

THE VOICE

MAGAZINE

Vol 25 Issue 22 2017-06-02

Staying Motivated in the Heat
When Summer Competes with Studying

What's New at myAU
Taking a Deep Dive

The Right Choice
Road Trip!

Plus:
The Cruellest Loss
Predictable Changes
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, 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

Predictable Changes

Karl Low



Last weekend a couple of things of note happened. The first, which you're more likely aware of, is that the federal Conservative Party of Canada (CPC) chose a new leader. I noted in previous columns how with the wealth of candidates up on offer, and the widely varying ranges of positions held by those candidates, we could find ourselves with a very interesting, and possibly shifting, CPC.

This was not to be, however, as, in the final round of thirteen rounds of voting, Conservative MP Andrew Scheer was elected as the newest leader of the Conservative Party of Canada. In this choice, conservative members have decided essentially to maintain the course that won them several elections since 2006, and lost them the election in 2015. Mr. Scheer, by most estimations, offers little change to the party from the course charted by Mr. Harper, so in this respect is a comfortable, if predictable, choice for the party.

Notes have been made about how he is a stronger social conservative than Mr. Harper was, but as Mr. Scheer has already indicated that he feels Canadians have already decided on many of the issues near and dear to the social conservative ideals, he won't be seeking to revisit them.

What you may not know about Mr. Scheer is that while he was pursuing his Bachelor of Arts in History through the University of Regina, he was also taking some courses from Athabasca University. If we're lucky, this connection may be able to be leveraged to more federal awareness of the potentials of national funding for a university that has students across the nation.

The other news item was that Athabasca University released its year end variance report that showed the university finished the financial year with a surplus of slightly greater than it was initially projecting its deficit to be. This comes partially from the university staff doing its best to cut costs wherever possible, as well as in increase in student enrolments. That this has happened shouldn't be much of a surprise, as, as I pointed out in a previous editorial, AU seemed to be obviously low-balling some of its predicted income measures so as to paint a dire situation for the university. While this doesn't mean AU's troubles are over, as President Neil Fassina has indicated that some of this surplus comes from a number of one-time additions to AU's revenues, it can provide some comfort for students who may have been concerned about the sustainability of Athabasca University.

Meanwhile, with convocation and summer both fast approaching, this week's issue looks at how to keep that motivation alive during the summer months, as well as a bit of a deep dive into the recesses of the myAU portal page. Also, Dear Barb tackles the difficult question of how to deal with a co-worker who's lost a child, and we resume our comics with Dysfunctional Love Languages and the hidden meanings of words in toxic relationships.

Of course, we also have our news, reviews, interviews, advice, AU events, and other articles to keep you busy this weekend, we wouldn't forget that. Enjoy the read!

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

Staying Motivated in the Heat

Deanna Roney



This spring we have had some wild weather, from flooding rains to temperatures soaring above 25 degrees Celsius within a week's span. When the rain is pouring and storms are blowing in and out, it is easy to stay motivated on courses and work. But when the weather flips and it is sunshine and blue skies that motivation can wane.

How do you stay inside and work when you could be outside enjoying the early summer? I think it is important to find balance throughout the year, but especially in the summer months. It is okay to take a few extra hours, or days, to get out to enjoy the

weather. I think now, more than ever, having a workable schedule is important. If you maintain a strict schedule that has you locked away all day, every day working on coursework, it will start to feel like a prison rather than a pursuit. I always found that when my mind was fresh and I had allowed myself time away from the desk my time spent there was more productive. When our hearts are in the projects we are working on it always turns out better.

So schedule your days a little lighter and allow a few hours off to take the dogs for a swim at the lake, or go for a walk in the sun. Schedule a couple days a week that are for catch up—in case an opportunity presents itself that you just can't pass up. Give yourself a bit more flexibility in these months because, at least for me, they are short lived. I can't turn my back on the work that needs to get done, that I want to get done, but that doesn't mean that I can't grant myself a bit of freedom as well.

A wonderful thing about studying at Athabasca is the flexibility it offers. You can study through the summer months—always working towards your goal—but you can lighten your load during these months. The first summer I studied with AU I found it challenging. I was enrolled in 19th Century literature, they were all (mostly all) novels I enjoyed reading, but hunkering down and reading these heavy novels was challenging. I found it hard to concentrate on them when there were so many other things I wanted to be doing. Yes, I read outside a lot, and I found time in the evenings, but it made the course a struggle and the stress of not getting through it as quick as I wanted soon dampened my enjoyment of the other aspects of summer.

If I had allowed myself a bit more freedom that summer, acknowledged that this one might take me a bit longer—or had the forethought to enroll in a bit lighter of a course as I did the following summers—I would have been able to enjoy the summer, and the course, more thoroughly.

If you are picking courses for the summer, consider ones that are a bit lighter and that you can take outside and study on the deck. Take an honest look at the things you want to accomplish in these months and make sure it is a reasonable list. Make sure to schedule some free time, some catch-up time for those impromptu summer adventures, and work time. Because if I learned anything in that first summer it is that the guilt of not feeling accomplished enough in a course would seep through and impact any adventure I was on.

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

What's New at myAU?

Barbara Lehtiniemi



The myAU portal is the gateway to AU studies, yet it's often rushed through on the way to course pages. Indeed, if you bookmark your course homepage, you can skip the portal almost completely.

Yet, there's a wealth of info at the portal gates, and even more on the student homepage that follows the login screen. Students new to AU may take the time to look around but after a few passes the myAU login routine tends to become nothing more than a series of mouseclicks.

It's easy to forget how many AU resources are available to students. Here's a look at what you might be skipping over in your haste to get to your course page:

myAU Help Page for Students. The link for this page is on the initial [myAU login page](#), which you'll find if you follow the [myAU link](#) from AU's

homepage. The login page has several sections covering FAQs, Help, and AU News. The [myAU Help Page for Students](#) is one of three links in the Help section. In addition to basic info about logging in to myAU, this page gives instructions on how to change your password, a browser compatibility list, and rules of student conduct for discussion groups. There is also an overview of the myAU student home page, which is where you'll land after you log in.

Student Home. The Student Home page is the core of your AU studies. From this page you can access your current courses as well as register for or withdraw from courses, request exams, and check your grades or request a transcript. You'll also find all your electronic letters here: confirmations of registration, tutor letters, and statements of grades, as well as exam request confirmations. Buried down at the bottom right, beneath the letters section, you'll find a Career section. Here you can access Career Cruising, a service provided by AU Counselling Services. Career Cruising provides "assessment tools, goals & career exploration activities" and a résumé builder.

Student Services. Access the Student Services tab from near the top of the page, next to the Student Home tab. There is a wealth of information on this page for students. In the At Your Service section, you'll find links to Advising Services, Counselling Services, Financial Assistance, the Ombuds Office, Scholarship & Awards, and many more AU services. In the Forms section you'll find links to request forms for new courses, examinations, letters of authorization, application to graduate, as well as requests for counselling appointments. In other sections on the Student Services page, you'll find links to information such as the undergraduate calendar, PLAR, transfer credits, and the student handbook.

Community. The next tab, to the right of Student Services, is the Community tab. Here you'll find links to the new AUSU Forums, AU's social network the Landing, as well as various student social media outlets. The Community page also has a News section, with links to recent posts from the AU newsroom.

Library. The library tab provides quick access to the AU library homepage and the library information desk. You can also click on the View Your Account link to request or renew library materials, or to see when your current loans are due.

Student Help. In addition to a repetition of some of the help-related links from the myAU login page, here you'll find links to the AU Information Centre and the IT Help Desk. The Student Help page also has an Ask AU section, with links to common questions as well as Ask AU's "Ask a Question" feature.

There's a wealth of information in myAU. Information can be added or changed over time and your needs as a student change too. It's worth spending some time looking around to see what resources are there to help you with your studies.

See what's new at myAU: access the [myAU portal](#) from the link at the top of any page on the [AU website](#).

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

Scholarship of the Week

Digging up scholarship treasure for AU students.

Scholarship name: The Undergraduate Awards

Sponsored by: [The Undergraduate Awards](#)

Deadline: June 13, 2017

Potential payout: Prestige, publication, networking, and a chance for a trip to the UA Global Summit in Dublin, Ireland.

Eligibility restriction: Must be graduating from an undergraduate degree in 2017 or 2018, or have graduated in 2016.

What's required: An abstract of 100 to 300 words, along with a piece of individual coursework used for your degree, for which you received at least a mark of "A". Word count minimum of 1750; maximum varies by [category](#).

Tips: Check out the [FAQs](#) page and watch the [How to Submit](#) videos for submission tips.

Where to get info: www.undergraduateawards.com/submission-2/



In Conversation ..with LOVECOMMISSION

Wanda Waterman



LOVECOMMISSION is the pseudonym of New York singer, musician, and composer Pat Scarlett. Hesitant to identify his genre, he describes his music as "avant-pop" because, in his words, he doesn't know what else to call it, but it's has also been identified as shoe-gaze and is reminiscent of the sound of the Velvet Underground.

He's just released "You Make it Alright," a track from his upcoming debut CD *Acid Dreams and War Machines*, to be released this summer. Inspired by the breakup of a long-term relationship, the song is a tongue-in-cheek romantic disavowal, much like 10cc's "I'm Not in Love" from 1975. Recently Scarlett took the time to share his insightful ideas on creativity, art, and authenticity.

Surpassing the ordinary by whatever means necessary

Scarlett's musical experiences brought him to a place where he adopted music not simply as a leisure pursuit, but as a way of being, a way of transcending the mundane.

"In terms of real impact," he says, "for better or worse, by the time music really started to direct what I was doing there was always that need to get out of whatever the fuck passed as ordinary, by whatever means necessary."

He sees sex, drugs, and rock-and-roll as intertwined elements of the same idea: ways of enlarging experience, of getting beyond the mundane, the artificial, and the illusory and finding reality.

"Sometimes you have to get outside the box in order to see the box. You can have a spiritual experience tripping on LSD because LSD takes you out of what passes as 'self,' as typical. I advocate getting your head out of a culture of bling and bullshit and getting back to something real."

Regarding *Acid Dreams & War Machines*

What does Pat Scarlett think about his first full-length album?

"When it comes down to it, I find that the closer you are to something—a sound, a project, whatever—the less insight you can really have about what it is. I prefer to hear what someone who hears it fresh has to say. The is the only thing that matters at the end of the day anyway.

No patience to smile and nod

Scarlett finds that the more he can focus, submerging in the work, the more authentic the work becomes. He tries to structure his life around his work and remove whatever doesn't seem honest or real. He also feels the need to surround himself with the right people.

"I no longer have the patience," he confesses, "to smile and nod in order to indulge someone's delusions of self. I try to surround myself with people who are on a similar wavelength."

"I also don't have patience for anything less than authenticity. I recognize the irony in talking about authenticity while advocating recreational drug use, but it's an irony that I'm comfortable with. Truth be told, I find that people are often more authentic when they're a bit loaded; it loosens the inhibitions and reveals the individual."

Being part of the tapestry that is New York

"New York has a few main contingents of people, says Scarlett: "those that grew up here and keep this city humming its particular tune, those that come here for work (businessmen, Wall Street-ers, etc.), and those, native or from wherever, that contribute something to the ever-changing tapestry that is this city—artists, designers, and I'd include anyone that's inserting their own particular vision into the city."

"Like the guy that realizes a dream of opening his own coffee shop, the ballet student who gets up and busts her ass everyday just to move in a way that brings you to tears. Anyone that's authentically bringing something new into this environment instead of just reflecting what they see or parroting opinion, I have a lot of respect for."

"Do your thing. Be real. That's the only thing that works anyway, and the only thing that allows this city, in one way or another, to become something it wasn't before."

Absorbing what's there

Scarlett feeds his muse by living life—getting up, going out, and taking it all in. He's also been much inspired by listening to music, both recorded and live, but doesn't like to pinpoint the influence of any particular artist.

"Really though, if I'm in an environment that stimulates me, where I can avoid bullshit and the need to bullshit—that's when my muse really starts talking. You have to be able to access what's available, really open yourself to what is, and that's when the most pure ideas—melodies, lyrical motifs, etc.—can come through."

Artists as legwork

"I remember reading an interview," Scarlett reflects, "with William S. Burroughs where he describes the writing process as more a

AU-thentic Events

Upcoming AU Related Events

Business Undergraduate Info Session

Monday, June 5, 5:00 to 6:00 pm MDT
Online

Hosted by AU's Faculty of Business
business.athabasca.ca/event-details/business-undergraduate-information-session2/
register online at above link

Library Orientation Webinar

Tuesday, June 6, 5:00 to 6:00 pm MDT
Online

Hosted by AU Library
library.athabasca.ca/orientations.html
no pre-registration necessary

BComm/CPA Info Session

Wednesday, June 7, 5:00 to 6:30 pm MDT
Online

Hosted by AU's Faculty of Business
business.athabasca.ca/event-details/bcomm-cpa-information-session-4-copy/
register online at above link

AUSU 25-Year Birthday Party

Thursday, June 8, 5:00 to 6:30 pm MDT
Main Building, AU, 1 University Dr, Athabasca AB
In-person

Hosted by AUSU
www.ausu.org/event/ausu-25-year-birthday-party/
no pre-registration necessary

Convocation 2017

Thursday, June 8 to Saturday, June 10
Athabasca Regional Multiplex, 2 University Drive, Athabasca AB

In-person and live-streaming
Hosted by AU
info at: convocation.athabasca.ca/

AUSU Council Meeting

Friday, June 9, 4:00 to 5:00 pm MDT
Willow Room, Main Building, AU, 1 University Dr, Athabasca AB

In-person and teleconference
Hosted by AU's Students' Union
www.ausu.org/event/june-person-council-meeting-2/
e-mail ausu@ausu.org for meeting package

Have you received notice about an AU event that's running only local to your area that you don't see here? Forward it to voice@voicemagazine.org. The first one to do so will win a Voice Merch pack!

question of transcription than any kind of 'invention.' There's a guy that saw what he was doing and knew that, in effect, he wasn't doing anything.

"In a way we artists are just doing the legwork, fumbling around trying to interpret what's coming in. We catch something, allow something to come through, dedicate ourselves, discipline ourselves in a way as to allow the process to happen. The more you open yourself to the process, the more you live the process, the more intense experience can become."

Do what you do as well as you can do it

When asked about his potential contribution to the world at large, Scarlett is self-effacing.

"I feel that the only positive contribution I can make to the world, to anyone," he says, "is to do what I do as well as I can do it."

"I think most of us associate some of the best and most intense moments in our lives with music. There's often a soundtrack there—a certain song immediately jogs a particular memory. There are songs that still absolutely floor me when I listen to them. And there are songs that inspire me, make me smile, unite me with a deeper sense of what it means to be human."

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



The Creative Spark! **Your Last Lecture**

Marie Well



Do you know what makes a great ad or great essay? Oxytocin bonding hormones. You know, the hormones you get when you first hug your newborn baby.

My Hindu friend posts tear-jerker ads from India on Facebook. Like Bollywood movies, Hindu ads contain moral messages. But ads from India make you smile, laugh, and think—like a "last lecture."

When I peer at Facebook, the Indian ads and Western ads look like opposites. While watching Western ads, I spurt cortisol stress hormones—as callous companies push products. While watching Indian ads, I spurt oxytocin bonding hormones—as warm actors share wisdom. Dalai Lama claims that every bit of wisdom makes "impressions" on our minds (like chisels on ice sculptures).

The West excels on pursuing external results, while the East looks internal. For instance, my boyfriend served as a Western trendsetter. He was meditating in the mid-90's and reading Eastern spirituality. At that time, mindful meditation hadn't come in vogue as people pursued the too cool to care attitudes of grunge, and heroin chic of Kate Moss,

Yet, Buddhists say the West lacks the foundation behind mindful meditation. (Perhaps adding universal spiritual rules will mark the next stage.) And next-in-line, Western researchers will copy India's moral ad model.

So, when you write your essays, model India—to heighten the right hormones. Next, let's spurt any sensible Canadian's oxytocin by sharing wisdom from Pete Barry's bible called *The Advertising Concept Book*. I boldface his comments below.

"A great ad not only stops you, it may also make you smile, laugh, or think" (p. 165). Your aim in writing essays evolves around making readers smile, laugh, or think.

To make people laugh, refer to Joe Toplyn's bible called *Comedy Writing for Late-Night TV*. Even if your jokes garner groans, you'll advance your writing within a week. What better way to make Fortran, physics, or phenomenology funny?

Use natural objects and locations to make a message. Consider using common objects in your school presentations to reveal a message. For instance, your school uniform's jacket zipper, when fully zipped, could read, "Free speech." I know. I know. Government won't fund the cliché.

Music can reveal a character's feelings. Use music in your presentations to convey emotion or tone. A piece of music behind your speech can create a second layer of meaning or strengthen your message.

What do I mean by a second layer of meaning? Well, in prior articles, we explored how actors can have multiple—even conflicting reasons—behind actions. You might talk about the power of music in healing soldiers with Alzheimer's and PTSD, and play a song about widowed war brides.

If you can't find the right music, sample the opposite. Or, you could choose a song about childhood sweethearts getting married.

Imply. Don't show it all. To enhance your presentations, use implied imagery. For instance, feature a war helmet stuck in mud to signify brain trauma in soldiers. Don't show the entire soldier stuck in mud. Minimize the imagery as much as possible without losing meaning.

Think up a benefit to your product, put it in the center of a mind map, and branch out phrase- or word-associations. Circle all the associations with potential. Use these in headlines, visuals, or taglines. Remember, in last week's article, we talked about discovering the "So what?" in your essays. To answer the "so what," try making mind maps of word associations from your essays.

For instance, put your general topic in the center of your mind map. Then branch this into your three (or so) major themes. Next, branch these themes into word associations. Keep branching until you feel drained. Then, circle all the ideas that might serve as problems. Find any overlap in the problems among the three themes. That's when the magic begins.

Has your cortisol spiked yet? Well, put a photo of your loved ones in your line of sight. Like an Indian advertiser, write to make them smile, laugh, or think. In other words, pretend each essay is your last lecture.

The Fit Student

Win a Sportsmanship Award

Marie Well



Do you gulp air when you read the text, "Team players need only apply"? Do you shove aside your applications, forward thrust toward the freezer, and slam-dunk coconut ice cakes—just to prove you're in the game? More importantly, do you consider yourself a team player?

I didn't see myself as a team player. I thought team players thrived on underperforming in university group work. I thought team players gained high-fives through gossip. I thought team players ganged up on the group misfit—namely, me. But, none of those things define team players. In truth, I have the makings of an elite team player—and so do you.

When my boyfriend played hockey as a boy, he won the sportsmanship award. Winning the sportsmanship award came naturally to him. Not for me. I won a citizenship award, but never showed up at the ceremony to accept it. In other words, I needed to learn a lesson—on the traits of team players.

Yet, later in life, I touched on the team player mindset. At my month-long work stint at the college, I took the time to help colleagues. I taught skills freely. I shared my secret resources. I praised the team members in front of the boss. I smiled a lot, flattered everyone, and fetched coffees.

When the college cut my contract, I worried about whether I gave too much. I beat myself up for overhelping and underperforming. Yet, within the next three months, the whole team either got let go or left.

Can you ever give too much to your team? Not according to experts on sports psychology. The more effort, inclusion, and encouragement you give, the more you and your team excel. And no-one should be singled out for abuse. Not the timid soul with the tendency to internalize. Not the stunning star athlete who stirs jealousy. Not the girl in pink with all the literary talent. Only dysfunctional teams single out people to punish.

Instead, effective team players boast the following traits, according to Dr. Terry Orlick in his book *In Pursuit of Excellence: How to Win in Sports and Life through Mental Training*:

- When team tension persists, the team members' spirits often break. Tension and conflict can break family spirits, too.
- Beware your comments and actions. They can break a team's spirit.
- Focus on only the positive with team and family members. Challenge them playfully to reach their best.
- Say and do things that help your team and family members feel valued and respected. Support them. Help them. Look for their positives.
- Have a mission statement for your team or family. Put this mission above any conflict.

- Never put down team or family members. Choose to get along with one another. Give encouragement to one another. Make sure no-one's left out.
- Concentrate on solutions—not the issues.
- Improve yourself with any lessons learned.
- Whatever makes you perform at your peak—do that often.
- When things get tough, zero in on the positives. Focus on the next step, however small. Celebrate that little step.
- Place your nose in any nonfiction book or instructional video you can find.
- Help your team to discover ways to win. Feel a deep reverence for one another's strengths and contributions.
- Share your insights. Don't hoard them. Give freely.
- Say hello to one another daily. Offer kind words. Give positive feedback.

So, while knowing your creams can ice a crumble cake, knowing your teams can plunk you on top of our crumbling corporate Canada. And if Canada's economic-growth-rate recovers, you'll slam-dunk more than coconut ice cakes.



Canadian Education News

Scott Jacobsen



93-year-old is a genuine inspiration for AU education

The Calgary Herald stated that one of Athabasca University's longest-standing students graduated at the age of 93. She earned a bachelor of general studies. She will receive the qualification on June 8. Her name is Louisa Daley.

Daley emphasized Robert Frost, William Shakespeare, and other great literary figures' productions in her studies. She earned another bachelor of arts in 1999, but couldn't help but continue on the path of further higher education through AU.

"I didn't want to get a degree, I didn't even think of it," said Daley. "I just wanted something to do. And I've always liked to study all my life and so I just kept on studying...I would be really happy if other seniors would take up studying because it's fun and it keeps you going," Daley said.

Layoffs in Catholic school division in Saskatoon

According to *The Star Phoenix*, there were twelve layoffs for the Catholic school division of Saskatoon, as they eliminated jobs for aboriginal student retention workers. The loss of the jobs came from a \$9.7 million cut in the budget.

It is, in part, a reflection of the reduction in funding and the increase in the student enrolments. Diane Boyko, Catholic board chair, said the elimination of the jobs saves \$0.7 million while noting the cuts were not an easy choice.

Boyko said, "Is there a risk that some of the students will not have all of the supports they need? Of course there is when you have this kind of a circumstance, but we're going to do everything that we possibly can to help them."

Lord's Prayer in school in question, via human rights complaint

The Edmonton Sun said, "The prospect of spending thousands of dollars on legal fees has prompted a public school division to end daily recitations of the Lord's Prayer at three of its schools." This happened because the Pembina school received a query about the legality of the recitation. School administrators put the prayer on hold. The chair of the Pembina school board, Jennifer Tuininga, stated that it is not their business to challenge the Constitution, and felt it was better to spend school board money on teaching and education rather than on fighting courtroom battles over the issue.

The claim is that the Lord's Prayer is an infringement of religious freedom, and needlessly singles out those students who are not Christian. Attempts at a compromise failed to come to fruition. The prayer was halted at Busby, Dunstable, and North Pembina schools. Each are northwest of Edmonton.

Ontario Links Lack of "soft skills" with Mobile Devices

The Hamilton Spectator reported on the emerging technology in the world today. The "chair of the provincial task force for a high-skilled workforce," Sean Conway, talked to teachers on the nature of the future workforce.

Conway spoke to the teachers of Hamilton Catholic board during their professional development day, which was at the Bishop Ryan Catholic Ryan Secondary School. He talked about these insights in the report entitled Building the Workforce of Tomorrow: A Shared Responsibility. Specifically, "I wanted teachers to know how important they are in getting good results so that young people come out of educational institutions with not just academic credentials, but the life skills that are important in getting a good job," Conway said, "Increasingly, we are concerned with these so-called 'soft skills' because this generation is growing up with hand-held devices constantly by their sides."

'Lack of cultural awareness, education and sensitivity' is reaction to costume party

CBC News: Calgary reported on students at Chinook High School in Lethbridge, Alberta, having a party. The party was a toast to the completion of Grade 12. The celebration was a costume party with cowboys and Indians.

On social media, it prompted a negative reaction. Some students expressed feeling offended by the online posts, while others felt the negative reaction was being overly sensitive. While not a condoned event by the school, some felt that educators need to possibly reflect on their role in its occurrence.

"My immediate reaction to even hearing about something like this is absolute shock and horror, and fear at the lack of education, lack of cultural awareness, lack of sensitivity, lack of the ability to have an equal and appreciative respect in community," said Many Guns, a professor of Native American studies at the University of Lethbridge.

Alberta Social Studies education curriculum changes seen as a travesty

The Edmonton Journal editorializes, "The rewriting of Alberta's Social Studies curriculum is turning into an educational travesty. The concept of teaching history is out of style, it seems. In its place is an inappropriate over-emphasis on social change and activism."

The Social Studies curriculum, as reported by the Edmonton Journal, is failing to widen students' worldview with the narrowing of focus on concerns expressed through the "modern social justice movement."

It is said that there is repeated emphasis on First Nations, Francophones, Inuit, and Métis history, as well as the theme of diversity. This over-focus, as well as the possibility of a curriculum that left them out (which this does not), is seen as a travesty because it there is a lack of a linear, complete, comprehensive history of Canada.

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



Canadian Science News

Scott Jacobsen



Canada should aim for gold in digital competitiveness

IT World Canada has said, "Canada ranks 9th in the world in digital competitiveness. At least that's the conclusion of the IMD World Competitiveness Centre at the influential Swiss-based business school of the same name."

Canada is viewed as having a silver, but not a gold, prize. The country is working hard to become part of the frontier of the digital economy. The top performers in this new frontier are "Singapore, Sweden, U.S., Finland and Denmark." Newer competitors, such as China,

Mexico, and India are seen as still needing to go a long way to catch up.

Canada's 2017 federal budget includes various plans for significant investment in artificial intelligence, smart cities, and the delivery of high-speed internet, along with many, many others.

Malfunction at U of A kills more than 9,000 fish

According to CBC News: Edmonton, the University of Alberta had an accident that resulted in the deaths of over 9,000 fish. Research will be delayed for up to half of a year as a result of the accident. The accident was caused by the malfunctioning of two dechlorination pumps.

The freshwater fish tanks in the Biological aquatics facility became flooded with the chlorinated municipal tap water. There were significant deaths of fish as well as frogs. Corrosion of an electrical wire caused the failure of the pumps.

The vice president of research of the University of Alberta, Lorne Babiuk, said, "We are very unlucky this time...We are quite confident that it will not happen again." Tally of deaths: 75 frogs (with 15 survivors), 1,093 adult trout, about 6,000 fingerlings, 96 carp (64 survivors), 2,073 goldfish (163 survivors), and 6 graylings.

"Superclusters" to be funded with several hundreds of millions of dollars

"The Liberals have announced the criteria for the "superclusters" they say will help get Canada's research ideas into the global marketplace and combat the country's weak international innovation and competitiveness standings," The Globe and Mail said.

The federal Canadian government is allocating \$950 million to the funding of the superclusters. The superclusters will be comprised of businesses, research institutions, and other partners. They will compete for funds based on the best ideas for commercialization and business-formation.

Paul Preston, director of science, technology and innovation policy with the Conference Board of Canada, said, "The challenge we have in Canada, as we move from discovery research to developing those ideas, [is] to try and align them with the market needs and grow and scale up a company."

Acne medication unexpectedly helps with multiple sclerosis

ScienceDaily reported on the clinical trial coming from University of Calgary researchers from the university's Hotchkiss Brain Institute (HBI), at the Cumming School of Medicine (CSM). Apparently, a common acne medication slows multiple sclerosis (MS).

The medication, minocycline, appears to slow the progression of relapsing-remitting MS "in people who have recently experienced their first symptoms. "...the discovery is significant as it offers a safe and affordable treatment option for those with early onset MS," ScienceDaily said.

The lead author of the study and HBI member, and professor in the Department of Clinical Neurosciences, Dr. Luanne Metz, said, "Based on these findings, neurologists will be able to prescribe minocycline for people experiencing their first symptoms of demyelination if an MRI suggests the cause will likely prove to be MS."

Science World in Vancouver Hosting and Innovation Festival for Canada's 150th Birthday

The Straight stated that Vancouver took the top spots for livability. The city has been upgrading to improve the experiences of living in the city, especially in the hotspots. One of them is Science World in Downtown Vancouver.

For the Canada 150, Science World will be implementing the Innovation Festival. One of its feature presentations is Made in Canada, which is a "venue is set to examine the the country's best (and weirdest) inventions."

The communication coordinator for Science World, Jason Bosher, said, "It's about teaching people how to be innovative and use that part of their brain, rather than just being a history lesson on why Canada is great."

Relocating Giant Telescope has Challenges

Nature reported that Canadian astronomers are analyzing the possible relocation of the Thirty Meter Telescope (TMT). The study was presented at the May 31 Canadian Astronomical Society of Edmonton.

TMT was to be built on Mauna Kea, which is a Hawaiian mountain. There have been legal challenges to this idea though, so they are looking at a back-up site of Roque de los Muchachos in La Palma, the Canary Islands. While they will be able to do most of what they would like to do with the telescope at the new site, the observational conditions will be less than optimal for looking at exoplanet atmospheres.

Michael Balogh, University of Waterloo astronomer, said, "a critical component of the Canadian astronomical landscape...If we have to move, it's effectively a de-scope in the project."

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

Student Sizzle AU's Hot Social Media Topics

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



AthaU Facebook Group

Laura seeks info on a source for online recordings of plays. Kari wonders why assignments aren't marked within the time stated.

Other posts include Proctor U exams, selling textbooks, and courses BIOL 235, CHEM 350, ECON 385, FREN 101, and MATH 309.

AUSU Forums - New!

In the Introductions forum, AUSU councillor Robin gets the forum ball rolling by introducing herself. In the Questions for AUSU forum, the AUSU office posts instructions for the forum.

reddit

An anonymous poster seeks feedback on the assignment and lab components for BIOL 480 immunology.

Twitter

@AthabascaU tweets: "Meet Louisa Daley, a 93-year old who defines lifelong learning & the #AthaU spirit of flexibility and dedication <https://t.co/lljm51v71E>."

@AthabascaUSU (AUSU) tweets: "Not sure how to use the AU Library? No problem! Check out their video orientation series! <http://library.athabascau.ca/AULibOrient.html> "

Women of Interest

Katherine Johnson was born August 26, 1918, in White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia, USA. She is an African-American physicist and mathematician who began working at NASA in 1953 and remained there until her retirement in 1986. Johnson calculated the trajectories, launch windows, and emergency back-up return paths for many early NASA missions, including those of John Glenn and Alan Shepard. In fact, Glenn refused to fly unless Johnson verified the calculations. She also did the calculations for the Apollo 11 flight to the moon. Johnson was the youngest of four children. She graduated high school at age 14 and college at 18 years of age with degrees in Mathematics and French. Throughout her career Johnson co-authored numerous scientific papers. In 1999 Johnson was recognized as West Virginia State College Outstanding Alumnus of the Year. In 2015 President Barack Obama presented Katherine Johnson with the Presidential Medal of Freedom. She was accredited with being a ground-breaking example of African-American women in STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics.)

Supplementary information about Katherine Johnson may be found at the following websites:

<http://www.makers.com/katherine-g-johnson>

<https://www.nasa.gov/content/katherine-johnson-biography>

<http://www.vanityfair.com/culture/2016/08/katherine-johnson-the-nasa-mathematician-who-advanced-human-rights>



The Right Choice

Sometimes a girl just has to drop everything and go. For people who are hard-wired like I am it's far too easy to fight the urge to just be spontaneous.

We get bogged down with the crushing load of responsibility. How can any accountable farm wife leave home when there's a crop to seed? The fact is, I'm the cook and the chauffeur, the parts runner and extra set of hands, not the actual farmer. How can any self-respecting adult leave home when the yard is abloom with dandelions and the first wave of flowerbed cleaning hasn't been done (or really even started)? How can any conscientious Nana worth her salt leave when Grady's been called up by the Mosquitoes to pitch? Or shot a thirty-nine to win third place in a golf tournament?

Yet, I did take off. I'd been itching for a solo road trip for some time. Ya know, one of those introvert-like behaviours. So, without inviting anyone to join me, I texted my sister in Hinton on Thursday and asked if I could visit Saturday-Sunday. The sort of quickie that avoids the phenomenon of "guests, like fish starting to stink after three days." Enough time to catch up without bugging up their routine or making me feel like an nuisance.

And so it was. The roads and weather were perfect. The traffic was manageable. If I'd truly wanted to get into my head, I wouldn't have played audio book tapes all the way, all the time.

There's just something wonderfully possible about filling a gas tank, packing road trip snacks, slapping on a pair of sunglasses, and hitting the open road. It's possible to stop and restart at will, whenever the hell you want to. To ride in silence or crank up the tunes. To regulate cabin temperature. To travel whatever speed you choose to. To stop at garage sales or antique stores or pretty boutiques. To try off-the-beaten-path eateries.

I did none of that. But I could have. And that's the beauty of a road trip.

It's not like commuting to work or doing a parts run to a bigger, neighbouring town. Or keeping medical appointments in the city and shoe horning personal and/or fun errands in and around them, for efficiency's sake. God knows, I've done thousands of those trips. Last week I did three one-hundred-kilometre

round trips in less than fifteen hours for farm repairs, for heaven's sake. Necessary, but not at all fun or relaxing.

So, my lovelies, if you have a chance to pack up the car and head somewhere with little or no agenda or deadline, grab it and go. Forget the house and yard. Forget the family obligations and must-dos. Set some boundaries (electrified razor-wire ten-foot tall barrier fencing) between you and the job, and just go. You may have to bear down and work like hell beforehand to make it happen, but so what. Sometimes just going for it is the right choice, from where I sit.



Dear
Barb

Barbara Godin

The Cruellest Loss

Dear Barb:

A co-worker of mine lost his eighteen-year-old son in a terrible car accident. Everyone in the office is devastated and we don't know what to say. He recently returned to work after a week off. We don't want to make the father's pain worse, but we also want to express how we feel. Some in the office feel we should just act as if nothing happened and others feel we should say something, but no one knows exactly what we should do or say. We need some advice.

Thanks, Jeff.

Hi Jeff:

The loss of a child is an unimaginable loss. No parent ever imagines that their child will die before them; it's just not the natural order of life. There is nothing you can say to make their loss any easier, but there are things you can say to let someone know that you care deeply and are concerned about their well-being. People often think it's best to say nothing, but it is better to say something. They lost a child, it's not like you are bringing something to their attention that they don't know. It's like the elephant in the room; you need to acknowledge the loss. Even saying "sorry for your loss" is an acknowledgement that you are recognizing they are in pain. As well, just saying that there are no words that could make their pain any less, is probably deeply appreciated. There are many sympathy cards which may be able to express the words you are unable to. Don't say you know how

they feel, unless you have lost a child and even then grief is an individual experience. Don't say things like, "at least you've still got another child" even if they have another child, to say that is definitely a no no. The loss of one child cannot be replaced with another. Make a casserole, I know that seems like old school, but for many people food is an expression of love and caring. Don't expect your co-worker to get over the loss of their child. Grieving a child lasts a lifetime, we learn to go on, but the loss of a child never ends. My best advice is not to be afraid to talk about the loss. If your co-worker brings it up, engage him, allow him to express his loss and be there to support him. A great book for a grieving parent is: *Beyond Tears: Living After Losing a Child, Revised Edition* by Ellen Mitchell. It is available in paperback on amazon.ca. As well you can write down the title and insert it in a sympathy card, this way the parent can choose whether they purchase it or not. Some people find comfort in reading and some people don't. Hope this information is helpful. Thanks for your letter Jeff.

Follow Barb on twitter @BarbGod

Email your questions to 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.

Dysfunctional Love Languages . . .

. . . in toxic friendships

Gifting



I can't keep this gun because my uncle Oober used it to kill himself. Happy birthday!

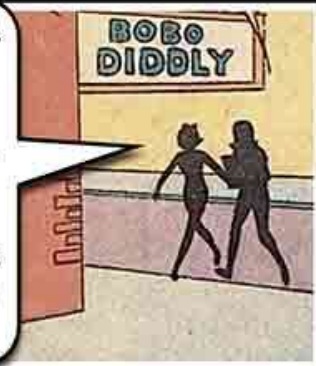
It's nothing! I know you'll do twice as much cleaning for me before my mother-in-law visits next week!



Acts of Service

Quality time

Hey, let's spend the day with your hot boyfriend. And don't worry, I'll keep him company if you get called in to work!



Touch

What's the big deal? It was just a friendly wedgie!



Words of affirmation

Oh, it's lovey! Sally'll say you look like a chunky mutt in that dress, but don't you listen!



WRITTEN BY WANDA WATERMAN



This space is provided free to AUSU: The Voice does not create or edit this content. Contact services@ausu.org with questions or comments about this page.

Introducing New AUSU Forums!

AUSU just launched a new forum on our website! The forum will be used to help students connect, have course discussions, election campaigning, online member consultations for bylaw revisions, and has a section for members to ask AUSU questions!

Check out the new forums on our website [here](#).



In-Person Council Meeting!

AUSU will also be holding our monthly public council meeting **in-person** in Athabasca on **Friday, June 9 at 4:00pm MT**.

All members are welcome to attend the June council meeting either **in-person or by teleconference**! Click [here](#) for a map or to find out more.



IMPORTANT DATES

- **June 8:** [AUSU 25-year Birthday Party](#)
- **Jun 8-10:** [AU 2017 Convocation](#)
- **June 9:** [In-Person Council Meeting](#)
- **Jun 10:** [Deadline to register in a course starting July 1](#)
- **Jun 15:** [July degree requirements deadline](#)
- **Jun 30:** [Deadline to apply for course extension for July](#)
- **July 10:** [Deadline to register in a course starting Aug 1](#)

AUSU 25-Year Birthday Party

AUSU was founded in 1992 as the first students' union in the world to represent distance education students.

We are going to celebrate with a **25-Year Birthday Party and Student Meet & Greet** in Athabasca during convocation weekend. All members are welcome to come out to have some cake, meet other AU students, and get some free gifts from AUSU!

Date: Thursday, June 8

Time: 5:00pm MT

Place: Fountains area in front of Main Building
Athabasca University Campus
Click [here](#) for a map

Email ausu@ausu.org with any questions.

You are Invited!

**AUSU 25-Year
Birthday Party**

**June 8
5pm MT
Athabasca**



2017 AU Convocation

Stop by AUSU's booth at the AU 2017 Convocation for some free gifts or to pick up an adorable AUSU Grad Bear, and enjoy a hot lunch courtesy of AUSU! Check the AU website [here](#) for more info about Convocation.

Congratulations to all of the graduates!



Convocation travel information

AUSU wants to make sure this year's graduating class has a fantastic convocation. To make this happen, we're providing free transportation via bus or limo service to take people from Edmonton to the Athabasca Multiplex each day of convocation 2014. This applies to those graduating from AU undergraduate programs, and their guests (some limits may apply).

We've also arranged hotel discounts in Edmonton.

CLASSIFIEDS

Classifieds are free for AU students! Contact voice@voicemagazine.org for more information.

THE VOICE

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