



THE VOICE

Vol 25 Issue 40 2017-10-13

A Blast from Voices Past

Where We've Come From

Dealing with Writer's Block

Unlocking your Brain

Possessed by Language

An Existential House of Horrors

*Plus:
The Study Dude!
In Conversation
and much more!*



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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.

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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 Grand Opening Special

Karl Low



Last week was our “soft opening.” We brought in this fancy new website, let people poke around and kick some tires, but didn’t really make a lot of hooplah about it, because we wanted to get some of the last kinks worked out. Like the discussion forums below, which are now separated by story, and figuring out that we didn’t have a way to direct you to our facebook and twitter feeds. Those little things are now fixed (look way down on the bottom of the page) so we’re moving ahead with our big grand opening.

We’re hoping to really bring people into The Voice Magazine this week, so we’re running a contest. If you haven’t subscribed to our weekly mail-out, now’s a great time as all new subscribers will be entered into a draw to win an iPad mini, or one of 25 swag packs featuring the all new Voice Logo.

But wait, what if you’re already a subscriber? And didn’t we already have a new logo that we were putting on swag? Whatever happened to that?

For the first question, we thought of that, and if you’re already a subscriber then what you need to do to get an entry is to head over to our feed-back page, and send me a quick comment on

what you like, and don’t, about the latest incarnation of the Voice Magazine. You’ve had a week now to see how the new site and schedule works for you, so let us know what you think.

For the second question, we did have a logo re-design done back in 2014. If you ever let us interview you for the Minds We Meet column, or pointed out an error you found in the magazine, odds are you’ve already seen it. For those that haven’t, here’s what you missed. The plan at that point was to have The Voice swing to a look much closer to a 1920’s broadsheet, but with a modern feel.

As time passed, it was decided we should go more modern instead, and with recent concerns about Russian interference in media, the use of an image reminiscent of the Russian Sputnik satellite (the first satellite put into earth’s orbit) was questioned as to if it was truly appropriate. So if you have any Voice swag with that logo on it now, consider it to be a rare, dare I say collectible, piece of vintage Voice history. I’m not saying it’ll be worth anything a few years down the road—but I’m not saying it won’t either.



In the meantime, our feature article this week is a Blast from Voices past. If you’re just joining us here at the Voice today, this is a great article to see just where we’ve come from, and you can dig into all you missed by following some of the related article links below. We’ve almost 25 years of students and grads writing for *The Voice Magazine*, and almost all of it can be found somewhere on this site. That’s a lot of history, so to help you find some of the good bits, we’re also starting a new short, Vintage Voice, where we’ll bring some of the best parts of Voice Magazines of old to your attention.

But that’s just the tip of the iceberg. There’s a lot more in this week’s Voice Magazine including news, reviews, interviews, scholarships, events, and various other goodies. So welcome, and enjoy the read!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Karl".

Blast from Voices Past

Barbara Lehtiniemi

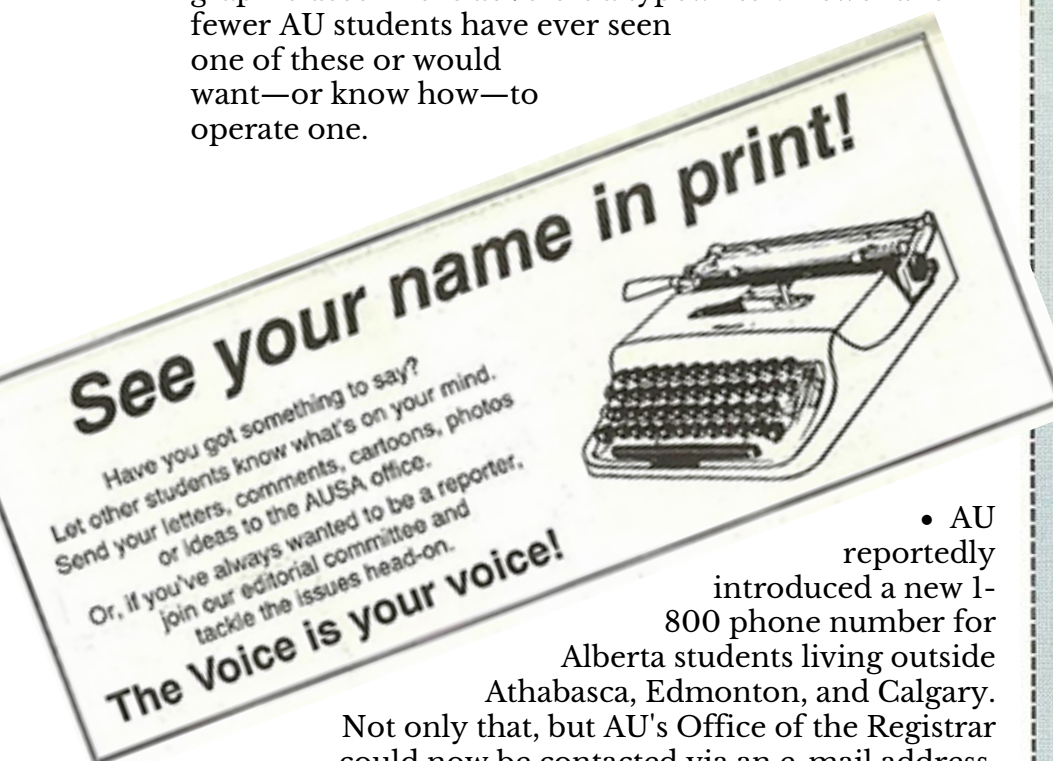


In last week's article, *Back to the Future*, we examined some of the headline issues for *The Voice* readers of 1994. This week, we take a look at how quaintly archaic 1994 seems to be—now.

In addition to the apparent gloomy financial situation at AU, *The Voice* in 1994 brims with quaintly outdated details:

- In the Spring 1994 edition of *The Voice*, AUSU (known then as AUSA) was gearing up for its council election—with mail-in ballots. Consider that, with online ballots in the 2016 election, barely 4% of the eligible members voted; mailed-in ballots in 1994 could probably have been counted by one person over a small cup of coffee.

- *The Voice* itself advertised for contributions of articles or letters. That's no different from 2017 except that the graphic used in the advert is a typewriter. Fewer and fewer AU students have ever seen one of these or would want—or know how—to operate one.



- AU reportedly introduced a new 1-800 phone number for Alberta students living outside Athabasca, Edmonton, and Calgary. Not only that, but AU's Office of the Registrar could now be contacted via an e-mail address.

- AUSU invited members to attend its Annual General Meeting in Edmonton. In-person was the only option for attendance. But maybe you got cookies.

Fold here

Voting Instructions

The Chief Returning Officer (CRO) shall provide to each active member as identified on the "official voters list:"

- a printed ballot form
- a ballot return envelope
- pertinent biographical information as provided by each candidate

Each active member shall be allowed to cast one (1) secret, non-transferable ballot for each of the elected positions.

Each active member shall place and seal their ballot in the return envelope according to instructions provided for by the CRO.

Important: This form comprises both the ballot and self-addressed return envelope. Please comply with the following directions:

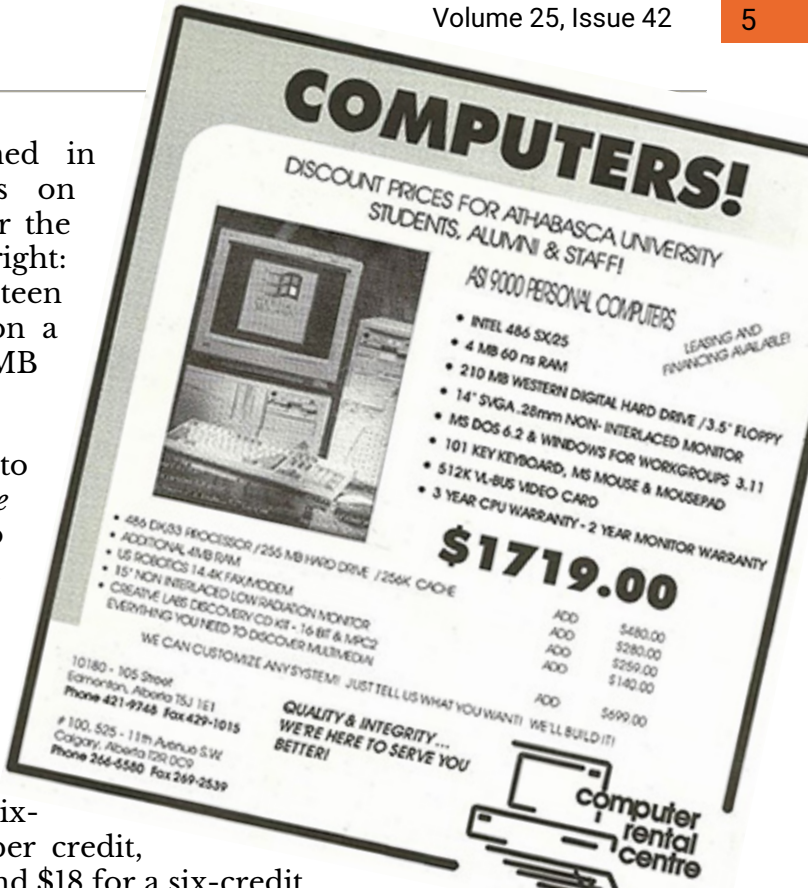
1. Mark ballot by casting one vote for each of the positions contested.
2. Cut along the dotted lines to remove ballot and return envelope from this page.
3. **Print clearly, on the Return Address portion of envelope (see reverse side of this form), your name, address, and postal code.**
4. Fold form with ballot on the inside and return address on the outside, seal and mail.

Voting will commence upon your receipt of this ballot and continue until March 25th, 1994. Please return your ballot early.

Ballots must be received at AUSA offices
by 4:30 pm, March 25, 1994 in order to be counted.

Thank you for voting!

- More advanced technology is mentioned in another ad, offering discounted prices on computers for AU students and staff. For the absurd price of \$1719.00 (you read that right: one thousand seven hundred and nineteen dollars), students could get their hands on a computer package with INTEL 486, a 210 MB hard drive, and 4 MB of RAM.
- Today's Alberta students will be interested to know the Summer 1994 edition of *The Voice* reported that AU tuition had just risen to \$330 for a three-credit course, up from \$300. (Alberta students pay \$667 tuition for a three-credit course today.) Out of province and overseas tuition costs are not given in the article. In a separate article, AUSU reported an increase to its fee structure, from a flat \$4 per course to \$6 for a three-credit course and \$12 for six-credit courses. (Currently, the fee is \$3 per credit, which means \$9 for a three-credit course and \$18 for a six-credit course.)
- In the Fall 1994 edition of *The Voice*, AU advertises that it was introducing non-credit short courses in microcomputer applications. Courses include training in WordPerfect 6.0, Lotus 1-2-3 Version 2.4, Simply Accounting 2.4, and Windows 3.1.



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computer rental centre

Become computer literate

Athabasca University now offers non-credit short courses in microcomputer applications.

Courses are available in two formats: paced and home study.

(Paced courses offered in AU's state-of-the-art computer classrooms. Homestudy courses provide an opportunity to become computer literate at home or work at a time and pace that is convenient to students.)

MS DOS Courses

- Introduction to DOS (MS DOS 6.2)*
Nov. 9 or Jan. 11 (6 to 9 p.m.)
- Word Processing I (WordPerfect 6.0)*
Wednesdays, Nov. 16-Dec. 14 (6 to 9 p.m.)
- Word Processing II (WordPerfect 6.0)*
Wednesdays, Jan. 18-Feb. 15 (6 to 9 p.m.)
- Spreadsheets I (Lotus 1-2-3 Version 2.4)*
Mondays, Nov. 14-Dec. 12 (6 to 9 p.m.)
- Spreadsheets II (Lotus 1-2-3 Version 2.4)*
Mondays, Jan. 16-Feb. 13 (6 to 9 p.m.)
- Database Management (dBase IV 2.0)*
Fridays, Nov. 18-Dec. 16 (9 a.m. to noon)
- Accounting Systems (Simply Accounting 2.4)*
Fridays, Jan. 20-Feb. 17 (9 a.m. to noon)

Fees: Introduction to DOS and Introduction to Windows are \$50 each or FREE if taken with another course. All other courses are \$175 each.

Paced (in-class) course offerings are subject to sufficient enrolments.

Windows Courses

- Introduction to Windows 3.1
Nov. 7 or Jan. 9 (6 to 9 p.m.)
- Word Processing I (Microsoft Word)
Thursdays, Nov. 17-Dec. 8 (6 to 9 p.m.)
- Internet and the Information Superhighway
Saturdays, Nov. 19-Dec. 10 (10 a.m. to 1 p.m.)
- Using Multimedia for Effective Presentations
Thursdays, Jan. 12-Feb. 2 (6 to 9 p.m.)
- Workgroup Applications (Lotus Notes)
Fridays, Nov. 18-Dec. 9 (1 to 4 p.m.)
- Income Tax (CanTax)
Saturdays, Jan. 21-Feb. 11 (10 a.m. to 1 p.m.)
- Spreadsheets I (Microsoft Excel)
Fridays, Jan. 13-Feb. 3 (1 to 4 p.m.)

Courses begin in November at the Calgary and Edmonton learning centres.

TO REGISTER: contact in Edmonton 497-3422, in Calgary 298-2920.

* these courses available in home study (\$100 per course)

- In the Winter 1994 edition of *The Voice*, AUSU provided a rundown of fees students might have to pay when writing exams. Invigilation centres at some post-secondary institutions were offering the service at no charge, while others had fees ranging from \$10 per exam to \$15 per hour. Most public libraries offered the service for free.

- Then-editor of *The Voice*, Karen Brown, reported that "more than 1000 AU undergrads are accessing their tutors, professors, or course materials by computer." In the same article, Brown writes that "although computer access is in demand at Athabasca University, making more courses and tutor access available online raises the issue of open accessibility."

Brown cites the costs of computer hardware and internet fees—this was back in dial-up days—as being barriers to education for many students.

- Finally, AUSU unveiled the new mascot for the association, a cartoon rendition of a carrier pigeon. Students were invited to suggest names for the mascot. The suggestions could be sent by—you guessed it—snail mail.

Just like looking through a photo album from our teenaged years, romping through *Voices* past produces some unintended humour and a few cringe-worthy moments. Now that *The Voice* has launched its new online look, we hope we've matured enough that readers in 2040 won't be smirking—too much—at how we were in 2017. *The Voice* intends to stick around to be the future's blast from *Voices* past.

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



Fly on the Wall Possessed by Language!

Jason Sullivan



A Furtive Glance Through an Existential House of Horrors.

A nightmare scene: our vibrant student minds reduced to a brainless blob! Who cast this malevolent spell? Perhaps it was nefarious alchemy wrought by the linguist Ferdinand de Saussure who stated with slitting simplicity that, prior to language, “*thought is merely a vague shapeless mass*” (de Saussure in Allan, 316). Language possesses us and subjects us to its means of expression. We see and become ourselves within the limitations of our cultural purview. What's more, even when *we* form our thoughts into words, we are separate from

our *selves*, whose being was doing the original thinking. It's as though language parasitizes our thought like alien spores. Scary stuff, given we usually believe that we think and speak for ourselves.

Our minds can be a spooky wood to traverse. This much we know when we consider *what we are thinking* apart from *we who are doing the thinking*. Jacques Derrida agrees with de Saussure that language structures our thought because language is written into us like programming: our cultural means of expression inscribe themselves upon us like a series of ritualistic tattoos. (Cue creepy children's voices singing 'a,b,c,d,e,f,g...')

Every thought that becomes words is, in this sense, *text*; for Derrida the spoken word is reducible to the written word because language is inscribed into our minds as though we were a living blackboard. Meaning is imposed upon us from without while any true meanings remain forever displaced, leaving only a trace, as the absence of one meaning leaves behind a ghostly residue so that another meaning may appear in turn. This is because each word gets its definition by its difference (for Derrida *differance*) from all other words; thus, any final meaning or *original referent* is displaced off into infinity (Allan, Pp. 317-318). “In the final analysis, language is meaningless because meaning is based on deference, not difference” (Allan, 321). An utterance attains meaning only by temporarily holding at bay, or deferring, all other meanings so it may imagine a space for itself.

Meaning thus remains fleeting, a haunting—that which is present, yet not. And we can never know who or what we are prior to, yet outside of language we are reduced to a quivering mass of shadowy uncertainty and sibylline incoherence. The very language that allows us to express ourselves insidiously functions to immure our thoughts within its bounds, such that creativity may merely be an illusion that, in reality, produces evermore conformity. “Language by its nature is writing, a violent inscribing of other. Signs and words carry reference to other signs and words. They quietly, surely,

and simply imply one another.” (Allan, 320) We are trapped in a labyrinth; language is our only way to make verbal sense of the world.

Like repressed evil forces about to spring forth following the proper incantation, the absent other meanings of a word like *truth* are the very means by which the term attains its meaning. Truth needs falsehood for its visage to appear; without these external definers truth washes away as the tide of reality floods ashore. Truth is everywhere and nowhere like a ghost. And everyone knows a ghost can never be killed because it is already dead.

So too with *identity*. In his analysis of Byron Defoe's 'Robinson Crusoe', Derrida describes the human, all too human, fear of being buried alive. A lack of certainty about *who one is* may produce existential fear the more one investigates the fragility of selfhood. It's like being stalked by a dark pursuer. As with words defined by their difference from other words, our identity is defined by the absence of other identities. These Others are necessary to create a wraith of self amidst the ruins of denied Otherness within oneself; for a stable identity to occur we must *be* who we believe we are without too many internal contradictions. If this spooky chorus of possible selves met the light of day of our consciousness we could be overtaken by a fear that our stable self was being submerged:

“Robinson Crusoe's fundamental fear, the fundamental, foundational fear, the basic fear from which all other fears are derived and around which everything is organized, is the fear of going to the bottom, precisely, of being “swallow'd up alive”...of sinking alive to the bottom, of sinking and being dragged down to the depths, as much because of an earthquake as because of wild or savage beasts, or even because of human cannibals.” (Derrida, P. 122).

At bottom there are held back forces of destruction: everything we imagine ourselves *not to be* when we speak of what and who we *are*. We assume that we have a self as we assume that language reflects reality. Yet, as Kenneth Allan notes:

“There is no center. By a quirk of logic, there never has been a center. Everything that humans have tried to use as a center for their systems of knowing actually exists outside the system. And something that exists outside of a system by definition cannot be within the system, let alone its center.” (Allan, 321). If we aren't the centre of ourselves then are we in the belly of the beast of language?

AU-thentic Events

Upcoming AU Related Events

Get pumped about peer-review!

Tues, October 31, 2:00 to 3:00 pm
MDT

Online

Hosted by AU Faculty of Graduate Studies

fgs.athabascau.ca/news/presentations/
e-mail fgs@athabascau.ca with your student number to register

BComm/CPA Info Session

Wed, November 1, 5:00 to 6:00 pm
MDT

Online

Hosted by AU Faculty of Business

business.athabascau.ca/event-details/bcomm-cpa-information-session-4-2/

register online at above link

AU Open House & Info Session

Thurs, November 2, 10:00 to 11:00 am
MDT

Online

Hosted by Athabasca University

www.athabascau.ca/discover/open-house/

register online at above address

second session: Thursday, November 2, 6:00 to 7:00 pm MDT

Facebook Live Event

Thurs, November 2, 5:00 to 5:30 pm
MDT

Online

Hosted by AUSU

www.ausu.org/event/facebook-live-event-3/

no pre-registration required

Language threatens to devour us as we assume personages and identities: the mask of difference from others that we don to attain selfhood is easily sheared away. For Louis Althusser: "it is impossible to access the "Real conditions of existence" due to our reliance on language...we are always within ideology because of our reliance on language to establish our "reality"; different ideologies are but different representations of our social and imaginary reality" not a representation of the Real itself...the thing ideology (mis)represents is itself already at one remove from the real." (Althusser in Felluga, online). Thinking we have a stable identity is not the same as being what we are, whatever that may be. Ideology spawns a reality to suit its image.

When we seek for ourselves we are really looking outside ourselves from a place of self. This circular inward gaze from a hypothetical *outside* could be akin to being possessed by a demon chasing her own tail. The presence of some self-defining traits requires the absence of other traits and it is these soft boundaries between self and other, whose permeability is far truer than any apparent demarcations, that are all that holds us in place in our mental world and the ogres of madness cordoned off in another. We risk burial alive if we do not hold onto our fictitious sense of self; Hallowe'en is a rare opportunity to embrace plurality and play in this sense. We can, for a day, *be* whatever and whomever we wish.

Hallowe'en provides a rare occasion for the realization of the fact that reality is constructed *discursively* by ideologies to legitimize their own existence. The punk band the Dead Kennedys, in a song titled *Hallowe'en* once sang:

"You're dressed up like a clown/
Putting on your act/
It's the only time all year you'll ever admit that"
(Dead Kennedys, online).

The grim certainty of the Hallowe'en masquerade is that it unmask the reality that life itself, and the language we use to identify ourselves and others, are performances that conceal the sordid truth that, behind our masks of words, behind our costumes of culture, our essential being remains shackled to the extent that words and expressions fall short of the original meaning our spirit intended. "As soon as the music leaves your head it's already compromised", claimed the rock critic Jack Brewer, and the dark truth may be that as soon as we express ourselves we devolve away from the very selves we seek to illustrate. This process of expression through socially acceptable channels implies repression; Herbert Marcuse in his 1962 book 'One Dimensional Man' termed this *repressive desublimation* (Ceasefire Magazine, online).

Perhaps the most authentic zombies are we who realize just how mindless we are by the very fact that *we* are aware of our own *minds* and that there is space between the two. Reflecting on our own thoughts

More AU-thentic Events

Business Undergrad Info Session

Thurs, November 2, 5:00 to 6:00 pm
MDT

Online

Hosted by AU Faculty of Business

business.athabascau.ca/event-details/business-undergraduate-information-session3/

register online at above link

The Research Itinerary Series - Session 2

Thurs, November 2, 6:00 to 7:00 pm
MDT

Online

Hosted by AU Faculty of Graduate Studies

fgs.athabascau.ca/news/presentations/

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

Doctorate in Business Administration (DBA) Info Session

Fri, November 3, 5:00 to 6:00 pm
MDT

Online

Hosted by AU Faculty of Business

business.athabascau.ca/event-details/doctorate-business-administration-dba-information-session-7/

register online at above link

reveals the distance between the *I* and the *me* and the terrifying-yet-delightful difficulty in creating for ourselves the perfect existential costume that reflects the inexpressible.

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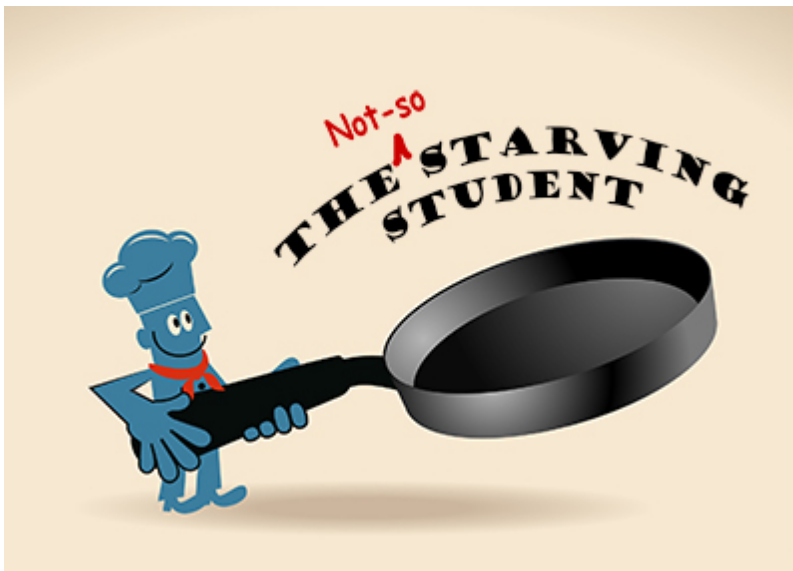
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Jason Hazel-rah Sullivan is a Masters of Integrated Studies student who loves engaging in discourse while working in the sunny orchards and forests of the Okanagan.



The Not-So Starving Student Spooky Cocktails

Xin Xu



Halloween simply isn't complete without its share of themed food and drink items. But if you're a busy AU student, the time-consuming preparation that goes into making delicious and artistic Halloween food cameos almost feels like a trick rather than a treat. To help you cater to your spooktacular house guests, or perhaps stimulate your taste buds at the minibar, we've compiled a list of themed drinks (alcoholic and non-alcoholic) that are sure to impress and simple to prepare.

Morgue-a-rita

This infamous drink is sure to set the mood for your festivities. The cocktail mix can be purchased from most supermarkets. Tequila or orange liqueur can be added to your liking. The second step allows you to get creative with food coloring. To create the spine-chilling slime, whisk some corn syrup and green coloring together and drizzle down the sides of your glass. Lastly, watch your guests slowly gravitate towards this irresistible delight.

Non-alcoholic option: purchase margarita mix without adding the booze

Prep time: 8 minutes



Strawberry Die-quiri:



If you're like me you're dying to serve these to your valued guests. This strawberry daiquiri can be made in under five minutes while the haunting decor can accomplish on your study break. Use a latex glove, as shown, to fill with water and food-coloring (optional) and throw it in your freezer.



Before you open your door for the guests, throw the frozen palms into your daiquiri for a simple way to entertain. It will be sure to break the ice.

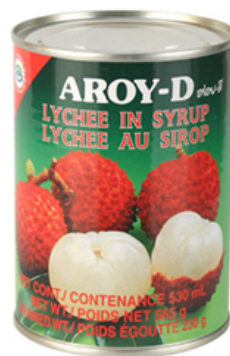
Non-alcoholic option: purchase the daiquiri mix without adding the booze

Prep time: 5 minutes (overnight with frozen palm)

H(eye) ball



For the perfect way to sculpt your eyeballs, purchase a can of lychee found in the ethnic aisle of most supermarkets and some wine or red grapes (another option is to use olives). Then stuff the grapes into the softened lychee to create the pupil of each eyeball. Finally, to concoct your high-ball, mix whisky, club soda and ice cubes.



Nonalcoholic option: replace whisky with any of your favorite soft drinks

Prep time: 15 minutes

Brewy Mary



It's nothing new and there are no gimmicks with Mary or this drink. Just get standard Bloody Mary mix and follow the instructions. Instead you're simply changing the presentation. Have empty baby food jars lying around? Or perhaps a mason jar? Use those to get creative with this effortless beverage. For a more boo-zy option, try adding vodka into the cocktail mix. For optional garnish, try using a single stalk of celery to mimic the stirring stick of a cauldron.

Non-alcoholic option: there's no need to purchase the flavor mix if you can use the healthier option of tomato or clamato juice.

Prep time: 3 minutes

Pina Boo-lada

This drink is an instant crowd-magnet. The creamy, coconut and sugary flavors take you back to a tropical beach, or graveyard in our case. Start with some pina colada mix, white rum, coconut milk and pineapple juice. The best part is that you can skip the fruity garnishes and get creative with corn syrup again. This time mix red food coloring with corn syrup and drizzle along the sides of your glass. Serve chilled.

Non-alcoholic option: to achieve the pina colada taste use the premade mixture. However if you're looking for healthier options, coconut milk and pineapple juice still creates a thick delicious texture

Prep time: 5 minutes to prep (60 minutes to chill)



As always, drink responsibly. A message from the ghoul-vernment of Canada.

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



In Conversation ..with Sierra Blanca

Wanda Waterman



changed since 2000.

Sierra Blanca is a multi-instrumentalist indie/folk artist who divides his time between Nashville, Tennessee, and El Paso, Texas. His music displays many influences and his lyrics manifest a deep disappointment in the current political climate in the USA. He's now working on an EP called Honorable Mention, due for release on the 10th of November, and has released two early tracks, "Paint the Road", which you can listen to [here](#), and "Book" which can be heard [here](#). Blanca recently took the time to talk to us about the new album, his work ethic, and how the experience of musicmaking has

Describe your musical background. What role did music play in your childhood?

My family was part of a missionary group in Mexico, and I played keys as part of the worship group. I spent a lot of time messing with new instruments and learning to play!

What was your most amazing musical experience?

There's been a couple, but one of them would have to be an open jam at The Prophet bar in Dallas, TX. There were just some of the most talented musicians there that were able to improvise at a level I hadn't experienced as a young musician. Great memories.

How do you go about writing lyrics?

I usually write vocal melodies in my head, and the lyrics come next. It's a mixture of just sitting down and deciding roughly what feel the song gives me and fitting words into the melodies, changing things as I go.

If you had to give your music a genre, what would you call it?

Probably something along the lines of Americana/soul.

Which instruments can you play?

I play guitar, keyboard, bass, and drums. I played flute in elementary school, but not sure if I'd still be able to do it justice, haha.

What lead you to write "Paint the Road?"

It actually came about parallel to an idea for a video I had. I wanted to write something that embodied my recent experience in traveling, creating new relationships, and just changes in life. I ended up filming a video for it as I traveled from Nashville to El Paso.

What do you like best about *Honorable Mention* so far?

I like that it's probably the most heartfelt piece of work I've written, speaking lyrically. It's also my first release in a phase of my life where I'm dedicating more of my time and resources to music.

I usually try to be efficient in the studio, so I did it in about a week and spent most of the day laying down tracks and reworking stuff as needed. It's always a good time watching the music come to life in places other than my living room!

What life conditions do you require to come up with new music?

Most of my ideas come along when I'm just sitting at home playing guitar or keys, so I guess as long as I have the time to just relax and express my day through music, I'll keep writing music.

Which city is more musically inspiring for you, El Paso or Nashville, and why?

I would say they both have had an influence in one way or another. El Paso is home and is where I've written most of my music. I have a lot of great memories there and have had life experiences that I'm sure show up in my music one way or another. Nashville is sort of a different world. There's a ton of talent here that inspires me to push the limits a bit. Nashville is also a different musical hustle than El Paso. I've learned a lot about the business here.

What do you feed your muse?

There's a pretty big list of albums that I'm sure have influenced the direction of my music. I would say just the love of playing and recording music is the biggest drive, though. I can close myself in a room for hours just writing and composing music and blocking out the world.

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

To keep writing and playing for as long as I can. I try to just put music out there and hopefully it's something other people can relate to.

In your opinion, how have the experiences of hearing and making music changed since the year 2000?

I think developing and growing as a musician definitely changes your perspective when listening to music in general. My tastes in music since I was a kid have changed like crazy, and still do to this day. Making music is probably a lot easier than it was back then, since we have a good bit of technology to allow us to do a good deal of stuff in our own home for a decent price. It's nice!

What will you be doing after the album's release?

Playing more, writing more. I'm hoping to start the recording process on a full-length release at the beginning of 2018.

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



Canadian Science News

Scott Jacobsen



U of A Funding Boost for Science

Global News: Science said, "The federal government is investing nearly \$24 million towards research equipment at the University of Alberta. On Thursday, the government announced \$23.8 million in funding."

These projects to be developed may lead to "ground-breaking results" in adapting forests to climate change and looking into heart failure as well as the research in dark matter.

Amarjeet Sohi, the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities, stated that it was an honour to support the impressive research projects.

Sohi noted that science can push the forefront of discovery and innovation.

The University of Alberta is "part of more than \$554 million going towards 117 new infrastructure projects at 61 post-secondary institutions."

Aurora Borealis in the Skies

CBC News: Technology and Science stated that there is a "fast-moving stream of particles is being spewed out from the sun, and it could produce a light show here on Earth."

Natural Resources Canada and the U.S. Space Weather Prediction Center (SWPC) have been forecasting particle streams being the potential cause of a geomagnetic storm. This will mean the potential showing of the northern lights.

When the particles come to the earth, they interact with the magnetic field for the creation of colours seen as the northern lights or the aurora borealis. "The SWPC has issued a minor geomagnetic storm watch...That means there is a chance to see the aurora across the entire country," CBC News: Technology and Science said.

Big Icebreaker Arriving in Victoria, B.C., Harbour

CTV News reported on the arrival of a massive ice breaker, named Polar Prince, in a Victoria, B.C. harbour. It is coming to the final parts of a 150-day trip around the Canadian coastline from Toronto to Victoria.

The trip via the Northwest Passage went along with the 150th birthday celebrations of Canada. Geoff Green, Expedition Leader for Canada C3, said that the celebrations are only a primer.

Green said, "It's been a journey to help us look at our past, present, and future; learn a lot about this country, its successes and its flaws; and to look ahead to how we can be better...I leave this 150-day journey with a great sense of great optimism, hope and potential for Canada in the next 150 years."

Potential Solution for Climate Funding Crisis

"The Climate Change and Atmospheric Research program (CCAR), which supports seven independent projects in climate science, is due to run out [of funding] at the end of the year," according to the National Observer, "to the dismay of countless scientists, advocacy groups and environmentalists."

PEARL, or the Polar Environment Atmospheric Research Laboratory, is one Arctic lab that studies the changes in the atmosphere. New Chief Science Advisor, Mona Nemer, said, "My understanding is that a solution [for both] is actually in the works, and things are on track and the community will be pleased."

The solution is proposed to be involving the climate fund and initiatives such as PEARL. Nemer is looking at collaboration with granting councils for supporting the major infrastructure and big networks in Canada for major science projects.

Minister of Science, Kirsty Duncan, is looking for "other avenues of support" as well. Katie Gibbs, the Executive Director for Evidence for Democracy, which is an Ottawa-based group devoted and dedicated to evidence-based decision-making, said, "Thousands of Canadians have contacted the science minister about PEARL and climate science funding over the last month."

Scientists Have 15 Whale Deaths on Their Minds

"The focus of this year's annual meeting of North Atlantic right whale researchers has been altered in light of 15 of the critically endangered marine mammals being found dead this year in waters off eastern Canada and the U.S.," according to CBC News: Nova Scotia.

The North Atlantic Right Whale Consortium has a goal of looking into a "mortality crisis." There is a serious set of risks to the whale population with those who study the animal for decades. Kim Davies, a post-doctoral fellow at Dalhousie University in the Department of Oceanography, described the focus on communicating the science and risks to right whales.

Davies was not surprised about a recent death report. It showed that four whales died based on collisions with ships. Another two died from entanglement with fishing gear. Fishermen, Indigenous peoples, large-vessel operators, and scientists will meet in Moncton, New Brunswick to work to reduce the total number of deaths to right whales.

Moir Brown, whale biologist, said, "That's what's key ... getting all the stakeholders in the room...Not just the scientists and the managers, but vessel operators and the fisherman — let's share information."

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

The Fit Student

Double-Double Trouble

Marie Well



Do you want to control your emotions? To suck back tears and never moan? To stop scuffs that break out while ordering McDonald's double-doubles?

Well, I'd love to seem smooth and suave—like Audrey Hepburn. So, I Googled royal etiquette: cross legs at the ankles, fold hands on lap, lift chin parallel to the floor, and smile. Oh, and carry a clutch.

Wait, a clutch?

I can't carry a clutch, I carry luggage. I bust laptop bags with books. I jam-pack backpacks with gym clothes. To me, a clutch is like stuffing Jack Black in a speedo. Doesn't fit and doesn't float.

For me, suave's far-stretched, so I'll strive for even-keel. Sadly, I'm rife with giggles and redehyes. I'd bawl in my cubicle while swaying to Hindi love songs. That is, until my fed-up boss offered me the corner office. And not long ago, I coiled in an X-ray waiting room when a leathery woman sized me up and croaked, "You've got a nervous laugh."

I'd love to act as even keel as Papa. His toes twirl while his voice gently cracks as he takes frantic calls during blizzards. His eyes blink once or twice as he clicks the channel when his missus yells. Nothing phases Papa. I'm no Papa—but I'm calm. When Papa's missus curses me, I let a nervous giggle.

So, how do we manage emotions? Begin by second-guessing assumption. Focus instead on facts. For instance, if I think drunk McDonald's patrons drive away sales, that's an assumption. But if a drunk McDonald's patron growls, "Hooker!" and chases me out the golden arches, then I've made my case: I balked on a dollar double-double.

Authors Dennis Greenberger and Christine A. Padesky tell how to control your thoughts and moods in their book *Mind Over Mood: Change How You Feel by Changing the Way You Think*.

- One thought can shape your life.
- So, check your thoughts: "Identify what you are thinking and to check out the accuracy of your thoughts before acting" (pp. 16-17).
- Why? Because faulty thoughts spur bad behaviors: "Our thoughts about an event or experience powerfully affects our emotional, behavioral, and physical responses to it" (p. 2).
- And helpful thoughts groom great outcomes: "Our thoughts and behaviors are usually closely connected. For example, we are more likely to try to do something if we believe it is possible" (p. 18).
- Beware automatic thoughts: "Automatic thoughts' ... simply pop into our heads automatically throughout the day" (p. 52).

- Why beware automatic thoughts? Because our automatic thoughts can lead us to act in strange ways: “Thoughts often occur rapidly, automatically, and just out of our awareness. We sometimes act out of habit, and the original thoughts that led to these habits have been forgotten” (p. 19) ...
- ... which means “You will notice times when you ... experience a mood that doesn’t seem to fit the situation” (p. 50). In other words, you’ll act odd and unreasonable without knowing why.
- So, stop faulty thinking by focusing on facts and not interpretations: “‘Facts’ are generally things that everyone would agree on in a situation ... ‘Interpretations’ are things people looking at the same situation might disagree about” (p. 72).

Not all drunkards at McDonald’s brawl. Yet, a wild-eyed McDonald’s stray rapped loudly on my window as I waited alone in the car. Shocked, I looked away. Haunted, I later discovered the media nicknamed that location “McCrack’s.”

So, here’s a mindbender: How many facts does it take to avoid double-double trouble?



Scholarship of the Week

Digging up scholarship treasure for AU students.

Scholarship name: UpNature Scholarship for Nursing & Medicine Students

Sponsored by: UpNature

Deadline: November 30, 2017

Potential payout: \$1000

Eligibility restriction: Applicants must be at least 18 years of age, be a citizen of Canada, US, or Australia, be enrolled in an academic program in nursing, medicine, or related fields, and have a GPA of at least 3.0. See full [eligibility requirements](#).

What's required: A completed online [application form](#), with a maximum 500-word essay on your career aspirations and how you plan to contribute to your chosen field.

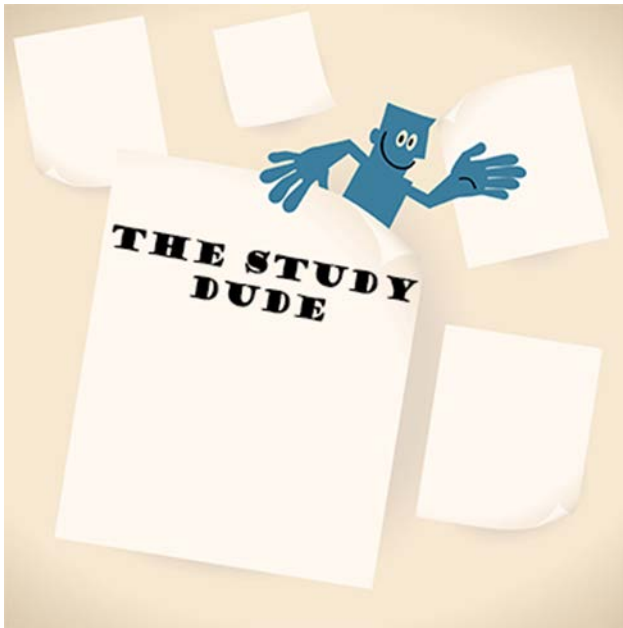
Tips: You can add photos, videos, or other items to your application to spice it up.

Where to get info: www.up-nature.com/pages/scholarship-nursing-medicine-students



The Study Dude Word Lust

Marie Well



Grab a grand vocab—and romance it.

I made a file of delightful words I named “Wordlist.” But crazy spellcheck named it “Wordlust.” Perfect, I thought—a play on love for words.

My vocabulary shriveled. So, I stared down a dictionary nightly. I learned that words have multiple meanings that don’t mix or make sense. And whenever I read nonfiction, I jotted big words onto blank pages. I plugged these words into Dictionary.com, crafting vocabulary cue cards for online viewers.

Today, I access humankind’s best voice-recognition software for vocabulary: Cuddles. Ask Cuddles any word, and he drums up spitfire synonyms and definitions. And he’s one handsome volume.

I love words that purse the lips—words like “sparkly perfection” (Barbara Baig, 2015). So, I bought a rhyming dictionary for lines begging for song. I also notice traits like onomatopoeia—the “b” that bubbles on your lips, the “f” that curses under your breath, the “s” that slithers off your tongue. Play with sounds like they’re Slurpee cups in the Sahara Desert.

Weave your own word-lust into wonderful tales. Question the art, too: What’s a twist on words? Well, a double-entendre, for one. (A double-entendre is a word with two meanings, like “sharp” as in “further down the dark side-street stumbled a man dressed sharp.”) And how do you zing a line’s last word? End with a word containing a funny, abrupt sound, like *k*, *b*, *d*, *p*, *t*, or *g*. Or end with a concrete word, something you can sense, like “heartthrob.”

And bust through writer’s heartaches. My woes? I skinny-down sentences to skeletons. I fail to flow time-transitions between the now’s and then’s. I fear reading classics will suck away my soul. But if I keep reading on writing, I’ll surely make the changes.

Barbara Baig says make your own “word hoard,” which I call “word-lust”: a list of words you love. She shows how in her book *Spellbinding Sentences: A Writer’s Guide to Achieving Excellence and Captivating Readers*:

- Words create magic. They move the world to action. They paint pictures. They touch hearts. So, play with words like magic wands.
- You have your own word hoard. I have mine. Strengthen that hoard through exercises.
- First, start freewriting random words that come to mind. Repeat words when stuck. Checkmark the words that taste like tongue syrup. Write them in your word-lust.
- By freewriting, you “wake up your word mind, opening up and lubricating the mental channels through which words flow” (p. 37)
- When you see sparkly words you don’t use, use them. Say them, write poems with them, but mostly, play with them like clay.
- Second, take any subject and write down its jargon. Jargon makes great metaphors, but don’t confuse readers with words like “iron butterfly” or “short strike.”

- Third, take any person, place, or event in your life and write related words.
- Fourth, write down heart-tugging words said by friends. Tuck them in your word hoard.

As a final tip, change your face by changing your words. If you want to blow kisses, use pucker-up words with *b*'s, *p*'s, or *m*'s. If you want to spark fear, use frown words with *f*'s or *v*'s or *n*'s. If you want to smile lots, use grin words with *k*'s and *g*'s and long *e*'s. Maybe that's why *k* is the funniest letter of the alphabet: it leaves you with a smile.



Canadian Education News

Scott Jacobsen



Math Mental Health Funding Boost for Students

"Post-secondary students in Alberta will be able to better access mental health services thanks to a three year grant from the province," the Daily Herald Tribune said. There was an announcement made at Grande Prairie Regional College (GPRC) by Minister of Advanced Education Marlin Schmidt.

GPRC President and CEO, Don Gnatiuk, described the announcement as having direct and positive impacts on the lives of students. GPRC will get \$675,000 for three years. An additional \$40,000 was announced for Indigenous students at GPRC for access to mental health projects.

Schmidt noted that he wants all students at GPRC to be able to access the mental health supports available to them, whether regarding "sexual harassment or assault, or...if you're struggling with addiction."

Saskatchewan Catholic System's Largest Expansion in Provincial History

According to the Catholic Register, after using the notwithstanding clause for the protection of Roman Catholic education school system in Saskatchewan, the Catholic system is undergoing its "largest expansion in the province's history."

Nine schools opened in the fall alone. Last April a court ruled that the province cannot fund non-Catholic students in the Catholic schools. Premier Brad Wall's government used the notwithstanding clause to disregard that ruling.

This overruled the court to affirm the presence and growth of Roman Catholic education in Saskatchewan. Chair of Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools, Diane Boyko, said, "Parents have made a decision to embrace Catholic education. That's the most important endorsement that we could have."

The Government of Saskatchewan paid for all nine Catholic schools.

Profiles of Alberta's Universities and Their Prices

The Globe and Mail listed some of the costs and student body sizes of some colleges and universities. The Alberta College of Art + Design costs \$5,570.98 for is tuition with a student body size of 1,197. The University of Alberta costs \$8,484.63 with a student body of 37,830.

Our own AU costs \$7,960 for out of province and \$6,670 for Alberta residents. The University of Calgary costs \$6,590 with a student body of 35,150. The University of Lethbridge tuition is \$6,137 with a student body of 8,468.

MacEwan University cost \$6,106 with a total student population of 17,824. And finally, Mount Royal, as another Alberta university, \$6,469.86 with a student body totalling 12,045.

Alberta Withdraws from Western College of Veterinary Medicine

Horse Canada stated, "The Western College of Veterinary Medicine (WCVN), jointly established by the four western provinces in 1963, is part of a world-class hub for animal and human health that is based at the University of Saskatchewan and provides high-quality research, education and clinical expertise to Western Canada."

Marlin Schmidt, the Alberta Minister of Advanced Education, made an announcement of the non-renewal of the contract with WCVN after 2020. The financial support comes to \$8 million per year. Tony Vannelli, the University of Saskatchewan Provost and Vice-President Academic, described disappointment in withdrawal from one long-term partner.

For the 2019-2020 academic year, the Province of Alberta' funding for new seats in veterinary medicine will be at the University of Calgary's Faculty of Veterinary Medicine (UCVM). This will stop students from being able to pursue a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine from WCVN.

Alberta's Top Honour to Two Calgarians (!)

The Calgary Herald said that Steve Allan and David Werklund, two Calgarians, will be receiving the highest honour in Alberta: Alberta Order of Excellence.

Allan is a chartered accountant and community volunteer. He described the order as "overwhelming and very humbling. Werklund said he is a "big believer in coaching and mentoring throughout wherever I've gone." Werklund is the founder and chairman of Tervita, which is an environment and energy services company.

He touched on being an employer as not only about making money, but also about making a positive impact in people's lives. Werklund has the University of Calgary faculty of education named after him, circa 2013, as the Werklund School of Education, after a donation to the department.

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

Women of Interest

Margaret Thatcher was born October 13, 1925, in Grantham, Lincolnshire, England and died April 8, 2013, in Westminster London. Thatcher was the longest-serving British prime minister and has been recognized as the most influential politician in British history. She was Prime Minister from May 4, 1979, to November 28, 1990. As a result of her uncompromising leadership style Thatcher was nicknamed "the Iron Lady," a name that became synonymous with her. Thatcher was educated in chemistry, although she always knew politics was her true calling. She served three terms as Prime Minister and resigned after Michel Heseltine launched a challenge to her leadership.

Additional information about Margaret Thatcher can be found at the following websites:

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

<https://www.margaretthatcher.org/essential/biography.asp>

<http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0857137/bio>

Student Sizzle — AU's Hot Social Media Topics

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



AthaU Facebook Group

Kimberly asks how student mothers stay organized when taking multiple courses; mothers and others respond with tips and tricks to get coursework—and everything else—done. Mícheál inquires whether anyone has managed to get into med school with a social science degree; responses indicate it's a long shot at best.

Other posts include Edmonton meet & greet, telephone quizzes, and love-it-or-hate it PHIL 252.

reddit

User "UndercoverHummus" seeks tips on a senior-level science course to complement his non-AU program.

Twitter

@AthabascaU tweets: "Announcement: The #AthaU First Nation Colleges Student Awards application deadline is next week. Apply today: <http://ow.ly/ja9330g61dJ>."

@AthabascaUSU (AUSU) tweets: "Want to learn how to use your new Office 365 program from AU? FREE training through <http://lynda.com> ! <http://bit.ly/1Qvg8pb>."

Vintage Voice

Unearthing classic articles from previous issues of *The Voice Magazine*.

2005: AU announces the advent of e-letters. This resource-friendly option allowed students to have their letters for course registration, withdrawal, exam, and grades, delivered through their myAU portal. "The process took more than a year, was worked on by eight staff members from the Registrar's Office and Computing Services, and the program was extensively tested by a number of volunteers." [AU E-Letters Are](#)

[Here!](#) December 16, 2005.

2010: In a move that likely sent shockwaves through the AU student community, AU announced that they had renamed the first field in the myAU login page from "User ID" to "AU Student/User ID". [Did You Know?](#) July 2, 2010.



Dealing with Writer's Block Effectively(ish)

Deanna Roney



There is a debate over whether or not writer's block is a thing. To which I say, "Of course it is," as I sit staring at a blank screen. The debate should not be whether or not it is a thing but what is the cause of it. Sometimes it is something simple, for fiction it could be you've written yourself into a corner and don't know how to get yourself out, leading to feeling blocked and unable to write. It could be as simple as deleting those words and starting over, getting out of the corner by simply removing the corner altogether. It could be a lack of inspiration or being distracted and unable to focus on the task at hand.

When it is the former it can just be a matter of buckling down and deleting all those words you spent so much time putting down. For the latter, however, the answer can be a bit more difficult. When our mind is distracted, or we are feeling uninspired, I find the best way to overcome it is to free-write. It can be as simple as not having a

topic for, say, an article, or an essay. The scope seems too large and the answer just won't come to you. If you put aside the thoughts of writing an article or writing an essay and just write, leaving all typos behind, then there is usually a grain within those words that will spark an idea and give you direction.

Pushing yourself to free-write isn't always that easy though. I find the longer I try to get words down without feeling like I am accomplishing something the more difficult it becomes. This generally leads me to something I have written about before: productive procrastination. I can't simply walk away and watch TV or read a book because I will be nagged with guilt that I should be working. So, I do the next best thing, clean something that has been avoided for too long, maybe even treat some leather boots that I have been thinking could probably use it since I bought them a year ago.

It is a bit amusing, the number of things I can find "that need to be done" when I should be working on something else. While this form of guilt-free procrastination can be beneficial to other aspects of my life it does not help me get anything accomplished on the work end, which is what I should be focusing on and not rubbing this wax into these boots.

Walking away can help, but this isn't always an option, there are deadlines, whether real or self-imposed, and things need to get done. We could clean all day but that paper still needs to be written. So if you need to walk away a better way to do it is to go and make yourself a cup of coffee/tea and come back to a fresh screen and write. It doesn't matter what it is, just let the words hit the screen in whatever fashion they take. Odds are that once the words start to flow there will be a grain of inspiration, an idea, that will hit you and then you can take that and start the project that needs your attention the most.

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

Thanksgiving Unwelcome

Dear Barb:

Well another Thanksgiving ruined because of my sister! My sister is divorced with two kids who live with her full time. For the last three Thanksgivings she has brought a different guy and his kids, to our family dinner. She hardly knows these guys, so everyone feels uncomfortable. The guy she brought this year had three kids and two were in their early teens. The youngest one was running through the house making a mess and not listening to anyone and his father was totally ignoring him. My sister tried to get the boy to listen, but he completely disregarded what she said. Even mom stepped in and tried to control him, to no avail. Meanwhile the teenagers were on their phones for the most part, except when I caught the older one smoking weed outside. I laid into him about doing something illegal at my mom's house. At least he listened to me. We don't know what to do about this. My brother and I want my sister and her kids to share family events, but why does she always have to bring these guys, that she hardly knows, plus their kids. Do you have any suggestions on how we could handle this without my sister becoming angry and not showing up? She is a very reactive person. Thanks, Nicole.

Hi Nicole:

Sorry to hear about your Thanksgiving, but I think this happens more often than most people realize, especially as people are now having multiple marriages and blended families. Maybe it's time to begin some new family traditions. For example, drag out some old games and get

everyone involved. Get outside and throw a ball around, or go for a hike. Get the kids to burn off some energy while creating a fun day they will remember. This will give mom time to tend to the dinner, or if mom wants to join in the fun, get someone else to peel the potatoes, or just leave the potatoes for a few minutes, while everyone goes for a hike. Kids always function better in a structured environment. Also participating in these activities will give everyone an opportunity to get to know each other. You and your brother could also suggest to your sister that she not bring anyone over until she knows them a little better. Discuss with her how the situation is uncomfortable for everyone. You will have to be careful how to approach this with your sister, as she may get her back up and decide she is not going to attend. You and your brother should have a pretty good idea how your sister will react, therefore carefully consider how you want to proceed. The answer may be to simply keep everyone busy, therefore the tension will be kept at a minimum. Thanks for your great letter

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:

Quebec's New Face-Covering Law

You know, we might be better served by a law that makes people wear clothes on the metro.

With an addendum that stops couples from publicly groping and dry-humping each other.



Wade Watson



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 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](#)
- **Dec 8:** [Deadline to register in a course starting Jan 1](#)
- **Dec 12:** [AUSU Council Meeting](#)

Eyewear Savings

AUSU has partnered with FYidoctors to bring some great eyewear savings to our membership. FYidoctors has over 300 locations across Canada and growing.

Discounts include:

- Select brand name frames starting at \$200
- Everyday value packages starting at \$159
- 20% off upgrades, lenses, and non-scrip sunglasses
- 10% off contacts

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



AUSU Course Evaluations

Have you finished any courses in the past year? We encourage all undergraduate students to fill out an [AUSU course evaluation](#) online after every course!

Although your evaluation is confidential, the results are compiled and available online [here](#). This information can help students choose their courses, so the more evaluations are completed, the more useful this resource becomes!

Fill out a course evaluation online [here](#).



Awards & Bursaries – Deadline Nov 1

Only a few days left to apply for AUSU's November cycle awards and bursaries!

Find out more or apply online [here](#).



AUSU Career Resources

Looking for a job? Need help creating a resume or preparing for interviews?

Want to find out what career fairs are coming up in your province?

AUSU's [Career Resources](#) can help.



CLASSIFIEDS

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

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