wonder, "Who's this, when did it happen, what are they doing, and why. What does it mean to me and my place in this family, community, culture?" Most importantly, they'll wonder why they should care, 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

Bond Bailing

Dear Barb:

Hi, I have been estranged from my mother for many years as she has drug and alcohol problems. She was abusive and neglectful and I made it perfectly clear that I want nothing to do with her. Now she's in the early stages of ALS and recently she contacted me asking for money. Apparently, she is homeless and has no money. I was angry that she would have the nerve to call me asking for money after the way she treated me. Of course, I told her no and hung up the phone. Shortly after, my aunt called me telling me how my mother's health isn't good and she really needs help. I don't want to help my mother, my feeling is she created this mess and why should I bail her out? On the other hand, I am feeling some guilt for not giving her the money. When I talk to other people about it, some are feeling she is my mother and I should help her if I can and others are telling me to do what feels right for me. I really need some help making this decision. Thanks, Carl.

Hi Carl:

Undoubtedly a family member who is in a bad situation and is asking for money puts a person in an uncomfortable situation, especially when it is your mother and you add a health and substance abuse problem into the mix. I think you know if you provide the money, you are just enabling your mother's unhealthy behaviour, however it takes a pretty tough person to say no and

walk away and be unaffected by a loved one in need, especially a parent. There are other options for you to help your mom rather than simply providing money. Perhaps you can arrange for your mother to go into a treatment facility. There are many organizations that provide care for homeless people who are addicted. Ask your mother to join you in speaking to your family doctor about what resources your mother would be eligible for. It may be possible to get her on some disability income due to her ALS. Does your mother have siblings that may be willing to take her in with the condition that she seeks treatment? You could offer to help with the financial care of your parent, without actually giving her money, if that is something you are prepared to do. But be ready for the result, as she may not be receptive to your offer. At that point there is nothing else you can do. If you put the offer out there and she is not interested, you have to let it go.

Good luck Carl, hope it all works out for the best.

Follow Barb on twitter @BarbGodin

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At dawn the runners came, circling the Chateau. Quietly at first.



They were soon joined by others. Quietly at first.



Buses had been sent. They'd returned full. Then the tunnels were opened.



False orders had been given to the military to stand down. (Later they admitted they'd only pretended to believe the orders.)



Alan gave the signal and all began chanting, "Get out! Get out! Get out!" Helicopters came to take the Generalissimo and his entourage away.



The former government quickly offered Alan any assistance he might require in setting up the new regime.



Thanks, but the new regime is already trained and ready.

But don't worry— we've got room for all of you on our communal farm in northern Mississippi. The fresh air and honest work'll do ya good!

Now if you'll excuse me, I have to go spring our leader from death row.





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IMPORTANT DATES

- **Mar 31:** [Deadline to apply for course extension for May](#)
- **Apr 10:** [Deadline to register in a course starting May 1](#)
- **Apr 11:** [AUSU Council Meeting](#)
- **Apr 28:** [Deadline to apply for course extension for June](#)
- **Apr 30:** [Deadline to apply for 2017 Convocation](#)
- **May 5:** [Deadline to finish courses for 2017 Convocation](#)
- **May 10:** [Deadline to register in a course starting Apr 1](#)

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MAY 1

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