

THE VOICE

Vol 26 Issue 03 2018-01-19

Minds We Meet

Interviewing Students Like You!

The Bank of You

Lend a Hand.

Mary's Story

A Final Chapter

Plus:

Letter to the Editor

Not a New Years' Resolution
and much more!



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The Voice Magazine

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View and articles presented
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 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.
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 all on auto.

Volume 25, Issue 43

© 2017 by The Voice
 Magazine

ISSN 2561-3634

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Dear Editor;

Hi, I just wanted to give a point of feedback on the professor who wrote that nursing assistants are using AU and doing psych 290 to upgrade to rn; we are not nurse assistants. We are licensed practical nurses and professionals in our own right already, practicing within our own scope and with our own responsibilities.

And I for one am very proud of that.

I am not a nurse assistant. I am a Nurse.

Kind regards, Debbie Q., proud LPN.

(It's always good to avoid generalizations -Ed.)

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

A Promethean Editorial

Karl Low



It might be overselling it a bit, but I'm going to be stealing a little bit of the fire from my betters this week, hence the article title.

The fire I'm going to steal is from the upcoming Council Connection. You may have heard from some shady sources that AUSU Council was planning on raising their fees. The first reading of the fee increase motion came forward at the last AUSU Council meeting, and it would have needed five votes of the seven people present to pass.

It didn't receive them. It wasn't even close.

When the vote was called, only two councillors voted in favor of the fee increase, and five voted against. Councillors on AUSU were reluctant to vote in such a large increase right now though there was general agreement that a fee increase would very likely be needed and some point in the not-too-distant future. But there were concerns that AUSU does not yet have enough information about other sources of an expected increase in revenue, or a defined plan for the excess money the fee would bring in.

Even more surprising, two student observers were present at the AUSU Council meeting (no, that's not the surprising bit. I mean, okay, it is, but that's not what I meant) and, in the Q&A period following the meeting, both voiced their support *for* the fee increase. Welcome to AU folks, where students are good with paying higher student association fees, but the student council that gets those fees votes against it. As if we needed any more proof that AU is unique.

More information about this (including who voted which way), and everything else that went on the meeting, will be able to be found in our Council Connection report, hopefully available next week.

Meanwhile, this week, our feature article is a student interview, where we speak with an AU student in the Criminal Justice program who has an eye set toward law school—if she ever stops being a student.

We also have a continuation of one of the articles that made Best of the Voice several years ago. Barb Godin revisits her special sister with a final chapter to the story, a chapter that's no different in how it pulls on your emotions.

This week also has a continuation of the theme of a new year bringing change in various aspects, from Barbara Lehtiniemi's look at a new way of helping people, to Hazel Anaka's new view of choosing your word of the year, through Deanna Roney's preparation for a new experience in pursuing her graduate degree.

And of course, we round that off with a selection of columns and other interesting articles, events, news, reviews, advice, and, just to keep things light, a look at the reality of how the truth really is what you make. Even though that reality is, like all truth, what you make it. You'll understand once you've read the latest installment of *The Fly on the Wall*. Enjoy the read!



MINDS WE MEET



Sinead Hickman is originally from Whitehorse, Yukon, but moved to Alberta as a teenager. She currently resides in Red Deer with her two young children and her husband whom she credits for allowing her to achieve her educational goals. She has been an AU student off and on for the past decade and is in her final courses toward her degree in Criminal Justice.

Why did you choose to study at AU?

I finished my policing diploma from Lethbridge College and was hired with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) right away. I wanted to continue my education and Athabasca accepted my full two years towards my current degree.

What courses have you completed so far that you would recommend to other students?

I *loved* Ethical Decision Making in Law Enforcement (CRJS 490) and Victims of Crime (CRJS 352). Those two are by far my favourites.

I know you mentioned being a student on and off for the last ten years at AU, what are the improvements you have noticed as you work through your courses?

I have noticed that I learned how to take notes and study more efficiently. I used to copy out so much more than I needed to. Now it's highlighting and rewriting just the minimum.

What are your academic goals for 2018?

I hope to graduate! Finishing my classes with the highest marks possible early in the year and graduating would make this a perfect 2018. I would LOVE to hang my degree on the wall before Christmas.

What are you hoping to do with your education from AU?

I am hoping to get a promotion within the RCMP. I am also hoping to go on to a Master's program in Criminology and maybe law school after that.

What is one thing on your bucket list that you would like to complete in 2018?

I would love to take a road trip to Victoria with my husband and kids to meet my half-sister. We speak often, but we just recently reconnected so I haven't meet here.

If you were to get a tattoo to symbolize your life, what would it be?

It would be my children's names in some sort of cool design.

What was your favorite memory from 2017?

Having my son. He is nine months old now.

What is it like to juggle two young children with school?

Hard! I couldn't manage both school and family without my husband. He has supported and sacrificed so much for me to be able to follow my dreams. I couldn't ask for a better partner.

What is one thing you started doing in 2017 that you want to do more of in 2018?

I started walking more. We also started asking our daughter what her favourite part of each day was. It is nice to remember the good things that happen, even if your day was a little crummy.

Best movie you saw in 2017?

Star Wars: The Last Jedi.

What movie are you are excited to see in 2018?

A Wrinkle in Time

If you didn't have to worry about time or money, what would you be doing today?

I would forever be a student!! I love to learn and grow as a person. I honestly believe it is never too late in life to go back to school or start a new career. Life would be so boring without education and learning.

Laura Nelson is a marketing analyst by day and a bibliophile by night. She is in her final stages of completing her BA with a major in English through AU.

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

Is your call really important to them? Taking turns on both sides of the call centre desk.

Hang on to your scrotum. Busby LeClair reveals MegaLog Corp's sinister call centre strategy. "You will...be required to explain your question/concern/comment/complaint to a minimum of six obviously bored and uninterested employees in a variety of departments unrelated to your predicament, including corporate catering, janitorial services, and our Australian Outback office." [If Voice Mail Were Honest](#), November 4, 2005.

Hazel goes postal. Columnist Hazel Anaka seeks tech help but loses herself in the call centre maze of Telus. "I suspect these tech support people get more training in defusing angry customers, repeating the same scripted answers, and giving as little information as possible, than they do on actual tech stuff." [From Where I Sit - #@%\\$#@ Telus](#), April 28, 2006.

Mary's Story

Barb Godin



On July 22, 2017, my sister passed away. She was only thirteen months older than me. I wrote about Marion (Mary) in a previous issue of *The Voice Magazine*.

Mary and I spent part of our childhood together. She was my closest sibling, and I always felt we were a part of each other. I was connected to Mary in a way that I wasn't with my other siblings, or even my parents. We shared the pain of being born into a family where we felt totally unwanted and experienced abuse and neglect.

As teenagers, Mary and I were involved in a deadly car accident where a friend was killed. Mary sustained a traumatic brain injury and numerous other injuries including a broken leg and pelvis. My injuries were minimal. The brain injury changed Mary and our relationship forever. I tried many times over the years to reconnect with her but it was always strained. We grew more distant, only writing at Christmas or birthdays. We both married and had children, but our families hardly knew each other.

During the last five years of Mary's life things changed again and we began to talk more. I soon began to realize how ill Mary was, both physically and mentally. I was shocked to see the transformation from the last time I had seen her. She had no teeth, did not wear dentures, and was extremely thin. Her spine was twisted with osteoporosis, making it impossible for her to stand straight. She often lost her balance and fell, usually hitting her head.

My heart ached for Mary. I hated the pain she was living with and I wanted her life to be better. She weighed between 75 and 80 pounds and her diet consisted mainly of cheerios, peanut butter, diet coke and black coffee which she ordered from the neighborhood convenience store since they delivered. She slept 18 hours a day. If I called her before 7 or 8 in the evening she was in such a deep sleep that her phone would ring so long that the operator came on. Her mental state continued to deteriorate. She was irrational and suffered from temporal lobe seizures and rages.

The osteoporosis had been brought on because the medication she was taking for seizures had depleted her bones of calcium. It could have been prevented if her doctor had put her on calcium supplements, but neither Mary's doctor nor the pharmacist told her this was a side effect. In fact, the situation only came to the doctor's attention when our older sister took Mary for a doctor's appointment and mentioned the curvature in her back. She was sent for a bone density test and the diagnosis was made, and then she was prescribed calcium supplements. Mary took the medication, but she refused to accept that she had osteoporosis, nor would she agree to use a walker or cane to help with her balance.

Following a fall and a visit to the hospital, the hospital refused to discharge her unless she agreed to use a walker. She agreed, reluctantly, but two days after leaving the hospital she called the pharmacy and told them to pick up the walker, sitting outside her apartment door. I tried to

convince her to keep it but her response was "I'm only a year older than you and you don't have one."

Mary's mental illness was extremely frustrating. She saw everyone as a threat. She told me people were coming into her apartment and stealing her cigarettes and diet coke, and leaving notes for her that she would find posted on her fridge. I tried to explain to her that no one could get in with her door locked and the chain and knives across it. She was convinced we were trying to put her in a home, when, in reality, we were trying to get her some help to improve her life.

One evening, after we talked on the phone and had a good conversation, or so I thought, she reported me to the police. I was awakened at midnight to the sound of my phone ringing. The police officer on the other end of the line said he had received a complaint from Mary that I had been harassing her. She regularly blocked my number and I was not able to call her for months. Then, out of the blue, she would call and ask why I had blocked her. I was angry, frustrated, and almost ready to give up. During her lucid times we talked about the pain and betrayal we felt from being abandoned by our parents. We knew how each other felt and I made the decision to always be there for Mary. Every time I spoke to her, she asked me to tell her daughter that she loved her and I promised her that I would. At times I believed I was reaching her and that she was ready to accept help, but she never did.

I had not physically seen Mary for two years before her death, but I knew she was getting worse when she told me her physical symptoms. She described cuts and bruises she had gotten from falling and said that her fingers and toes were black. She said everything she ate went right through her and left her toilet full of blood. I feared for her and made her promise to tell her social worker. At times family members had contacted her doctor and social worker, but with the privacy laws, there was nothing anyone could do without Mary agreeing to accept help. I lived in another city a two-hour drive away and when we made plans to visit, she always cancelled. Eventually her children, grandchildren, and our other sister grew tired and frustrated from the abusive rages she'd direct toward them and they stopped contacting her.

The last time I talked to her was in June 2017, six weeks before she died. We had a great conversation and made plans for me to visit the next week. I went shopping and purchased a few items to bring for our visit. The day before the visit, I called and a recording came on: "this person is not accepting calls from you at the present time." I called on my cell phone and she seemed confused as to how I was able to call her. She cancelled our visit and banged the phone down. I decided to give it a few weeks and call her again, but that would never happen.

A couple of weeks later we went camping for the weekend. On Friday afternoon, after parking and setting up our camper, I received a call from Mary's social worker, Nadia. She said that Mary had been admitted to the hospital with pneumonia. Nadia said Mary was not doing well and she had lost more weight, and her mental and physical health were getting worse. She said that we needed to get together as a family and have Mary moved into an assisted living facility, because the hospital might decide to only release if she went into an assisted living facility. But if the hospital chose to release her on her own, our next step was to go before a judge and have her declared incapable of taking care of herself. We did not want to take Mary's independence away, but it seemed there was no other option as she was getting worse. We decided that if the hospital sent her home we would begin the legal proceeding immediately. On Saturday morning I called the hospital from the campground, hoping to be able to talk to Mary, but they said she had been discharged. I was surprised, but, in a way, I was relieved that they felt she was well enough to be released.

Two days later when I returned home Mary's social worker called and told me that Mary had passed away. I was confused and thought she must be mistaken. Nadia said the hospital had misinformed me and Mary had never been discharged, She died a few hours after being admitted as a result of the pneumonia. Mary had no one listed as next of kin; therefore no one was informed of her passing. She died all alone in a hospital bed with no one by her side. My heart broke for her having to spend the last minutes of life alone. I didn't want this horrible end for Mary. I wanted to be with her, to help her heal the pain. My chest felt tight, I did not want to breathe in this reality. My eyes burned with tears.

A part of me died that day with my sister. I think about her every day and wonder why she had to live such a tortured life. She was a menace to herself and the only people who could help her, let her down. Her doctors, social workers and family should have been able to save Mary from herself, but because of the mental health act, there was nothing anyone could do without her consent. Mary was never able to find peace while alive. Happiness came to her only in glimpses.

Barbara Godin is a graduate of AU and writes the "Dear Barb" column. She lives in London, Ontario with her husband and their two dogs.



The Bank of You

Barbara Lehtiniemi



Will 2018 be the year you make a difference in someone's life? Could you help someone lift themselves out of poverty, launch a small business, or complete their education?

Making a big impact is easier than you think.

In 2017 I invested in a Peruvian corn farm. On the same day, I invested in a livestock operation. Both agricultural enterprises were financed by loans I—along with others—made through Kiva.

Kiva is a non-profit organization that facilitates microloans to

impoverished people who do not qualify for conventional loans. Kiva connects borrowers with small-dollar lenders worldwide. Anyone with \$25 can start loaning money to people who seek to improve their lives and their communities. Kiva lenders pool small amounts—as little as \$25—to make larger loans with big impacts worldwide.

Founded in 2005, Kiva has facilitated over \$1 billion in loans. In 2017 alone, \$152 million in Kiva loans were made to 414,000 people, by 536,000 individual lenders. Lenders like me and other AU students.

I heard about Kiva from fellow AU student, Carla Knipe. Carla has made 17 loans through Kiva and plans to continue. Since 2010 Carla has helped women-run retail co-operatives, farmers, and

small businesses. "Kiva is kind of addictive," says Carla. "Once you start, you want to keep doing it."

Carla first heard about Kiva through her church. "The pastor was talking about tangible ways we could do good in the world, and he talked about his experiences with Kiva. I'd never heard of it before, and it really piqued my interest." Carla recognized that in Canada we live lives of relative abundance and what might be a small amount to us could make a big difference in someone else's life. "\$25 is not a huge amount of money when you think about it—a few posh coffees or fast food lunches. It's a really worthwhile cause, especially for people who don't normally donate to charity. You get your money back, so it's a donation you can make over and over again."

AU student Colleen Doucette also makes loans through Kiva. "I wanted to be able to help someone who wanted to build a stronger life for themselves and their families," says Colleen. "Someone who was a hard worker, someone who believed strongly in what they were doing and were dedicated to building a future for themselves and their families. And for only \$25 out of my pocket, it was peanuts—a no-brainer. So, the concept itself prompted me to make my first loan."

Colleen first heard about Kiva during Oprah's interview with Bill Clinton, who had written about Kiva in his book, *Giving: How Each of Us can Change the World*. Colleen made her first Kiva loan in 2007 and since then has made loans to 21 people. With only \$53 of her own money invested, Colleen uses the amounts repaid to her to re-lend to others, a total of \$523 so far.

The Kiva experience has been overwhelmingly positive for Colleen. "I love the fact that a whole group of people from around the world can pool \$25 each (or more!) to help someone else who's trying to build a life for themselves and their families. It's such a great concept! It's only a small bit of money on my part, but together, it makes a world of difference for someone who's struggling."

Getting started with Kiva is easy. Choose a borrower from among Kiva's lists of people seeking loans, make a payment through Kiva with PayPal or a credit card, then sit back and wait for repayment. Once you've been repaid, you can choose to re-lend to another borrower, as most Kiva lenders do, or keep the money.

The most difficult part of lending money through Kiva, I discovered, is choosing who to lend to. With thousands of borrowers seeking funds, the choice is overwhelming. You can narrow down your selection by searching only for specific areas, categories of people (eg. refugees), or types of enterprises.

Both Carla and Colleen browse loan requests that are waiting for the final amounts to be fully funded. Says Carla, "If there is a loan that is almost funded, and has a small amount to go (like \$25 or \$50) then I love to be the person to top that up so the loan is fully funded." Colleen often uses a similar strategy. "Sometimes I look to see who's almost got 100% of their loan funded and their time is running out. Other times I'll look for a woman who has a creative side and loves to produce her crafts (because I'm a fellow crafter!)." The choice of who to lend to is completely up to the individual lender.

For my first loans, I narrowed the selection by country, then looked for loans that needed only a bit more to be fully funded. My thinking was, the sooner the borrower received their loan, the sooner they'd begin paying it back, and the sooner I could re-loan. There are a lot of seemingly worthy borrowers, and I found the choice difficult. Each potential borrower has a detailed profile on Kiva and I spent a lot of time reading them to help finalize my choice.

My first loans went to two borrowers in Peru, one male and one female. Each were seeking around \$1000 to expand their agricultural businesses. I loaned them each \$25. For me, it's a small amount. For them, it has big impact.

When the amounts I loaned are repaid, I plan to re-loan. Like Carla says, it is addictive. It's an incredible feeling to know I'm helping make a difference. Although I'm seeking to improve others' lives through Kiva loans, I'm also enhancing mine by participating in a venture that makes a difference.

To make a difference in someone's life this year, consider Kiva loans. You'll find the info you need to get started on the [How Kiva Works](#) page of the [Kiva](#) website. Keep in mind that all funds loaned through Kiva are in U.S. currency. Occasionally, borrowers default on their loans; read [The Risks of Lending](#) page for more info on risk.

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



The Fly on the Wall Truth Tellers

Jason Sullivan



Last year, we addressed the idea of us, noble scholars, reduced to asinine drudgery and suggested that behind our mild-mannered veneers we have a cornucopia of fruitful intellectual possibilities. We posed the question, is truth itself impossible? Education means philosophical inquiry, even if it's only to realize that each act we engage in and each thought we express is the product of *underlying ideologies and belief systems* that we either realize as concrete or leave in a mist of mysticism known as *intuition*. Wielding a metaphorical mop of knowledge, here's something that we aren't automatically taught to recite out

of our education: *truth is a production rather than an outcome.*

To maximize our intellectual selves may mean to raise new topics of concern rather than give the same old, tired answers to the same old, mundane questions. Fundamentally we tend to assume that every question has an answer but, as with the phrase *every picture tells a story*, the winding path towards truth itself leads us onward toward something assumed to be present: non-negotiable finality.

Michel Foucault considers the dangers of taking the prevalent truths of our time as central to our ability to think and speak critically. Discourse is not about things as they are but instead constructs our conceptual modes of understanding. Although it appears that "things are already murmuring meaning which our language has only to pick up; and this language, right from its most rudimentary project, was already speaking to us of a being of which it is like the skeleton" nothing could be further from the truth (Foucault 64). We have what Foucault calls a *will to truth* that runs our desiring selves such that everywhere we look we find truth and meaning. The only

problem is that when many people converse and agree on a particular meaning it becomes dominant and runs over all others. Thus, to speak is to drown out; discourse erases opposition and proclaims its particular significance as sovereign over all others.

Whether within online fandoms or among cultural expectations, a certain feudalism sets in; think of the famous poem *'The Hockey Jersey'* where the kid with the Canadiens jersey becomes a pariah because hockey for his peers only *speaks the vernacular of being* a Maple Leafs' fan. The Canadiens certainly exist, but only as an opposition or *Other* and not as something to be identified with. To *be*, symbolically, a Canadien, as in to wear the jersey of one, is essentially unthinkable. It'd be akin to wearing a T-Shirt with Bible scripture to a meeting of Neil deGrasse Tyson fans.

As academics, we have to consider not only the limited parameters of our disciplines (battling it out in perpetual rivalry with other disciplines across bloody fields of contested terrain) but also the fact that underlying all of our academic discourse lies a shared, David Duchovnian faith that *the truth is out there* awaiting discovery.

Foucault acidly notes that we naturalize our dominant ways of thinking:

"It seems that Western thought has taken care to ensure that discourse should occupy the smallest possible space between thought and speech. Western thought seems to have made sure that the act of discoursing should appear to be no more than a certain bridging between thinking and speaking" (Foucault, 64).

When we speak, we feel that the objects of our discourse are true by virtue of us speaking of them with certainty; in reality, we are speaking these truths into existence, and this conjuring makes truths appear more stable than they actually are. Until it is struck, for instance, a bell could well be a cup. Yet when we share a belief that the cup hanging upside down in a church tower is, in fact, a bell, then the bell must, in truth, be what we think it is. In this sense a sentence spoken represents all other hidden thoughts that were repressed or discounted so that a singular, momentary, truth could reach the discursive light of day. Discourse is in this way

AU-thentic Events

Upcoming AU Related Events

New Program Students Orientation (Undergrad)

Thurs, January 25, 5:00 to 6:00 pm MST
Online

Hosted by AU Faculty of Business
business.athabasca.ca/event-details/business-undergraduate-new-students-information-session/

Register online at above link

Bannock and a Movie "Lana Gets Her Talk"

Fri, January 26, 12:00 to 1:00 pm MST
Athabasca University, Peace Hills Trust Tower,
12th floor, Room 1222,
10011 - 109 Street, Edmonton AB

In-person; limited seating

Hosted by AU Centre for World Indigenous
Knowledge and Research

indigenous.athabasca.ca/documentation/Lana.pdf

Register by phone (780)428-2064 or e-mail
ivyl@athabasca.ca

FHSS Talks

Short-circuiting Social Machines: Poetics, Aesthetics & Power

Fri, January 26, 2:00 to 4:00 pm MST
Edmonton (AUE 1112) and Calgary (BVC S6024)

In-person and online

Hosted by AU Faculty of Humanities and
Social Sciences

athabasca.adobeconnect.com/fhss-research

no pre-registration required; connect via
above link or phone 1-855-228-6652;

participant code 7503945

Looking ahead...

AUGSA Meet & Greet

Sat, January 27

Calgary: Socite Coffee Shop, 1223 11 Ave SW,
3:00 pm MST

Red Deer: Starbucks (at Chapters), Gaetz Ave
S, 3:00 pm MST

Edmonton: Starbucks, 3227 Calgary Trail NW,
3:00 pm MST

Toronto area: Boston Pizza, 50 Courtney Park
Dr, Mississauga, 2:00 pm EST

In-person

Hosted by AUGSA

No pre-registration necessary; grads and
undergrads welcome

masked by our personal interpretations which we naturalize as *common sense*. Even as common sense changes through history, discursive regimes tend to mask just how fluid and susceptible to re-imagining our landscapes of thought and existence really are. Yet we take truth as a goal and often its particular manifestations seem to make our dreams of understanding come true. We do this, claims Foucault, because our *will to truth* demands that we find evidence for what we are seeking. Anything less would, to quote the 90s Charles Barkley commercial for deodorant, be *uncivilized*. We naturally desire order and understanding not chaos and confusion.

“We must”, says Foucault, “call into question our *will to truth*, restore to discourse its character as an event, and finally throw off the sovereignty of the signifier” (Foucault, 64). Relativism seems to lurk behind critiques of the will to truth; how can something be many things at once, there must be a truth to the matter! Many a physicist has table-pounded about the inflexible domain of matter *as such* but it is indeed the *as such* that matters most: the Foucauldian realization here is that each truth is the creation of a particular discursive regime. To a physicist matter is what matters and to a carpenter the type of wood constituting the table is of interest. Academically and professionally we are supposed to fall in line and scrub stains of uncertainty by deploying truths we have learned except for, perhaps, the truth that truth itself is open to interrogation.

Jean Baudrillard exposes that both our will to truth and our doleful acquiescence to our academic role as its dispensers is based on a downright theological assertion: that there is a final, everlasting, capital 'T', *Truth*. Because this truth is discursive, it comes in words and, as John 1:1 states, “the Word was with God.” So, in a real sense, every significant discursive statement is and has always been a statement backed up by the gold standard of truth-dispensation: God. In our times, however, the reality of final answers comes into perpetual question. So much so that people feel the constant need to engage in arguments about whose truth is true-er without necessarily realizing that such a debate implies a deep and thoroughgoing doubt in the legitimacy of truth itself as an absolute insoluble force. Baudrillard notes:

“All of Western faith and good faith was engaged in this wager on representation: that a sign could refer to the depth of meaning, that a sign could exchange for meaning and that something could guarantee this exchange: God, of course. But what if God himself can be simulated, that is to say, reduced to the signs which attest his existence? Then the whole system becomes weightless; it is no longer anything but a gigantic simulacrum: not unreal, but a simulacrum, never again exchanging for what is real, but exchanging in itself, in an uninterrupted circuit without reference or circumference” (Baudrillard, online).

He goes on to state that we only ever simulate truth and that we do so by masking the reality that we can only re-present truth in images and facts rather than ever apprehend its existence outside of the symbols we take as signs of truth's existence. Like a ghost, truth can neither be killed nor brought to life for the simple reason that it exists not as a concrete entity but as an idea and an ideal. The truth for Baudrillard is that

“ultimately there has never been any God; that only simulacra exist; indeed that God himself has only ever been his own simulacrum . . . One can live with the idea of a distorted truth. But their metaphysical despair came from the idea that the images concealed nothing at all, and that in fact they were not images, such as the original model would have made them, but actually perfect simulacra forever radiant with their own fascination. But this death of the divine referential has to be exorcised at all cost.” (Baudrillard).

Our academic role need not be to mouth truths that we are expected to believe in; we can go further and critique the very certainties that underlie such facile assertions that truths are always final and unquestionable. Few things may bring more danger than a citizenry's desire for liberation from the ambiguity of reality; authoritarianism, no matter how benign or even *scientific*

it may seem at first, can easily ensue. To this end perhaps the only reasonable thing we can do as free-thinking students, empowered and armed as we are with knowledge gained at our wonderful institutions of higher learning, is to wield our mops of knowledge to merely bring a sheen of order and cleanliness to that which is already there in the world around us.

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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.



Scholarship of the Week

Digging up scholarship treasure for AU students.

Scholarship name: Kin Canada Bursaries

Sponsored by: Kin Canada

Deadline: February 1, 2018

Potential payout: \$1000

Eligibility restriction: Applicants must be Canadian citizens or landed immigrants, and must be enrolled full-time at a post-secondary institution. See full [eligibility requirements](#).

What's required: A completed application form, including contact, educational, and financial information, details on volunteer and employment activity, and knowledge about Kin Canada. Send the whole package to the club closest to you.

Tips: Brush up on your local Kin, Kinette, and Kinsmen club activities to make a good impression.

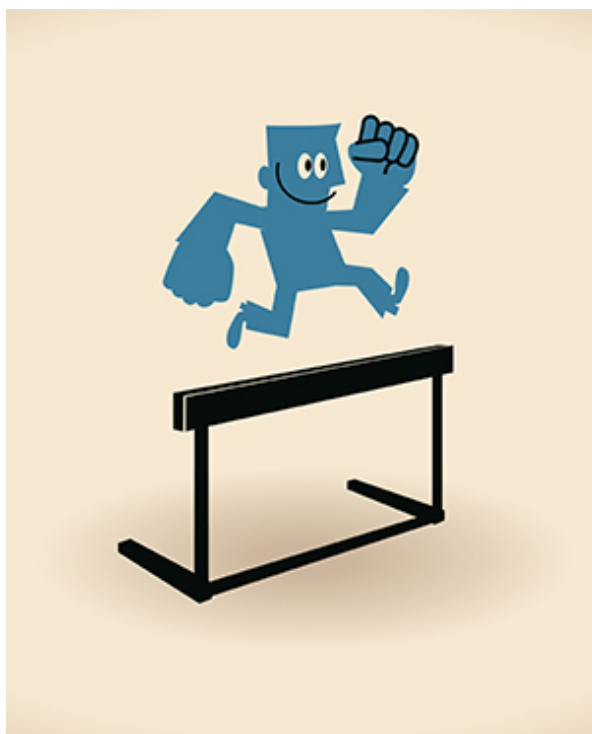
Where to get info: www.kinCanada.ca/bursaries



The Fit Student

Reward Yourself

Marie Well



What brings you pleasure? Lunch at a comedy club? Lunch by a still pond? Or lunch loaded with Redbulls and ballpark franks at a spelling bee?

I once got highs over perfect math grades. I'd stare at math textbooks until midnight, solving problems. A 100% exam scored a victory. Anything else, meh. Yet, I fretted failing every test.

Now, I get pleasure from healthy diets. My boyfriend calls it OCD. I record each calorie, study healthy tips, and eat raw foods. I lecture baristas—the vegetarians—on high fiber diets. Yet I flinch over my past struggles with eating disorders. Might food-OCD be another form?

And what about exercise? In grad school, my endorphins shot nonstop from fitness. I trained two-to-five hours each day. But after I stopped, each attempt to restart failed. Why? I jumped into high intensity training too soon. My mood soured. My jaw

quivered. Panic erupted.

Only once I started going for walks—daily—did I return to fitness. Now, I feel pleasure from most any exercise. To reward myself for every ten-minutes shadow boxing, I house-clean. Make chores breaktimes to liven 'em up.

I feel pleasure from cold showers, too. Cold showers lower stress and depression. It's impossible to feel poop pants in blasts of cold water. Consider electric shock therapy. If electric shock can zap away psychosis, what might cold shock do?

When I land a career, I'll set aside even more rewards. Buy comfy gym clothes. Layaway a souped-up hybrid bike. Load up on coconut milk and organic carrots at a hippy wholefood fare.

Mithu Storini talks about the need for pleasure in the book *Stress Proof: The Scientific Solution to Protect Your Brain and Body – and Be More Resilient Every Day*.

- Make pleasure a priority: "You must treat pleasure with the same importance with which you treat going to work or taking a shower, by allotting time for it every day. Never leave pleasure by the wayside or sacrifice it for 'more important' things" (p. 155).
- Insert pleasure in *everything* you do: "Actively seeking and feeling pleasure at every opportunity on your daily routine can make you resilient to stress" (p. 156).
- Reward yourself with pleasures while you work: "Pick three things that bring you pleasure. Look at your schedule and slot these three things into your work" (p. 157).
- Reward yourself often to lower stress: "There is evidence that actively cultivating reward and pleasure in your daily life can protect you from chronic stress and its damaging effects on your reward circuit" (p. 154).

- Your life will worsen “if you stop doing things that bring you pleasure, while living under chronic stress with a hyperactive emotional brain that keeps you immersed in negativity” (p. 155).
- Depression kicks in when stuck with a jerk: “When a vulnerable mouse is locked in a cage with an aggressive mouse for about ten minutes every day, it develops depression after only two weeks. Ten minutes of mouse time is at least as long as a workday in human time” (p. 153).
- But rewarding yourself makes anything bearable: “In one study ... stressed mice were given a sugar reward ... This reward appeared to ‘normalize’ their behavior so it was comparable to that of the mice who had not been stressed” (p. 156).

I feel rewards when I compliment people. I once told a woman that she had a beautiful soul. Her face softened, moved by the gesture. Her boyfriend hugged her tighter. A tiny child peered up at her face.

Then she loaded up on a caramel macchiato, a caffeine moustache etching her grin.



Not a New Year's Resolution

Deanna Roney



I have written several articles on how to keep organized; this is because I had never found a method that worked for me long term. As the New Year is upon us I have taken some time to reflect on my current process and if this is going to work moving forward, because this year, I feel, is going to be a challenge.

I have been using the Bullet Journal method for a while now. It has worked well in that it allows me to make notes in “future months” of things I need to do, I have monthly goals, and then I break those into my weeks. My biggest issue before

employing the Bullet Journal method was I would get way too far ahead of myself. I would plot out my days in a weekly planner—for months. Then one hiccup in the plan and it was all messed up; I fell behind, and I had no more room to write anything in the planner. It was a disaster.

Seeing that the Bullet Journal method has worked well for me I am going to keep using it, but with the MAIS program starting this month I need to have a few other organization tactics in place. The first one I am working on is planning the next two years (remember what I said about getting ahead of myself?) I want to have a visual plan for my program; nothing else will go on this planner. I drew up 2018 and 2019 and broke it into months, then I estimated how long each course will take, how many I think I can take at a time and in what order I need to do them. The last point is the most important as there are prerequisites and courses that are by “group study”

method rather than “individualized.” The group study means a paced course and these I needed to plan strategically.

Once I got the courses plotted on the rough draft I left a few courses as “flexible.” This way, if I find that the courses take me longer than anticipated (or shorter), I have these ones that I can move around to fill in some time gaps or lessen the work-load.

I have also added one key space in my weekly planner and that is for “notes.” I was taking up both pages with the days and leaving nowhere to make notes about things I need to get done but don’t have a specific day set aside for yet, or for things that need to get done next week but haven’t been plotted out yet. This note feature has been great, I also use it to track the work I am doing for my literary internship, so I can be sure I am on track for the weekly goals here. As my “days” can get jumbled with notes, tick marks, x’s, and other things, it is a nice quick visual to see that “yes I have achieved these goals” or “better make this a priority for the remaining days”.

Finding an organization method is so important. I tend to go full tilt when I get an assignment and I want to finish it, now. But that “method” leads to other things being forgotten or pushed aside, and with both the internship and MAIS program taking dual priority I have had to find a way to keep the stress level down while making solid progress through both. This method of tracking my years for the course and weekly goals for both have been working well, so far, in keeping me on track and not feeling like I am flying in multiple directions while getting nothing significant accomplished.

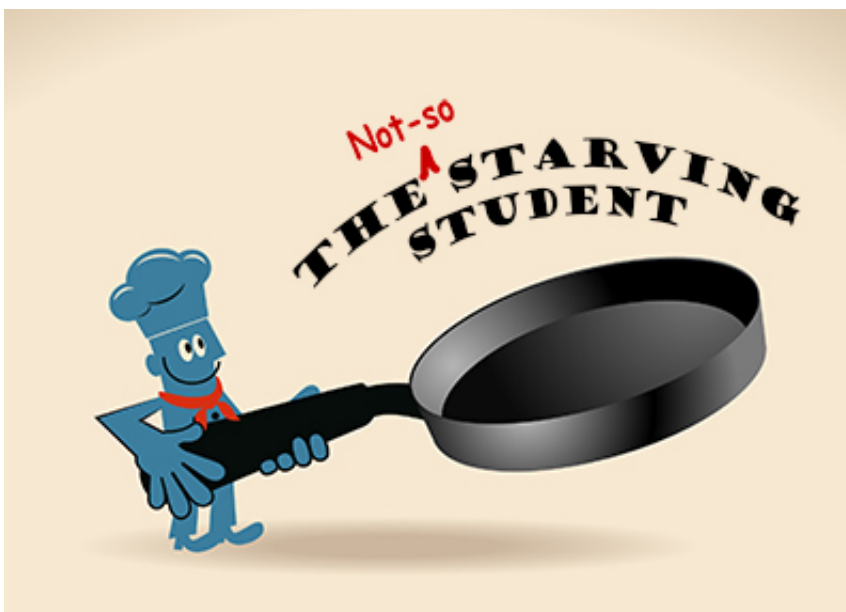
So, while I am not one for New Year’s resolutions, my goal this year is to keep on top of my planning, stay organized, and keep the workload manageable.

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



The Not-So Starving Student Low Budget Dinner Parties

Xin Xu



Have you ever been dying to host a dinner party, wanted to impress the guests, but also not to drain your wallet? I realized the crux to hosting an excellent party doesn’t all depend on the food, but it certainly is one of the highlights. So instead of going out of your way to scroll through Pinterest or watching endless Youtube playlists of Gordon Ramsay recipes, we’ve compiled a list of delicious, simple, and budget-friendly dinner menu items. Next time you host your very own dinner party as a budget conscious student, you’ll be equipped to wow your guests without hurting your savings.

Perogies

One of my personal favorites to serve is perogy dishes. These are versatile and allow your guests to customize their favorite toppings. For me, I like to purchase frozen perogies and prepare my favorite sauces made with tomato sauce, cream, and caramelized onions. The task could not be made simpler and looks gourmet when sitting next to green onion, cheese, sour cream and chilli toppings. The perogies can keep your guests fulfilled and satiated for the rest of the evening.



Chicken waffles

Chicken waffles sound anything but budget. You might wonder about the difficulty of the chicken-frying process or the headache of preparing the perfect sauce to top the appetizer. However, much of the work you'll need is done for you. You can purchase store bought Eggos and Nashville hot wings from just about any convenience store. I didn't forget about the sauce either! Simply whisk together hot sauce and maple syrup for your own gourmet spicy maple sauce.



Hot dog chillies

I'll skip the hot dog preparation part as this is quite self-explanatory. For an extra touch of gourmet, replace traditional wieners with smoked summer sausage or even bratwurst. My favorite part of this recipe is creating the chilli, which takes less than five minutes. If you're constantly hustling between school or work, this recipe is meant for you. Stir some canned chili over the stove and add in some fresh tomatoes and herbs. Before the guests arrive, prepare some simple toppings such as onions, coriander, and shredded cheddar and you're ready!



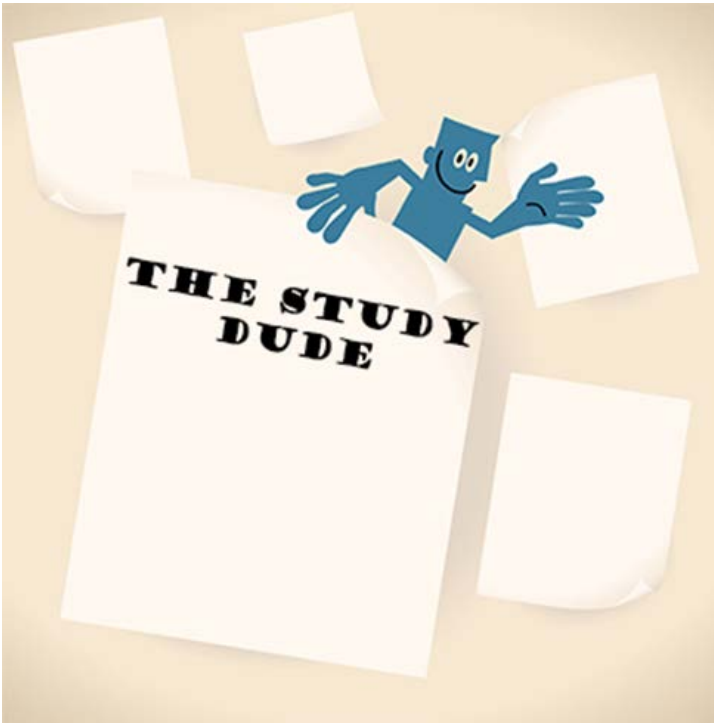
Loaded baked potatoes

Even without the anxiety of cooking for your guests, I customize my own baked potatoes for the regular school day. Baked potatoes are simple, hearty and can be the highlight of any party. To prepare the baked potatoes, wash and lightly coat the outside of each potato with salt, which helps to keep the potato inside fluffy. While the potato bakes in the oven for about an hour at 425 degrees C, you can begin preparing toppings such as sour cream, chives, bacon bits, cheese and green onions. When the potatoes are ready to serve, make a single incision and load the toppings up.

The Study Dude

Stephen King, Sans K-12

Marie Well



Do you want to write like an illiterate? Like Stephen King stripped of K-12? Like J. K. Rowling at a loss for how to handwrite the letter “H”? I’d bet you do—that is, if you love Shakespeare. Some say Shakespeare, an illiterate, honed his mastery in adulthood. Others say he had a ghost writer. As for me, well, I believe in miracles.

During graduate studies, I wrote muddled in my thesis—like a big-word emcee for kindergarten grad. I used passive verbs every chance. I thought passive meant objective. My content, not my style, got my A’s.

My writing began to bud a decade later, when an editor prodded, “Write clearly.” Yet, professors often frown on clear writing, favoring the thorny. For example, during the undergrad, I wrote a paper puffed with pretentious nouns. My prof gave me an A+

while admitting she didn’t get the gist. Secretly, neither did I.

I later read Steven Pinker’s blurb on clarity in his book *The Sense of Style*. My takeaway? Top academics blend clarity with jargon. So, learn theoretical terms—in other words, jargon—straight away.

Now as I write, I tweak for hours, even days, thesaurus at hand. My best writing builds a surprise, a shock, a joke, or a poetic line at least once every paragraph. It takes time to craft jokes. So now when I write time crunched, and I feel it in my prose.

Even with solid writing, I may not end up in a “best of” edition. Too much weird keeps me sidelined. Yet writing keeps me sane.

My style? Fat-free sentences. Scriptwriting got me crafting fillet mignons, not Big Macs. But then I read a beautiful blurb—a page long—and wonder where I went wrong.

One day, I hope to write like Shakespeare. At least, like Stephen King stripped of K-12. Or Edgar Allen Poe with no sense of rhythm.

Harold Evens shares tips on writing clearly in his book *Do I Make Myself Clear? Why Writing Well Matters*:

- What words make for clear writing? “They are mostly short, and they are concrete, not abstract” (p. 33).
- Avoid flying boots by not muddling your words: Harold Evens “used to throw a shoe at the television whenever [he] heard *weather* expunged in favor of *existing weather conditions*” (p. 12). Go simple, not stiff.
- How do you edit sentences? Listen to George Orwell: “If it is possible to cut a word out, always cut it out” (as cited in Evens, p. 98).

- Or listen to Strunk: “Vigorous writing is concise. A sentence should contain no unnecessary words, a paragraph no unnecessary sentences” (as cited in Evens, p. 98).
- Don’t lean on “to be” verbs: “The passive voice ... so often sneaks past usage sentries. It robs sentences of energy, adds unnecessary words, seeds a slew of wretched participles and prepositions, and leaves questions unanswered” (p. 83).
- Good writing uses active verbs: “Vigorous, clear, and concise writing demands sentences with muscle, strong active verbs cast in the active voice” (p. 83).
- Good writing shies from adverbs: “Adverbs modifying verbs and nouns and adjectives ... *mostly* ... clutter sentences” (p. 95). How do you cut the adverbs? “Use the Adverb Annihilator free for any laptop or mobile. Just type in *ly* and interrogate all the *ly* adverbs that pop up” (p. 95).
- Make your sentences sing: “Try being a musician in prose. The more you experiment, the more you will appreciate the subtleties of rhythm in good writing and bad” (pp. 108-109).
- And write like Shakespeare: “Who dares say good writing, even great writing, can be learned ... Shakespeare learned to write. Yessir; Shakespeare had a lousy start then refined and mastered every trick in the rhetorical trade” (17).

According to Helen Sword, some profs urge students to write with style early in academics. In other words, learn to write like journalists. Others say write like a stiff until grad school. Hence, the motto, fake it ‘til you make it.

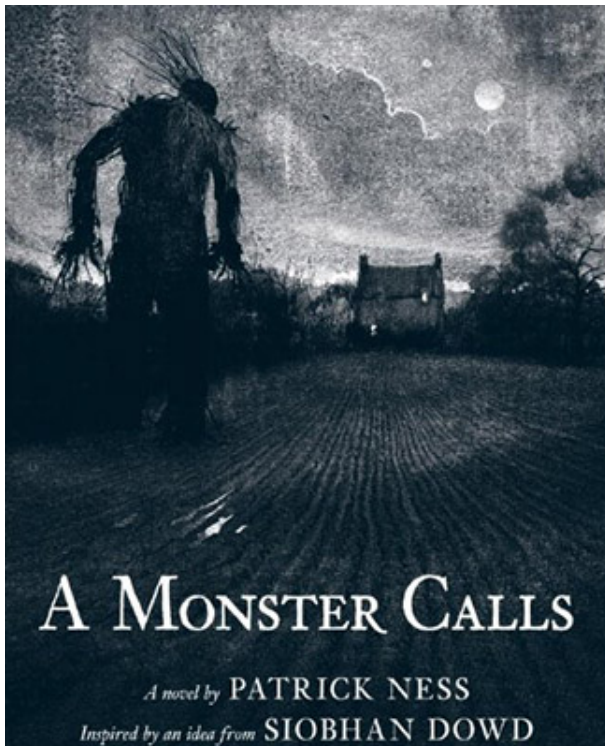
But if Shakespeare learned to write like Stephen-King-sans-K-12, we can too.



Media Review

A Monster Calls

John Buhler



Book/Film: *A Monster Calls*

Author: Patrick Ness

Illustrator: Jim Kay

Before her death from breast cancer in 2007, writer Siobhan Dowd began to develop a story about a boy facing the imminent loss of his mother to cancer. She drew inspiration from the highly poisonous yew tree, which was nevertheless the source of an anticancer drug she was being treated with. Dowd would not live long enough to complete this project, but, from her preliminary work, author Patrick Ness and illustrator Jim Kay created an award-winning book for teens, *A Monster Calls*. In 2016, the film version was brought to life through a UK and Spanish co-production that weaved together live action, animation, motion capture, animatronics, and CGI. The PG rated film was given its general North American release in

January, 2017.

In the film, Conor O'Malley is a lonely and isolated 13-year-old boy and his mother has cancer. He is bullied at school and his parents are divorced, with his father living in the US with a new wife and child. Conor's grandmother is a stern businesswoman whose sterile museum-like house is no place for a 13-year-old boy, though with his mother's worsening health, Conor will have no choice but to live there. The adults who surround him are not telling him the truth about the severity of his mother's cancer, and he repeatedly suffers from a harrowing nightmare in which the grounds of the nearby cemetery swallow his mother while he desperately struggles to hang on to her. Amid these struggles, or rather because of them, the yew tree in the neighbouring churchyard tears itself from the ground and sets off to confront Conor. As the movie progresses, the massive and ancient tree tells Conor three stories and then Conor must tell the tree a fourth story, "the truth". But the truth, like the monster's stories, contain difficult moral ambiguities and contradictions. *A Monster Calls* is a dark exploration of the pain involved in confronting an impending loss, but it is more: Conor has a secret that only deepens his sense of isolation.

Conor struggles—along with the audience—to grasp the meaning of the stories told by the tree. But stories can be powerful, and the tales illustrate human contradictions. Eventually, Conor is forced to admit his own contradiction, his own truth. In the book, it was clear that Conor felt the *need* to be punished, and this may have been obscured in the transition from printed page to screen. Perhaps this is why some reviewers wrongly concluded that the film was simply about loss, but—spoiler alert—what weighs upon Conor is that he wants his own suffering to end, and that of course will only happen with the death of his mother. He wants his own pain to simply stop, even if it seems contrary to his love for her. Recognizing and accepting his human frailty prepares Conor for the loss of his mother.

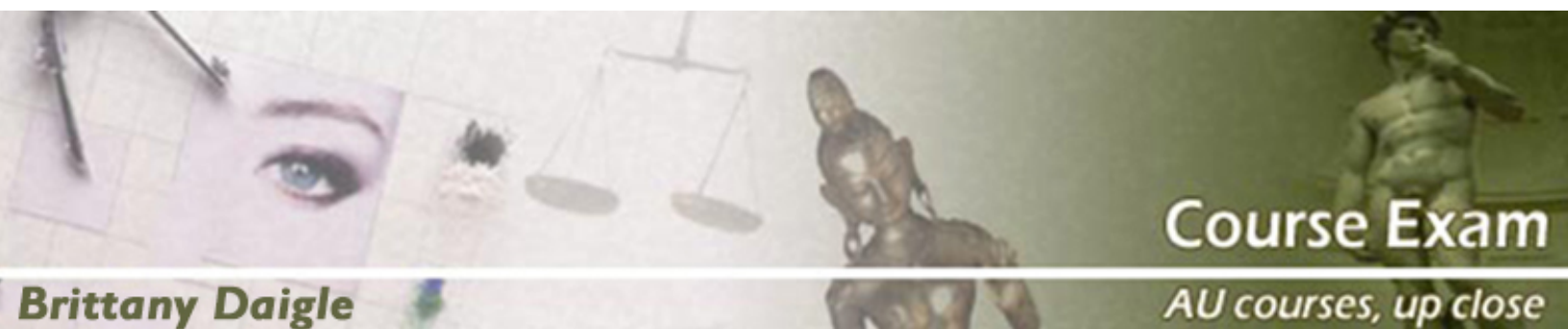
The film, by J.A. Bayona, who also directed the upcoming *Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom*, brings together an extremely talented group of actors. There can be no doubt that Lewis McDougall, as an anguished Conor facing the death of his mother, draws upon his own experience of having lost his mother to multiple sclerosis. As Conor's mother, Felicity Jones, perhaps best known as Jyn Erso in *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story*, convincingly portrays a young woman succumbing to terminal cancer. Conor's severe grandmother is played by veteran actor Sigourney Weaver, while Liam Neeson provides the weathered voice of the ancient and gnarled monster.

In spite of a compelling story, talented actors and fantastic visual effects, the film, in North America at least, was not an overwhelming success. Perhaps its dark subject matter did not appeal to most movie-goers: it doesn't feature a miracle cure, a last-minute reprieve or tidy Hollywood ending. On March 28, 2017, it was released on DVD. Nevertheless, *A Monster Calls* remains a profound and poignant film, destined to find an audience among cinephiles who appreciate its subject matter, stunning visuals and unusual narrative style.

Even though the movie made only a short appearance in theaters, *A Monster Calls* remains a popular book since its release in 2011, and a quick internet search indicates that it is still readily available from numerous bookstores and online. In 2015, an unillustrated version of the book

was released in anticipation of the film, but in the absence of Jim Kay's dark and foreboding images, it offers less visual pull. (Perhaps the intention was to avoid having the original images compete with those in the film). In 2017, *A Monster Calls: Special Collectors' Edition* was released, and included the original illustrations as well as additional artwork by Jim Kay, interviews with the writer/screenwriter Patrick Ness, actors and director, as well as insights into the film's animation and special effects. Though it will not appeal to everyone, *A Monster Calls*—as a book or a film—is an intense and haunting story.

John has his BGS from AU and started writing for the voice while he was taking it in 2003.



Brittany Daigle

Course Exam

Admin 233—Writing in Organizations

According to the syllabus, ADMN 233 (Writing in Organizations) is a three-credit introductory business and administrative studies course “for students wishing to improve their written communication as it applies to the workplace. Writing in organization involves a problem-solving process requiring that one analyzes situations, make decisions, and inform others of those decisions.”

Writing in Organization has three main sections, nine timed quizzes weighing one percent each, one diagnostic writing assessment weighing six percent, one assignment worth fifteen percent, two assignments weighing twenty percent, and one online final exam worth thirty percent. The three sections discussed within this course cover the 3-x-3 writing process, how to write routine e-mails and memos, how to write persuasive and sales messages, how to write negative messages, how to write routine letters and goodwill messages, and how to prepare, organize, and write typical business reports. For students concerned with the number of quizzes and assignments, the diagnostic writing assignment is just for the marker to evaluate your writing skills, the answers to the nine assignments are very easily found within the textbook, and the content in the other three assignments are extensively demonstrated within the textbook. The “ADMN 233 assignments and the final exam feature workplace-oriented scenarios that ask students to complete business-related communication tasks.”

Pierre Wilhelm, the course coordinator for ADMN 233, has been coordinating and teaching undergraduate business communication in the Faculty of Business at Athabasca University for over sixteen years. Currently, he is teaching COMM 243, COMM 277, COMM 329, and ADMN 233. He states, “ADMN 233 is taught to a large segment of undergraduate students across all faculties and helps students acquire essential communication competences to write business correspondence efficiently. Writing business correspondence is like other professional writing genres. This communicative act follows a creative process guided by specific style rules. The skills one gains planning, outlining, writing, and revising texts by applying style rules can readily

Course Exam

AU courses, up close

Brittany Daigle

transfer to other writing 'genres' whose core considerations are universal: 'What does my reader need to know or act on? How can I communicate to him or her in a succinct, yet effective way? Should I get to the point early in a text or delay the impact I wish to make?'"

Wilhelm continues, "ADMN 233 style rules aim to improve the clarity of one's writing and its overall informative or persuasive impact on the reader. The challenge students taking this course face is to understand what these writing rules imply in terms of composing a sound business message. They must practice writing activities on their own and, if need be, seek the help and guidance of a course instructor. Students who require more extensive remedial help may also request the support of a writing tutor at the [AU Write Site](#). They can also complete supplementary learning activities provided on that site."

Moreover, he states that students should be on the lookout for a revised version of ADMN 233 in 2018, "This new course version updates learning outcomes and writing tasks to 'keep up' with evolving business correspondence trends. It addresses business communicators' increasing reliance on social media."

Brittany Daigle is 22 years old and completing her BSc in Computing Science & Information Systems with AU from Toronto, Ontario.



Student Sizzle — AU's Hot Social Media Topics

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

AthaU Facebook Group

Amanda seeks insight on using ProctorU and the comments reveal a surprising rule about smartphones—you have to show it to the ProctorU rep, even if you don't have one. Patricia seeks prep tips for writing the GMAT and the comments devolve into a discussion of AU's MBA. Cheryl asks and receives advice about her COMM 243 exam's Lotus Notes format.

Other posts include Convocation 2018, AUGSA meet & greets, sending transcripts by courier, and pursuing a degree in medicine.

Twitter

[@AthabascaU](#) tweets: "Has your family helped your [#AthaU](#) journey? We're looking for those current students and alumni interested contributing

a 400-600 word blog about how family in any form (friends can be family too!) has helped steady the ship! "

[@AthabascaUSU](#) (AUSU) tweets: "The revised dates for the 2018 AU Convocation are now posted at <http://convocation.athabascau.ca/index.php> ."





One Perfect Word Redux

Faithful readers of this space may remember that in 2017 I wrote about author Debbie Macomber's decades-long habit of choosing one perfect word to focus on for a year. She chose words like wisdom, prayer, surrender, hope, purpose. My own experiment with the word 'kindness' was not a total failure. I didn't do all the interactive things Macomber did to intensify her contemplation, but I did find myself being more mindful about how I talked to myself.

And while I haven't (yet) chosen a word for 2018, I did hear a new spin while watching a recent episode of Marilyn. Her guest was family therapist, Joe Rich who seems to have a quirky balance of empathy, humour, self-deprecation, and a keen understanding of how people *really* are. He was there to discuss *How to Conquer Your Goals*.

We all know that making resolutions is usually a recipe for failure. According to Rich, eighty percent will be a distant memory in a matter of weeks. He describes resolutions as black and white, hardwired, and offering no flexibility because of the strict focus on outcome. Either you quit smoking or you didn't. Either you lost forty pounds or you didn't. Either you went to the gym five days a week or you didn't. Insert your own vice here.

Better, according to Rich, is setting goals because they are more process focused. To increase the chances for success they need to be simple, measurable, and realistic. I will save \$500 in six months. I will use my debit card only three times a day. If you can understand *why* the goal is important to you, you'll have a better chance of sticking with it when the initial enthusiasm and focus wanes. Writing it down also helps reinforce it. The best approach is believing the addictions self-help mantra of *one day at a time* because that is all we have, today. If we fall short today, we have a fresh new chance to succeed tomorrow. Even with two steps forward and one step back, we're still making progress. Rich also urges us to remember past goals we've achieved and replicate the conditions of that success.

But, apparently the latest, greatest approach is to 'find your word.'

To sit down and figure out what we want with our head and heart, how we want to feel in 2018. He used the example of a parent wanting to use technology less. Digging deeper shows the intention, which is to be present with your children. Choosing the word 'present' is insightful and will affect behaviour and ultimately be more effective than saying I won't use my cell phone.

I see those head, heart, feelings questions as a simple tool to choosing that one perfect word. It seems quicker, easier, more definitive than the process Macomber uses. I love being able to cherry pick the best of all strategies and collective wisdom for my own use. Now if you'll excuse me, I've got some navel gazing to do, from where I sit.

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





Broken Hearts, Online

Dear Barb:

I have a six-year-old daughter who was recently diagnosed with a heart condition. She was apparently born with it, but it wasn't apparent. Now she needs to take medication for it. My husband and I have not told my daughter about her condition. My husband says our daughter doesn't need to know. He feels we should just go on with things as they are. If we keep this from her we are not being honest with her, and we have always stressed to her that mommy and daddy will always tell you the truth. So I think telling her is the right thing to do. Also I believe it would be better for her to know her condition in case something happens when she is away from us, so she will be able to tell people that she has a heart condition. What is your opinion on this? Thanks, Stephanie.

Hi Stephanie:

Sorry to hear about your daughter, but with all the advances in medicine today people are living normal, full lives with heart conditions. It is best to discuss this with your daughter's cardiologist before you do anything. And the final decision is up to you. Amazon has a few books on the subject - [Cardiac Kids: A Book for Families Who Have a Child With Heart Disease](#). Also, I found a Web Booklet that has [information about childhood heart disease](#).

I feel that a child should be made aware of their condition, however you have to be careful not to scare them, which is why it is good to discuss this with the cardiologist first. Children are adaptable and can learn to live with many situations. As parents, we want to protect our children from uncomfortable circumstances, but reality is full of ups and downs. I believe it's best to prepare your children for these types of obstacles. Thanks for writing Stephanie, hope this was helpful.

Dear Barb:

I have a question about social media. I was married briefly and the relationship ended badly. My problem is that my sister has pictures of me with my ex on her face book account. I asked her take them down and she refused to. She said she didn't want to because of the other people in the pictures. She said she will not tag me in them, but every time I go on her site I see the pictures. Why wouldn't she just delete them? Larry.

Hi Larry,

Welcome to the world of social media. The only account that you can control is your own. If someone tags you in a picture, you have the option of deleting the tag so the picture will not show up on your account. Your ex was a part of your sister's life which she obviously doesn't feel a need to delete. So my suggestion to you would be to not go on her account and look through her pictures. Easy fix. Thanks for writing Larry.


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.






Sometimes I
feel like a
spiritual
floozy.




Why do you
say that?




I cheat on Christianity
with Islam. I cheat on
Islam with Zen
Buddhism.


And I cheat
on Zen
Buddhism
with Native
American
Spirituality.



Sounds to me
like you're
faithful as
heck.



Wait—will this
path lead us to the
old ash tree?



All paths lead to the old ash tree.

Ah, yes, I see
what you
mean . . .



Short-circuiting Social Machines: Poetics, Aesthetics & Power

Friday, January 26, 2018
2:00pm to 4:00pm

FEATURED SPEAKERS:

Rochelle Sato

A discussion of *Letter to Cody*:
The longest journey by Mitchell Moise

Michael Lithgow & Karen Wall

Embedded Aesthetics:
Artist-in-Residencies as Sites of Discursive
Struggle and Social Innovation

Angie Abdou

Navigating these Rutted Roads:
In Case I Go and Cross-Cultural Collaboration

- + Rooms have been reserved in Edmonton (AUE 1112) and Calgary (BVC S6024).
- + The talks will be live-streamed on Adobe Connect:

Conference Number(s): 1-855-228-6652 | Participant Code: 7503945
Adobe Connect link: <https://athabascau.adobeconnect.com/fhss-research/>



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ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY
STUDENTS' UNION

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IMPORTANT DATES

- Jan 26: [Call for Nominations Opens for AUSU Election](#)
- Jan 31: [Deadline to apply for course extension for Mar](#)
- Jan 26: [Deadline to submit Nomination for Election](#)
- Feb 9: [Deadline to register in a course starting Mar 1](#)
- Feb 12: [AUSU Election Candidates Announced](#)
- Feb 13: [AUSU Council Meeting](#)
- Feb 15: [March degree requirements deadline](#)

Year-Round Bursaries

AUSU has numerous bursaries available year-round for students in financial need.

Emergency Bursary - can pay for course extensions of supplemental exams needed due to unforeseen circumstances and urgent financial need. (Note: AUSU pays the fees to AU directly.)

Health Care Bursary - can pay up to \$1000 towards a health care plan for members who have no other reasonable access to personal or group health care benefits.

Travel Bursary - help pay travel costs for members who need to travel for their AU studies, such as to attend exams, labs, practicums, or related conferences. (Note: AUSU pays travel costs directly. Students must apply at least 30 days before travel.)

Computer Bursary - to purchase new laptops for student that need a new computer for their AU studies. (NOTE: This bursary will not be available until October 1)

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



AUSU Career Resources

Looking for a job or career change?

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.



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Want to get regular news and updates from your AU Students' Union? Want to hear about upcoming awards and services available to you as an AU student? Want to get all the latest on our upcoming election?

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CLASSIFIEDS

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

THE VOICE

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www.voicemagazine.org

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

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ISSN 2561-3634