

THE VOICE

MAGAZINE

Vol 25 Issue 40 2017-10-13

The Debate About Math

Something Doesn't Add Up

Leather Up for Friday the 13th

The Bikes of Port Dover

Thursday the 12th

Is Luck a Choice?

Plus:

*Fly on the Wall
In Conversation
and much more!*



CONTENTS

The Voice's interactive Table of Contents allows you to click a story title to jump to an article. Clicking the bottom right corner of any page returns you here. Some ads and graphics are also links.

Features

The Debate Around Math Education Doesn't Add Up 4

Articles

Editorial: *Let's Be Clear* 3
Leather Up for Friday the 13th..... 9
Thursday the 12th 19

Columns

Fly on the Wall: *How Will We Remember Us?* 7
The Not-So-Starving Student: *Five Curries* 12
In Conversation: *with King of Nowhere*..... 13
The Fit Student: *A Well Dressed Asparagus* 16
The Creative Spark: *Fooled by Art* 17
Dear Barb: *Very Superstitious, Writings on the Wall* 20

News and Events

Women of Interest 6
AU-Thentic Events 10
Student Sizzle..... 11
Scholarship of the Week..... 15
AUSU Update..... 22

Graphic

Politically Bereft: *Making Nations Great Again* 21

***The Voice
Magazine***

www.voicemagazine.org

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

Email

voice@voicemagazine.org

Publisher

AU Students' Union

Editor-In-Chief

Jodi Campbell

Managing Editor

Karl Low

Regular Contributors

Hazel Anaka, Barb Godin,
Carla Knipe, Scott Jacobsen,
Barbara Lehtiniemi, Deanna
Roney, Wanda Waterman,
Xin Xu

View and articles presented
here are those of the
contributors and do not
represent the views of AUSU
Student Council

The Voice is published
almost every Friday in
HTML and PDF format.

For weekly email
reminders as each issue is
posted, fill out the
subscription form [here](#).

The Voice does not share
its subscriber list with
anyone. Even I don't look
at it, it's all on auto.

© 2017 by *The Voice
Magazine*

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

Let's Be Clear

Karl Low



Today is not only Friday the 13ths, but is also international plain language day. This is a day to bring attention to how so much of what we read (and sadly, write) is anything but plain language. From business reports and sales pitches filled with buzzwords that mean nothing, to laws and contracts that have in place an entire profession devoted to deciphering them for normal people, to of course scientific, medical, and most relevant for us, academic reports and assignments that talk in circles.

When did it become taboo for scientists to refer to themselves. Everything must be done by the royal we, or worse, not attributed to any particular person at all. "The tests that were done showed . . .", "It was determined that the survey results should be adjusted . . . " I deal with writing like this all the time at the Voice Magazine, partly because students are often trained to do it in their essays. Some of that is done directly by professors or secondary school teachers who think that the word "I" in an essay is a cardinal sin, or simply through minimum word counts that make students figure out the longest sentences they can use to say the smallest amount possible. I know how that works, I did it too.

However, I think that it primarily comes with fear. You'll note that in that writing, whether in business documents, legal documents, or academic papers, the person doing the action is always pushed to the side. "Errors were made in the accounting department." Who made them? The accounting department? That's not clear, is it? It could have been some yahoo came in off the street and fudged the numbers. Writing like that, passive writing, is a way to keep yourself distant from what you're writing. So that if you make a mistake, you can wave it off, "Oh, but if you read closely, you'll see I didn't ever say that I believed it myself."

I tell my writers, and the newer writers especially, to own what they say, and if they make a claim, then do it with conviction because they know they're correct, or don't do it. This leads to writing that is more direct, shorter, and generally better. More importantly, it leads to writers who aren't afraid to make direct claims, and who have more incentive to make sure they've got it right the first time.

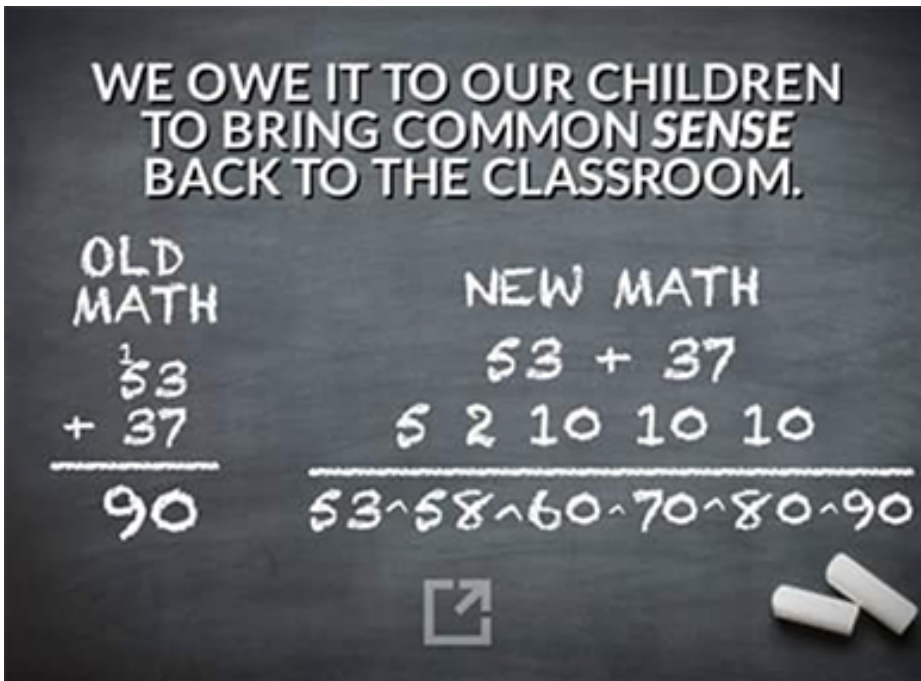
All of which ties in nicely to this being a Friday the thirteenth. This is a day that most of us give little more than a knowing nod to, but that, for some, has serious implications. But, as a few of our writers point out in this issue, there are other aspects of this day, both in what happens during the day and what our fears of it can suggest.

Plain writing day also ties into our feature article this week (albeit weakly), where Carla Knipe looks at the newest trend in math education in primary and secondary schools. How much of the debate about the new method of teaching math comes from people not understanding the point? And from there, Jason Sullivan looks even deeper into the idea of education via rote understanding versus a more active approach.

And that's not to forget everything else we have. So if you're feeling a bit nervous about today, flipping through this week's magazine should calm you down. And enjoy the read!

The Debate around Math Education Doesn't Add Up

Carla Knipe



The new school year is in full swing and kids are delving into another year of "reading, writing, and 'rithmetic". But the sense of optimism for a new school year is overshadowed by the growing voice of those who question the quality of children's education. The K-12 curriculum and the teachers who deliver it are under increasing pressure to deliver student success amid squeezed education budgets and the increasing complexity of the modern classroom.

This is not inherently bad. Anyone who has an interest in education will agree that providing kids the best opportunity of success for all students

will serve their futures well. But the overall climate of Canadian schools is that the curriculum is becoming a politicized battleground. Parents demand that teachers produce tangible evidence of improvement and success in student test scores. They are doing this not via one-on-one discussions at parent teacher conferences, but by public activism and advocacy played out in the media.

Then politicians enter the fray by declaring that the current system is broken and they promise the ultimate solution to fix it. Right now, school districts across Alberta are holding elections for school board trustees. In many of them, from rural areas to the largest boards located in Calgary and Edmonton, the state of education standards are being scrutinized like never before and are a main election issue. The main focus of this scrutiny is whether inquiry-based learning, also called discovery learning, is to blame for the current woes in education and should be abolished in favour of a traditional, back to basics, no-nonsense education model.

And what is school subject that is the focus of the most scrutiny? It's math. Numeracy and having solid skills in mathematics, starting from the earliest elementary years, is becoming the benchmark for measuring whether kids are receiving a quality education.

But trying to make sense of the current curriculum debate is not easy, especially when it comes to backing up opinions with solid research. News headlines scream that kids are being failed by the "dumbed down" education system. And what about the kids who are left struggling with coming to grips with essential skills? Parents are left with either the choice to let kids flounder, or to fork out substantial sums on tutors or at privately run, franchised "learning centres" to boost their skills. So why does math matter so much--while literacy skills seem to be ignored--and why is the debate surrounding numeracy so heated? Is math really so important when looking at the whole picture of education, and do the numbers about math that reflect a poor education system really add up?

It is difficult to know what to believe because each side dredges up statistics to support their arguments. But this doesn't answer the question as to why math in schools has become such a heated focus. The scrutiny may

be because numbers are easily quantifiable. Literacy has building blocks such as vocabulary and phonics, but beyond that, much of literacy is relatively abstract and contains a lot of subjectivity. There can be many ways to interpret a work of literature, for example. On the other hand, math is, well, math. It involves indisputable facts where there is only one possible right answer and a predictable formula for reaching that answer. There aren't really any philosophical discussions about math in childhood education like there are in literature. This is why math is easy to pick apart; either the answer is right, or it's wrong. Simple as that. Plus, the general trend in education--and society as a whole--has been to emphasize the importance of STEM subjects. Math and Science-based subjects, the argument goes, will lead to careers that will get people ahead in our technologically-based world. The ability to write essays or philosophize about literature, presumably then, will not.

But math is a problematic subject. Ask your colleagues and friends whether they enjoyed math in school, and the responses are more likely to be that math is the subject they hated most, or that they just weren't good at it—that they "just couldn't do math"—rather than it being a subject they loved. The inclusion of inquiry-based learning has been blamed for declining standards, but it has entered the curriculum precisely to engage more students and get them to like math. Hence the increased use of "discovery" or "common core" math—which, critics say, has absolutely no place in education as there is nothing about math that lends itself to discovery and discussion, so the use of these methods only creates confusion and frustration in students who don't have the capacity for philosophical reasoning. They see inquiry-based learning as a waste of taxpayer dollars and liken it to the disastrous equivalent "experiment" of whole-language curriculum during the 1980s and 90s that left many students with lasting difficulties in reading and writing.

Multitudes of news reports continue to scream out attention-grabbing headlines that call for a "Math Revolution" or point to a steady downward slope of test scores and sloppy pedagogy without offering solutions. The game of ping-pong played by education professionals and government officials leaves parents caught in the middle and they often don't know who is telling the truth about what is going on. They also feel that when they do express their opinions, they get rebuffed. The result is that their only recourse is to turn to the media to pressure policy makers into fixing the curriculum, math in particular.

One high profile example is an Alberta-based campaign by Dr. Nhung Tran-Davjes, who was concerned enough about the poor math education her children were receiving to [start a petition](#) on change.org that has now gathered thousands of signatures. It calls for widespread reform to the math curriculum. Dr. Tran-Davies has been a visible spokesperson for the Back-to-Basics movement in the media, and has also met with elected officials to press for change. The campaign has also called for tightening standards in universities' faculties of education for teachers in training.

But beyond these campaigns, what statistics are there to suggest that numeracy standards are in freefall in Canada? The biggest report that Canadian proponents of back-to-basics numeracy point to in their arguments is a study by the C.D. Howe Institute, "What to Do About Canada's [Declining Math Scores](#)," authored by University of Winnipeg professor Anna Stokke, and one that is widely quoted from. The case is laid out that the trend in all provinces is that math scores show a steady decline, which is particularly documented in provinces like Ontario and Alberta that use standardized testing to track student progress. The report calls for immediate and significant reform of the way numeracy skills are taught; otherwise, Canada will be at a huge disadvantage compared to other countries, particularly Asian nations. But other than the evidence presented in the Stokke report, the debate around math education seems to be largely anecdotal, citing students who are unable to perform simple sums in their heads, who don't know the multiplication tables by heart, or who can't figure out how to make change in a shop without the aid of an electronic device. Proponents of the "back to basics"

movement look to the Asian system as the epitome of how an education system should operate, and urges the Western system to adopt their methodologies.

However, what is missing in the Great Math Debate is some balance. What isn't talked about much is the other side, where educators are trying to engage students in developing an innate sense of numeracy that goes beyond rote memorization of facts and algorithms, or students who "get" math in a way they hadn't previously because of the shift in teaching methods. Could poor teaching and a lack of understanding of the process behind the pedagogy—in other words, the traditional, fact-based curriculum that math reformers advocate—be to blame for people hating math, despite the importance and necessity of it in our world? And is the Asian education system really the “perfect” system that North America should be striving toward?

What is also overlooked is that the practice of inquiry-based learning is often far different from the perception of it, especially where math is concerned. Math isn't just about the ability to recite facts. It also involves hands on exploration, critical thinking, reasoning, and problem solving. Memorizing math facts doesn't necessarily mean understanding, just as spelling bees don't measure an ability to write eloquent essays.

Perhaps, despite all the rhetoric, this debate is just a starting point. Hopefully, in the coming decades, there will be an understanding of numeracy and math education that we have not had previously, based on the realization that people are wired to learn math in different ways, in the same way that people are wired with different learning styles in general. Perhaps this will lead to an approach to numeracy that will benefit all learners, not just those who are naturally inclined to be good at numbers.

But in the short term, what is guaranteed about math education is that the polarizing debate continues; in school parent council meetings, among school boards and governments—not to mention in the media and on social media. The attention-grabbing headlines will continue to give the illusion that the issues are cut and dry. But without the in-depth and balanced reporting about what is really happening in schools and the inclusion of verifiable, academic studies and balanced discussion, the positives about current math education will be displaced in favour of the negatives. And those at the heart of it all; the teachers, students, and parents, will be left to wonder whether the current education system is really failing.

Carla is a Calgary writer who showed an early talent for words, not numbers. To make up for the shortfall, she married a guy who was good at math. Say "hi" to her on Twitter @LunchBuster.

Women of Interest

Marie Stopes was born October 15, 1880, in Edinburgh and died October 2, 1958, in Dorking Surrey. She was an author, palaeobotanist and a leading campaigner for eugenics and women's rights. Stopes was educated at the University of Manchester where she became the first female lecturer in palaeobotany from 1904 to 1910. She was against abortion, advocating that birth control was the answer. She wrote a controversial sex manual "Married Love" in 1918, which brought the subject of birth control to the public's attention. She recommended among other controversial ideas, compulsory sterilisation for those who were seen to be unfit to be parents. She even disinherited her own son because he married a woman with poor eyesight! In 1970 a charity was established in her name, Marie Stopes International (MSI). It continues to be one of the foremost providers of sexual reproductive health care in the UK.

"You can take no credit for beauty at sixteen. But if you are beautiful at sixty, it will be your soul's own doing."
- Marie Stopes

Further information about Marie Stopes may be found at the following websites:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marie_Stopes

<http://www.sciencemuseum.org.uk/broughttolife/people/mariestopes>

Fly on the Wall

How Will We Remember Us?

Jason Sullivan



Who hasn't heard the phrase '*well-behaved women seldom make history*'? Far fewer of us know who coined the phrase: Laurel Satchel Ulrich in 1976. In her academic research she studied obituaries of ordinary women "who lived and labored in silent obscurity" and realized that the ones who became known and notorious were those who challenged the expectations of their time (Ulrich, online). Those who transgressed the standards of their peers were remembered for their misbehaviour. In this same way, our future selves may remember how we made our learning

apply to us rather than just learning to adopt the facts and viewpoints of our course materials. It's fine to challenge and disagree with even the most sacred beliefs we encounter; perhaps a memorable education hinges on engaging with, rather than merely assimilating, scholarly material.

Learning leads us to grow as new ways of thinking enter our consciousness in the form of lists of facts and methods of inquiry. Sometimes education displaces our preconceptions and stands in for our intuition; we may feel an affinity with the information on offer and become born anew. Yet, if we take this authority at face value, it can replace all that we feel and know already about a subject: many a sociology professor covers great swathes of time simply countering students' assumptions about gender, race, and economics when they could be encouraging students to relate to the course material on their own terms. Education involves a fine art of creative openness where we learn new things while retaining our sense of self and even adding to what is being taught. Bringing our whole selves to our course material ought to lend definition to our educational experience.

For a course to be memorable it not only has to make a mark on us; we have to be able to look back and remember ourselves giving it a personal stamp. We must interact with it rather than allowing ourselves to simply take instruction. Since we are living our own histories as students we will remember our education most if we engage with it with a critical gaze rather than a compliant acceptance. We are not, after all, empty vessels awaiting instruction. We've returned to or extended our educational careers because we want something more or different from our lives and careers. It is from a place of desire that we embark on schooling; we feel a certain unwillingness to accept our personal status quo. As students, it helps to bear this in mind to get the most out of our educational journey, which is, after all, not merely about getting a better job, but also about having a more satisfying life. School, like life, is about more than just giving the proper answers and getting the proper piece of paper certifying one's success. To think through and about a topic is to learn it in terms of a mutual relationship where we add ourselves to the proceedings.

Every discipline has core assumptions and these are open to critique. To ask *how does this relate to me* and *do I agree with this* are aspects of critical thinking that may lead us to misbehave intellectually. Ulrich's study of history, for instance, privileges *associative logic*, which "reveals how A prefigures Q or even Z rather than ordering A then B then C" in a challenge to what is "more typically the linear cause-and-effect

formula of history" (Harrison, online). This demonstrates how the very way we think things happen and why is susceptible to be overturned or challenged. Alternative etiologies (explanations of causality) arise from ruthlessly questioning fundamental bedrock assumptions. Sometimes it can sound preposterous to do so, as when a person questions the existence of gravity. But we only need to remember being in love and floating off the ground in an enraptured state of bliss to know that our subjective states can be as important as the cold hard facts of objective truth. Floating may be impossible yet the heart cannot be censored; our very feelings act against the grain of received knowledge when they transcend boundaries of truth. As such, we misbehave whenever we allow our inclinations to colour our reception of the external world and make it our own. In the terms of course materials we may have to follow rules and procedures, but we can, if only privately, consider how the material actually makes us feel so we can relate to it more intimately and creatively.

To make course material our own is to be as intimate with it as possible and to engage in a relationship of relative equality rather than hierarchical inequality. The textbook may have the answers but the point of learning is also to ask new questions: innovation depends on fearlessly expressing out new ideas and challenging old dogmas. As students there is a time and place to give the answer a tutor expects of us, but all too often there is also room for shafts of light in dark caves of knowledge. Answers do not have to be final; there is room for us to suggest our own versions of truth into the picture. I'll always remember a professor of mine who related a story where, during a history exam at the University of Chicago in the 1960s, he found himself handwriting at such a torrid clip that he had time to scrawl out a lucid footnote illuminating some minor point of interest such that it later became a major insight for him. Rather than maintaining total focus on his prime topic, he was prepared to release new ideas as education stimulated his mind's poetic circuitry. If we take our coursework as an education relating to all of life we never know what wisdom may surface as our outer world of essay assignments and course material meets our inner world of our private thoughts and experiences.

Learning is about more than learning the methods and facts of a particular discipline; it can be transformative at a more fundamental level. Friedrich Nietzsche notes that we easily become tools of power structures that abound in our society: he particularly critiques objectivity as leaving out much of the human experience. "The objective man...is only an instrument, let us say a mirror – he is not an 'end in himself'" (Nietzsche, P. 134). If we want mere facts in black and white and the same methods applied everywhere, then we become mere instruments to forces beyond our control or interaction. A rose by any other name might smell as sweet yet what method of inquiry can describe its aroma without expressing the ineffable emotions implied in the experience? Nietzsche wrote that when a person utilizes only the factual "what is essential in him is overlooked – he is an instrument, something of a slave, if certainly the *sublimest kind of slave, but in himself he is nothing...as a rule, a man without content, a 'selfless' man*" (Nietzsche, P. 135). Learning can limit us or set us free; the key is to be aware that we are being taught new ways of thinking that can enhance us but not replace who we already are. To become truly objective may well be to no longer be oneself and, thus, to be alienated from one's processes of becoming. If we lose a grip on who we are we might look back one day and remember only that we passed a course and not that it meant anything to us.

Martin Heidegger suggests that true learning occurs when we relate to material because it strikes a chord already existing in us. "If the student only takes over something that is offered he does not learn. He comes to learn only when he experiences that he takes as something he himself really already has. True learning occurs only where the taking of what one already has is a self-giving and is experienced as such" (Heidegger, P. 275). Rather than being blank slates upon which facts are written and knowledge

constructed, this view shows that we the students are essential to our own learning processes. When we toil in silent obscurity and merely recount what is written in the textbook (or the answers in the back) we miss out on the enlightening essence of education itself. Sometimes we may challenge what we're being taught, when it goes against our personal opinions for instance, and other times we may simply add personal vignettes to our essays (such as when we consider a sociological concept such as alienation as it relates to our own life histories.)

To think and imagine ourselves into our learning is to behave in such a way that our future self will remember; the more we learn and become our educated selves the more we may see our own images in the material we study.

References

Harrison, K. (2007). 'We're No Angels'. 'New York Times Sunday Book Review'. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/30/books/review/harrison.html>

Heidegger, M. (1967). 'Modern Science, Metaphysics, and Mathematics.' In 'Basic Writings' (2008). New York: Harper-Perennial Modern Thought.

Nietzsche, F. (2003). 'Beyond Good and Evil'. Toronto: Penguin Classics.

Jason Hazel-rah Sullivan is a Masters of Integrated Studies student who loves engaging in discourse while working in the sunny orchards and forests of the Okanagan.



Leather Up for Friday the 13th

Barabara Lehtiniemi



It's my first Friday the 13th, and I'm clinging to the back of a motorcycle. It's a hot day and it feels great to escape the city's heat. Through my leather jacket and jeans I can feel the temperature drop as the highway slices through farmland. Even with a bulky helmet on, I can discern the scents different crops throw off as we whiz through rural Southern Ontario. Unlike being in the sealed environment of a car, motorcycle riding makes me feel immersed in the environment.

Along the way, a few other motorcycles join us. Others zip by trailing a high whine of acceleration. At each crossroads more bikes join the swelling parade. The drivers acknowledge each other—regardless of what make of bike each is riding—by raising one gloved finger off the handlebars. We don't know each other, but we know we're all heading to the same place.

It's Friday the 13th in Ontario, and everyone is going to 'Dover. Every Friday the 13th, the sleepy lakeside town of Port Dover, Ontario explodes with leather, chrome, and the throaty roar of thousands upon thousands of motorcycles.

Anywhere in Ontario and beyond you can see motorcycles streaming toward a speck on the map to congregate for no reason except that everyone else will be there.

We arrive on the outskirts of Port Dover. Traffic slows to a crawl, then stops. There are only two major routes into this lakeside town, and they're both closed to anything with more than three wheels. We've got two wheels, so we whiz by stopped cars full of tourists. They're coming to see us, but they'll have to park at the edge of town and hop on a shuttle bus or walk.

Cresting the hill of Port Dover's Main Street, we're met with the motorcycle mayhem that is Friday the 13th in Port Dover. Angle-parked along both sides of Main Street and a double row up the centre, and spilling onto nearby side streets, are thousands upon thousands of motorcycles. Heatwaves shimmer off polished metal while leather-clad bodies stroll through the streets, clutching helmets and checking out the chaotic array of bikes.

Kawasakis and Suzukis lean cheek-by-jowl with Harleys and Hondas. Every make and model of bike is represented among the gleaming rows, from vintage models to the new three-wheeled trikes. No one type has superiority here. Today they are all of one breed.

There's a party atmosphere in town. Residents sit in their front yards to watch the annual invasion. Entrepreneurs set up booths on available patches of grass to sell everything from t-shirts to tattoos. A tanned woman wearing white lingerie and waving a bouquet clings to the waist of her leather-fringed groom as their Harley leads a wedding party through the streets.

This is Friday the 13th in Port Dover, Ontario: one of the most amazing sights you can imagine.

The Port Dover Friday the 13th tradition began in 1981. That November—yes, November—a group of 25 friends went out for a ride and ended up in Port Dover. One of them must have remarked on the date which led to a discussion of Friday the 13ths, which led to a decision to do it again the very next "13th". The next Friday the 13th arrived the following August and this time a few more friends showed up. A tradition was born.

Since each year has at least one—and as many as three—Friday the 13ths, the congregation of motorcycles occurs with predictable regularity. Less predictable was the reaction of the residents of Port Dover.

AU-thentic Events

Upcoming AU Related Events

AU Library Orientation Webinar

Tues, October 17, 12:00 to 1:00 pm MDT
Online

Hosted by AU Library

library.athabasca.ca/orientations.html

no pre-registration required

AU Meet & Greet - Toronto

Wed, October 18, 5:00 to 7:00 EDT

Sheraton Centre Toronto Hotel, Dominion Ballroom, 123 Queen Street West

In-person

Hosted by AU Alumni Relations

www.eventbrite.ca/e/athabasca-university-toronto-meet-and-greet-tickets-38090259993?aff=eac2

RSVP by October 11 at above link

The Research Itinerary Series - Part 1

Wed, October 18, 6:00 to 7:00 pm MDT

Online

Hosted by AU Faculty of Graduate Studies

fgs.athabasca.ca/news/presentations/

e-mail fgs@athabasca.ca with your student number to register

MBA in Hockey Management Info Session

Thurs, October 19, 10:00 to 11:00 am MDT

Online

Hosted by AU Faculty of Business

business.athabasca.ca/event-details/executive-mba-business-hockey-info-session-5pm-mst-online-3-copy-copy-copy/

register online at above link

2017 BTM TalentMash

Sat, October 21, 9:30 am to 3:00 pm MDT

University of Alberta, Tory Lecture Hall

In-person

Hosted by ITAC Talent and U of A

business.athabasca.ca/event-details/2017-btm-talentmash/

register online at above link

Port Dover has a population of fewer than 7000. The increasing popularity of Friday the 13th gatherings meant that residents' numbers were soon eclipsed by motorcyclists. Traffic in town on those days became a nightmare, with only one main route in or out of town, and the streets jammed with motorcycles.

After some initial resistance, Port Dover embraced the periodic invasion. These days the "13th", as the event is popularly known, is managed much like the major tourist attraction that it's grown to be. Many streets are close to all but motorcycle traffic. Tourists arriving by car—and there are thousands of them—are obliged to park in ad-hoc parking areas at the edge of town. Local restaurants and shops burst at the seams and vendors do brisk business at pop-up locations. Police direct traffic and pretend not to be too interested in biker insignia. Sponsors hand out bottles of water and ranks of portable toilets handle the overflow.

Summer Friday the 13ths draw the largest crowds, with over 200,000 arriving for July 13, 2012. Winter 13ths draw a smaller but determined group of well-bundled motorcycle enthusiasts.

From its humble beginnings, the Friday the 13th event has become a major draw. Tourist organizations promote the event to bikers and non-bikers alike. Media outlets bring their satellite trucks to cover the event. Comedian Rick Mercer of the Mercer Report leathered up to do a Friday the 13th piece in 2013.

Even if you don't like motorcycles, it's a spectacular event. In the decades since a handful of motorcyclists decided to take a tour along the shores of Lake Erie, I've only gone to one "13th". Having been to Port Dover on quieter days, it was incredible to see it jammed with people and motorcycles. It was like the circus arrived in town, and I was a part of it. That visit was more than ten years ago, but I still listen for the throaty roar of motorcycles heading to Dover every Friday the 13th.

For more information on Friday the 13th activities in Port Dover ON, visit www.pd13.com. The next Friday the 13th is April 13, 2018.

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

Student Sizzle — AU's Hot Social Media Topics

Following What's Hot around AU's Social Media Sites.

AthaU Facebook Group

Amanda wonders how to best recognize excellent academic service; Shawna suggests nominating them for an AU Academic Excellence award. Dean asks for clarification on how much refund he'll get if he withdraws from a course within the first 30 days.

Other posts include AU student award deadline, and a revived discussion on AU's Computing and Information Systems program.

Twitter

@AthabascaU tweets: "What does the new MyAU experience look like? Here's a sneak peek of the changes that will come October 16: <http://ow.ly/ysnj30fDPmj>."

@AthabascaUSU (AUSU) tweets: "Did you know you can get 30 minutes of free legal advice through the Student Lifeline? Free for AUSU members! <http://bit.ly/2hArxaf>."

Youtube

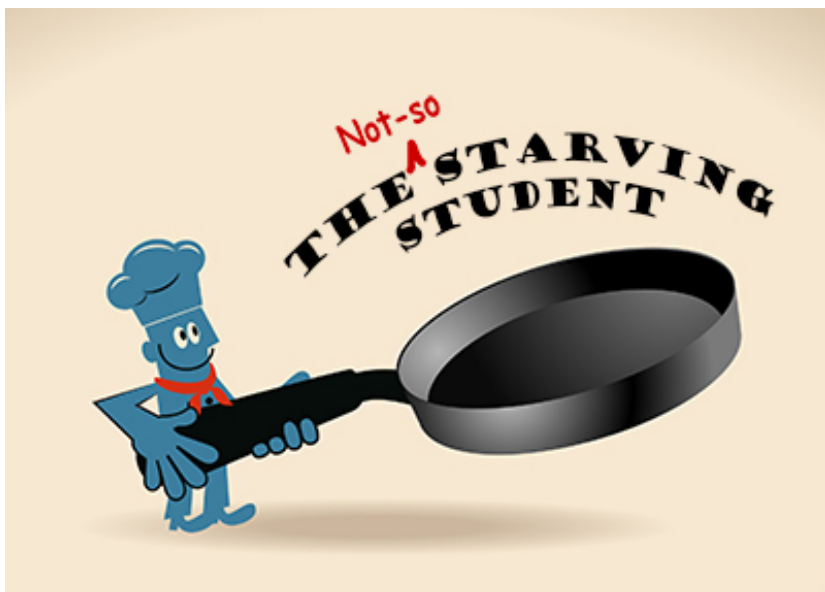
Spend fifteen seconds with authentic AU students by watching the latest series of *Authentic with AU Faculty of Business* videos on the AU Business uploads page.



The Not-So Starving Student

Five Curries from Around the World

Xin Xu



Fall is upon us, and the chilly mornings and long nights call for hearty stews and curries. Curries are simple to make, packed with nutrients, and help spice up your meals. One underlying theme of curry is the flavorful herbs accompanying every dish. While the dish is common in South Asia, the style of cooking has spread across all continents. Here are five distinct curries you need to try.

Japanese curry

Japanese curry's distinct sweetness differs from its counterparts in other areas of Southern Asia. Unlike curry powder used for traditional Indian curries, Japanese homes commonly use blocks of curry paste that, often, are less spicy than other curry styles. This dish can be served alongside rice, udon, or baked eggs. The Japanese add a cultural touch to traditional curries with various seafood additions, from oyster to mackerel, in their curry.



Indian curry

Featuring complex array of spices including coriander, turmeric and cumin, Indian curries were first believed to be served to British armies by Indian merchants. Curries may be dry or wet describing the sauciness of the mixture. Whereas wet curries are coated with a viscous sauce, dry curries allow the sauce to evaporate. The popularity of this cuisine is seen throughout the entire Indian subcontinent. The Indian chef uses no curry powder and instead blends his own fresh ingredients to create a unique taste.

Jamaican curry

While Indian curries produce a bright colorful mixture, the Jamaican curry colors are darker and use dried scotch bonnet chillies and include a distinct pepper (pimenta) native to the Greater Antilles in southern Mexico. Unlike its Indian counterpart, the texture is less thick and served with peas or rice in lieu of breads like naan and chapatis.





Ethiopian curry (Zighny)

At first glance, this curry already stands differently from the rest. Its vibrant crimson color lends itself from a spice mix known as berbere. The Zighny is popular in Sudan, Ethiopia, Eritrea, and other parts of East Africa. Despite the lack of quality African restaurants in my area, I was able to find some at local food festivals. The curry is typically served in a tray with Injera, a soured bread, that locals break off in pieces and dip in the curry.

Thai curry

Simply smelling the aroma of Thai curry allows one to distinguish its unique South Asian origins. The use of ingredients such as seafood, bamboo shoots, and kaffir lime leaves create an amalgam that melts in your mouth. The Thai distinguish their curries into yellow, green, or red curries based on the herbs used. The color is also an indication of spice levels. For example, red curries typically consist of red chillies whereas green curries uses fresh green chillies. For curry lovers everywhere, Thai curries are a must-try.



Xin Xu is a post-graduate health-science AU student, aspiring clinician, globe-trotter, parrot-breeder and tea-connoisseur.



In Conversation ..with King of Nowhere

Wanda Waterman



Blooms Hang Heavy, a thrillingly gothic album title for a band with the nihilist name King of Nowhere, was released on September 10. King of Nowhere, an alt-rock outfit from New England but now based in Brooklyn, New York, delivers a pungent mix of ambient, experimental, prog rock, and alt folk, accompanying clever lyrics sung, with resonant verve, by lead singer Jesse French.

In explaining the background of the song "Pigeons" in an interview with AXS, French explained: "'Pigeons' was written when I had first moved to New York and was staying with our bass player, Dylan. It grew out of a long conversation I had with this guy who was living outside, and is part of me processing the intensity of seeing extreme wealth and poverty existing right next to each other, and the ways that our spaces are designed to keep people out."

Jesse French recently took the time to answer our questions about his background, the new album, and why politics play such a big role in his lyrics.

What were your early years like?

I read a lot of science fiction and fantasy novels. Asimov, Heinlein, Orson Scott Card. Kind o' lived in my own world.

Who had the most influence on you musically?

My dad is a musician, and we used to play together a lot. That was hugely influential to me, and I was so lucky to grow up not only with access to instruments, a place to practice with a PA, and a few mics to start learning how to record myself, but also the guidance to head in the right direction. Lots of Neil Young.

Your songs are often occupied with political themes. Do you remember how you first awakened to the reality of injustice in the world?

I don't remember that first awakening — I do remember staying up at night as a kid feeling devastated by all the horrible shit that was going on around the entire world. That understanding has since morphed from a visceral one to a more analytical one.

Why did you decide to speak into that with your music?

This stuff occupies much of what I think and talk about. I guess it would be weird if my art didn't reflect that. Listening to Radiohead, Immortal Technique, and System of a Down when I was younger was a powerful part of that process.

What was the most mesmerizing musical experience of your life?

High on the list is performing in a friend's thesis performance in college in a 20 or 30 piece ensemble (including some other current and former KON members), making nearly entirely improvised music. That experience taught me so much about listening and how to create with other people.

Why did you choose alt rock?

I don't know that I chose it, exactly—we all listen to lots of different stuff and are interested in a pretty broad range of genres. The first band that Porter (KON guitarist) and I were in together, I played banjo and he played dobro. This just happens to be the way we sound right now.

If you had an artistic mission statement, what would it be?

Punk ideology, delicate sounds.

What's your next project?

We're already working on some new songs, and I've been looking for a space to start recording them in. The next EP is definitely in the works. Also, our drummer Aaron and I are in another band called Young Tricksters that's about to release our first full length—we started recording that one over two years ago now. Dylan and

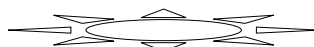
Porter have songs we're working on too. I play drums in some other bands, and record other people's music as well.

In what way do you think music in general has changed since 2000?

What I'm really excited about is the increasing affordability of recording technology and the democratization of that process. It's incredible to be able to make records without being signed to a label.

The total budget for this EP, including the studio time, mix and mastering, and physical copies, was under \$500. I have a recording setup that would have been absolutely out of reach financially to me a generation ago.

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



Scholarship of the Week

Digging up scholarship treasure for AU students.

Scholarship name: Scotiabank National Scholarship

Sponsored by: Scotiabank; administered by yconic

Deadline: November 2, 2017, 3:00 pm EDT

Potential payout: \$5000

Eligibility restriction: Applicants must be members of [yconic](#), an online student community (membership is free.) Additionally, applicants must be Canadian citizens or permanent residents or be international students with a valid student visa, be at least 16 years of age, be enrolled in or planning to enrol in a certificate, diploma, or degree program at a Canadian college, university, or trade school during qualifying academic years. See full [eligibility criteria](#).

What's required: An online application form, along with a maximum 150-word description of what word, quote, or phrase best represents your life as a student and why.

Tips: Read the [FAQs](#) for tips on how applications are evaluated.

Where to get info: yconic.com/program/scotiabank-national-scholarship/



The Creative Spark!

Fooled by Art

Marie Well



Did your creativity ever get stuck? Mine did for decades. Yet, during junior high, I thrived on creativity. My rundown school held a class-act art program. So, I crafted life-sized Sesame Street puppets, dyed Garfield pillows, and baked clay Barbie's. I made a solar system with planets and moons crafted from Styrofoam strung together in a wooden contraption. My teacher entered it into a science fair, but it got rejected, as my weekly allowance from Papa was shy many moons.

That same year—the year VHS caught on—I directed a video for science class. I called the video *The Wizard of Weather*—a spinoff of *The Wizard of Oz*. I wrote scripts and supervised students as they painted trees on giant cardboard dividers. When at last the video aired to a hushed classroom, I burst into tears. We recorded the video at twice the speed, sounding like munchkins of alien tongues.

A year prior, I took Home Economics, inspired by a love for sketching fashion. My teacher helped sew a blouse from materials Mom carefully chose. I wore that blouse until growth spurts dangled my wrists well-below the cuffs. But Mom angered when I asked for baking items. So, I'd ask last minute. The next day at school, I'd bake pizza with aged cheddar cheese, stewed tomatoes, and a sore butt. I enrolled in Industrial Arts thereafter.

Later in high school, I hit a speed bump—breaking my love for art. Peer and home pressures—and tough luck—unglued me. Instead of drawing and painting, I wrote songs. A decade passed before I dabbled back in art. Yet, recently, an art project piqued my passion. Now, I plan to build a tech-art installation for the Banff Center.

Noah Scalin teaches how to come unstuck in his book *Unstuck: 52 Ways to Get and Keep Your Creativity Flowing at Home, at Work & in Your Studio*:

- Students need to indulge in creativity when stuck on schoolwork.
- If you fear the creative task, do it. Facing fear strengthens you.
- Don't fear being the fool. Creativity thrives on red-faces and rejection.
- Don't create a *precious* project. Preciousness—otherwise known as perfectionism—stifles growth. Instead, make mistakes and plow forth.
- Find creative inspiration outdoors. Why? Your four walls limit your scope. A world of novelty awaits outside the box you call home.

- Get inspired by dull things. A paperclip has tons of artistic possibilities. Same with a nose ring.
- Involve other people in your art—and give them your art. Collaborate. Share. When you give, you get.
- For a project to get unstuck, take a funny word like "toot" and turn it into an acronym. [For instance, if you have an essay that covers four themes, tweak the first-letters of each theme until the letters fit a funny acronym. Include letters ripe for comedy such as k, d, t, b, p, g]
- Summarize a movie in less than 30 seconds. Then, make a 30 second video out of it. [And why not summarize your essay in less than thirty seconds? Make that summary a video, too. Bonus marks]

So, don't get creatively stuck for decades. Preciousness makes for unfinished projects. So, face fears and make yourself a fool. A paradox? I call it a creative spark!



The Fit Student

A Well Dressed Asparagus

Marie Well



I loathe shopping. I make celebrity dresses look like Rhino underpants. But guess what? I still look better in a t-shirt than Lady Gaga in her on-stage Victoria-Secret John-Lennon look—yes, John Lennon in a negligée.

Recently, I ducked into a high-end store to scout business attire. A purple dress caught my eye, although I haven't donned a dress in a decade. I stole away to a dressing room and slipped it on. When I looked in the mirror, I gasped. Beautiful. The dress fit as if designed with me as the mannequin.

I rushed to share my shock with my boyfriend. He calmly said, "It's the training." The moral? When you train weights six hours a week for four months, shopping gets fun. But, training alone doesn't make for shocking shopping sprees: I adjusted my diet—but out of necessity. Why? Because I had

underwent daily nausea and steady

x-rays, biopsies, MRI's, and bloodwork, but none of that had given me a diagnosis. So, instead of seeking bad news, I munched plants. Plants helped halt my eyes from crossing and my body from crying for 24-hour sleeps.

Plants—and exercise—slimmed me down fast, too. Jeans that wouldn't tug past my thighs suddenly fit. How did I do it? I downloaded the [cronometer app](#) to record my calories and exercise. I maxed the recommended daily allowances (RDA) eating mostly plants: fruits, vegetables, beans, nuts, and grains.

Now, I plan on fewer X-rays, MRIs, and ultrasounds. Diet and exercise cured me, it seems. Colin Campbell, author of *The China Study*, claims that our diets can cure us of cancers, diabetes, and heart disease—often better than the doctors can.

So, eat plants and exercise to slim down and slip in gowns. Heed Campbell's advice on plants to cure disease and sweeten old age:

- The key takeaway? Eat plenty of plants. "People who ate the most plant based foods were the healthiest and tended to avoid chronic disease" (p. 7).
- Munching plants can lead to "less cancer, less heart disease, fewer strokes, less obesity, less autoimmune disease, less osteoporosis, less Alzheimer's, less kidney stones, and less blindness" (pp. 2-3).
- And devouring plants can reverse disease: "Dietary changes can enable diabetic patients to go off their medication" (p. 3).
- Yes, chewing plants can *reverse* the most life-threatening disease: "Impressive evidence now exists to show that advanced heart disease, relatively advanced cancers of certain types, diabetes, and a few other degenerative diseases can be reversed by diet" (p. 23).
- Your diet can either cure or cause cancer: "Cancer growth can be turned on and off by nutrition, despite very strong genetic predisposition" (p. 23). By "nutrition," Colin means healthy plants. Health dangers, on the other hand, lurk in "consuming animal-based foods, including all types of meat, dairy, and eggs" (p. 21).
- Yes, animal proteins worsen cancer: "Casein, which makes up 87% of cow's milk protein promoted all stages of the cancer process. ..." (p. 6).
- Too much animal protein triggers cancer growth: "Protein proved to be so powerful in its effect that we could turn on and off cancer growth simply by changing the level consumed" (p. 6).
- So, substitute animal protein with plant protein: "The safe proteins were from plants, including wheat and soy" (p. 6). Beans offer great protein, too. "There is a mountain of compelling research showing that ... plant protein ... is the healthiest type of protein" (pp. 30-31).
- If you get sick, then, *sure*, see the doctor and take the medicine—but start chewing plants. "Drugs and surgery don't cure the diseases that kill most Americans. Your doctor probably doesn't know what you need to do to be the healthiest you can be" (p. 2). (Doctors can be dumb when it comes to diet.)

When I felt daily nausea, I searched for *anything* that healed: fresh air, cold showers, bananas, less sleep, kiwi, and gym workouts. And then these healers became lifestyle.

And, oh, that purple dress. Today, I peered at it again—on sale. No longer need I shop Mark's Work Wearhouse for saggy mom-pants. No, I've got a plant figure now—like a well-dressed asparagus.

Thursday the 12th

Deanna Roney



The history of Friday the 13th goes back, likely to the middle ages. There are all sorts of speculations about where this belief came from. But it is just that, a belief. The mind is a powerful thing and is something we don't fully understand. It is entirely possible that this myth of Friday the 13th being bad luck is our own creation, we believe in bad luck for that day and so we create it ourselves, without knowing it.

Things that may have happened that day, rolling an ankle, dinging your car, burning your finger in the oven, are all things that may have happened anyway

and we pin them on the day, or, they are things that happen because we are expecting something bad to happen.

If you are trying to be careful, thinking about it so hard, then the task becomes that much more difficult, you are overthinking it and the odds are, you are going to slip up. Maybe you're slicing an apple and you are focusing extra hard on not letting the knife slip off and cut your finger, but in focusing so hard, you make just that happen.

My mom has a saying when it comes to this particular day. It isn't Friday the 13th she is worried about, but Thursday the 12th. I never thought about this too much, but when you stop and consider it, no one cares about Thursday the 12th. But it precedes (obviously) Friday the 13th, so wouldn't it be considered bad luck as well, because it is ushering in the bad luck day. Of course, once we step on that slope it is a slippery ride to the bottom. However, the point stands Friday the 13th, just like Thursday the 12th, is just a day.

Friday the 13th being in October this year is considered extra spooky because it's October the month of monsters and goblins. It has inspired me to consider some appropriate reading for this month, what with the vibrant leaves, the cold and foggy mornings. While the day, and month, may be just another, it does set a certain mood.

For this month a few book recommendations would include *The Witches of New York* by Ami McKay, a book that I loved and, while it isn't "spooky", it is beautifully told and delves into the realm of witches and magic in our society; *In a Dark, Dark Wood* by Ruth Ware, while this one didn't live up to the blurbs on the cover, it is, on its own right, a wonderful mysterious read (just don't read too much into the blurbs); and the final one I will recommend is *The Library of Souls* by Ransom Riggs, now this one is number three in the series, I didn't read the first two, but the cover drew me in. It is a fantastic read of particular people living among us.

Each of these looks at things we consider scary, how our minds create certain beliefs, and how those beliefs will affect our perception on those around us. Similar to how our perception of Friday the 13th will affect how we act on that day.

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



Dear
Barb

Barbara Godin

Very Superstitious, Writings on the Wall

Dear Barb:

Soon it will be Friday the thirteenth and I wanted to share a story about my aunt. She is in her fifties and very superstitious. I get that some of us are a little superstitious, but she is over the top. For example, if a black cat walks in front of her she will turn around and start walking the other way, even if she has to go all the way around the block to avoid walking across its path! If someone opens an umbrella indoors she will freak out and snap it closed immediately. I remember as a kid breaking a small mirror. She was devastated, and made me say and do all these weird things, like turn around three times while chanting something that I can't even remember now. She said this was to get rid of the seven years bad luck. She also claimed that walking under a ladder would cause a person to enter into the devil's domain. Honestly, she is so weird when it comes to superstitions, but otherwise is a totally normal person. I think the worst thing was when her sister, my aunt Rose, died and was cremated. Aunt Rose had no children or husband, so we made all the arrangements. We decided to inter her ashes with another family member who had predeceased her. The date for the internment just happened to be Friday the 13th. My aunt begged us to change the date, and we actually tried to do it too, but that was the only available date that would work for everyone else. My aunt chose not to attend and has not spoken to any of us since. We've invited her to family events, but she refuses. Everyone feels bad, but we don't know what to do. Were we wrong in going ahead with the internment in spite of her feelings? Thanks, Erica.

Hi Erica:

Sounds like your aunt is a bit of an eccentric, but, according to research, over half of American's believe in some type of superstition. It's unclear why people fear Friday the 13th. It may have began back in the 19th century when Gioachino Rossini, an Italian composer died on Friday the 13th. That seems to be the first recorded mention of Friday the 13th bringing bad luck. In 1907 Thomas Lawson, a businessman, published a book titled "Friday the Thirteenth." The fear of Friday the 13th even has a name: friggatriskadekaphobia or paraskevidekatriaphobia. This fear of Friday the 13th causes airlines to experience tremendous losses on this day. Also, many high-rise buildings, hospitals, and hotels do not include the 13th floor because of the bad energy associated with the number 13. Cornell University psychology professor Tom Gilovich who says "our brains are wired to believe this nonsense and to find cause and effect where there is none." So your aunt is not alone in her beliefs, but perhaps she is taking things too far. I don't think you were wrong to proceed with the internment, as you can't please everyone. You most likely wouldn't change the date if only one person had something else planned either, so I don't think you needed to change the date for your aunt's belief system. Keep inviting her to events and keep in touch; hopefully she will come around. Thanks for your letter Erica.

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.

Politically Bereft Making Nations Great Again

Wanda Waterman



What the hell are you doing? The Messiah's supposed to be helping us make our nation great again!

What Would Jesus Do?

What do people mean when they ask that their nation be made great *again*? The phrase is pregnant with conjecture. It assumes, for one thing, that the nation *was* great once, but also that it *can* be made great again and that making it great again is worth our effort. It also suggests an awareness of the criteria of greatness—although this is often left unsaid.

Old Testament prophecies regarding the coming Messiah had been interpreted in such a way that many fully expected a political leader, one who would stand up to the Roman occupation and grant Israel the military autonomy and might it had once enjoyed. It hadn't occurred to most people that the Messiah might be a pious spiritual leader enraged at the way the merchant class exploited the poor.

The measure of the former greatness of Israel had been taken from its wealth and military might, in much the same way as nations are measured today. The greatness of nations can also be measured according to their cultural and scientific achievements, their architecture, institutions, and infrastructure, but bucks and bullets pretty much lead.

Isn't it odd that the countries deemed weak in the primary areas then are often the places where people are happiest? The countries with the highest measurable level of contentment, for example, or the countries with the best education systems, the most enlightened egalitarian structures, the most profound spirituality, are rarely—for any or all of the commonly accepted reasons—considered "great."

A great country in Jesus' terms would be a country that paid attention to what mattered, as Mary did by just sitting and listening to his teachings while her sister occupied herself with busywork. It would be a country with a sense of the sacredness of life, of respect for all beings, a country that reflected and considered, a meditative and studious country, a country full of citizens humble enough to accept their mortality while manifesting concern for the wellbeing of future generations.

Yes, I want to be there, too. We can get there if we try.

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



AUSU
ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY
STUDENTS' UNION

This space is provided by AUSU. The Voice does not create or edit this content. Contact services@ausu.org with any questions.

IMPORTANT DATES

- **Oct 13:** [November degree requirements deadline](#)
- **Oct 23:** [Edmonton Student Meet & Greet](#)
- **Oct 31:** [Deadline to apply for course extension for Dec](#)
- **Nov 10:** [Deadline to register in a course starting Dec 1](#)
- **Nov 14:** [AUSU Council Meeting](#)
- **Nov 15:** [December degree requirements deadline](#)
- **Nov 30:** [Deadline to apply for course extension for Jan](#)

Student Lifeline -Finding Balance

From family and friends to school, work and other commitments, from handling financial stress to the pressures of being a student and dealing with life's challenges and changes, **Student LifeLine** can help you navigate competing priorities and responsibilities and find a balance.

Contact **Student LifeLine** any time, 24/7 at **1-800-567-2255 (TTY:1-877-371-9978)** to speak to a caring, professional consultant for free expert advice.

You can also log in to www.lifeworks.com (username: **AUSU**, password: **wellness**) to access a wealth of helpful articles and resources, such as:

- Finding a Balance, this month's feature on the Lifeline [homepage](#), where you'll find links to articles, toolkit, recordings, and infographics.
- New podcast, Fitting Work and Life Together

Student LifeLine's team of expert consultants can help you handle all your competing priorities and find the balance that feels right for you.

This is a FREE service for all AUSU members!

Student Lifeline provides help and support 24/7 for any issues, from health, wellness, work, life, money, school, community referrals, and more!



AU Student Mobile App

Want to get connected with the campus community?

Want quick access to services and resources available to you as an AU student?

Get the FREE [AU Student App](#), courtesy of AUSU.

So far, this year, there have been over 500 friendships made and over 10,000 chats and likes on the Campus Wall! Don't miss out!



Eyewear Discounts

Get great discounts on glasses, upgrades, contacts, and more through FYidoctors!

Find out more on our website [here](#).



CLASSIFIEDS

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

THE VOICE

301 Energy Square - 10109 – 106 St NW - Edmonton AB - T5J 3L7
Ph: 855.497.7003

Publisher	Athabasca University Students' Union
Editor-In-Chief	Jodi Campbell
Managing Editor	Karl Low

Regular Columnists Hazel Anaka, Barb Godin, Scott Jacobsen, Carla Knipe
Barbara Lehtiniemi, Deanne Roney, Wanda Waterman, Xin Xu

www.voicemagazine.org

The Voice is published almost every Friday in HTML and PDF format.

Contact *The Voice* at voice@voicemagazine.org.

To receive a weekly email announcing each issue, subscribe [here](#). *The Voice* does not share its subscriber list.

© 2017 by *The Voice Magazine*