



# THE VOICE

Vol 27 Issue 25 2019-06-21

## **Minds We Meet**

Interviewing Students Like You!

## **We Were There**

Watching History Being Made

## **Life in Wartime**

The Neverending Battle

*Plus:*

*The Perks of Victimhood*

*Happy Saint-Jean-Baptiste Day!*

*and much more!*



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# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



**We love to hear from you!**  
**Send your questions and comments to [voicemagazine.org](http://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

### A Labour of Love

Karl Low



Labour strife is never welcome. Not by management, not by employees, and certainly not by customers. In the case of AU, those customers are you, the students. That's why I was exceptionally happy to read that the Athabasca University Faculty Association (AUFA) and AU Board of Governors have come to an agreement in principle. It remains to be ratified yet, but this basically means that any fears you may have been harbouring about a possible faculty strike at AU can now be put to bed.

From what I've been able to gather, AU did finally make some concessions to the union in the wording surrounding the use of contract and part time staff, basically affirming that you could not simply keep calling an employee a contract employee for years and years at the same position.

This helps to move some of those people from very precarious positions, always having to wonder if they need to start looking for a job at the end of their contract, to more stable employment, and also gives them additional benefits. In turn, this should make the positions more attractive to better talent. Personally, I think this will end up being a winning move for the university as well as the staff, even if

the university doesn't quite see it that way yet.

Beyond that, a Canadian team has won the NBA for the first time in history. In truth, that's about all I know about it. I've never been a fan of team sports, so missed out on all of the excitement about this while it was happening. Fortunately, AU students come from all walks of life, and this week, student Jeff Shermack makes his debut with his take on what it was like to be watching the final game that brought the American championship to Canada.

Our feature interview this week, however, is with Emily Bellamy, a student who's taking advantage of AU so that she can maintain her small-town lifestyle, even as she looks beyond to larger opportunities. It's a great interview because she's so open and honest about hitting that wall in an AU course that most of us have hit on occasion. When you finally realize you've been putting a course off too long and you may just be in over your head. We don't get many students who are willing to tell us about those times (for good reason) but I'm sure we all know the anxiety, fear, and depression that come with them.

If you're there, or you've been there, Emily's interview also gives you some decent tips for digging your way out of it—beyond dropping and re-taking the course (something I'll admit I did on a couple of occasions).

Plus, the Porkpie Hat looks at what it's like to live during wartime, in a war that we're all in, even if we may not realize it, and Wanda Waterman thinks about the unexpected perks of being a victim.

Of course, we also have more advice, news, reviews, thoughtful stories and even a look at the upcoming Saint-Jean-Baptiste Day! So, get ready to celebrate and enjoy the read!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karl', written in a cursive style.

# MINDS

# WE

# MEET



*Emily Bellamy is twenty-three years old and was born and raised in Alberta, though she now lives in Saskatchewan with her husband. She is currently enrolled in the Bachelor of Human Resources and Labour Relations program and hopes to eventually get a job as an HR Coordinator. This is her story.*

**Can you give us a little bit of background information about yourself? Who are you? Where do you live, where do you come from?**

My name is Emily and I am a 23-year-old born and raised in Alberta, Canada. I grew up on a dairy farm with my parents and six siblings. My parents immigrated from Holland some thirty-odd years ago and I was their 4th child and first of the kids to be born in Canada. I went to a tiny school with less than 200 students from Kindergarten to grade 12. Small town living is really all I know, with our country farm being close to only a tiny Hamlet with less than 500 people. Once I graduated high school, I met my husband and we headed east to his hometown in Saskatchewan. Thankfully his hometown is small enough for this small-town girl to feel right at home. I am currently working at my local Co-op as a cashier, clerk, file maintenance and produce clerk.

**What program are you enrolled in?**

I am enrolled in the Bachelor of Human Resources and Labour Relations program.

**Could you describe the path that led you to AU?**

I always knew I wanted to receive some form of higher education and had even applied and got accepted into the education program right out of high school. However, before completing all of the necessary paperwork I had a bit of a realization. I had felt a tremendous amount of pressure to pick a career right away, and since really the only two careers I truly knew about where farming and teaching I picked teaching. However, I realized that I was not ready to pick a career and there should be no reason for me to feel that pressure so soon. So fast forward to almost exactly a year ago, after I had time to focus on what my strengths were and what interested me, I picked a career in human resources. I love working with people and my interpersonal skills are something that I have been working on and improving over the past few years. I was ready to jump back into school because I know the hard work is going to expand on something I love and bring a range of endless job opportunities.

**Are you enjoying the program? Is there anything you like and dislike from the program?**

I am really enjoying the program. So far, the core courses I have taken for this program are very interesting and much of the subject material is very applicable to the position I hold on the health and safety club at my work. It makes the subject matter easier to learn when I can apply it to my day to day work.

**What do you do like to do when you're not studying?**

When I am not studying, I love to go for walks and runs, as well as taking long bike rides throughout my town. My go-to however is painting. I wouldn't quite say I am very good at it, or that my paintings would resemble anything spectacular, but I love the freedom that painting brings. Having my music playing loudly in the background with a blank canvas with multiple paints and brushes is just such a freeing feeling. It feels nice to have a creative outlet with no pressure to produce anything.

**What are your plans for this education once you finish?**

Once I am finished my education, I plan to begin a career in Human Resources. I hope to get a job as an HR Coordinator and spend a few years really soaking up as much knowledge as I can. This will hopefully lead into a specialization of sorts. Eventually, I would love to spend some time as a recruiter for a company. However, I do believe ultimately that I would like to become a Human Resource Manager for Federated Co-operative Limited and work in one of their main locations. I truly just want to experience and learn as much as I can! Human Resources has so many different avenues that I believe if I work hard there will be endless possibilities.

**Describe your experience with online learning so far. What do you like? Dislike?**

So far, my experience with online learning has been very pleasant. I really enjoy being able to do my schoolwork at the times that work best for me. The flexibility is by far the best part of online learning especially since AU allows you to use ProctorU as an approved invigilator I can take my exams at 9:00 in the evening if that is the only time that fits my schedule. I work full-time with varying shifts, so it is nice to be able to still work all my shifts and get my assignment and exams done when it works for me. A dislike I have about online learning is that often it can feel as though you are the only one going through this situation since contact with other students is minimal. However, the AU student app has helped with this problem quite a bit. Having a place where people can ask questions or just provide words of encouragement is of great help, and the app does a great job of that!

**At what point did you waver the most about continuing your schooling?**

One of the biggest things that caused me to waver about continuing my schooling was the fear of failing. I believe that the reason I was so worried about failing was because I already felt "behind" everyone else for starting university five years after I completed high school. So, my thought was that if I failed at this, I would be even more behind than everyone else my age. What got me through it was realizing that time was going to pass whether or not I went back to school, and that if I didn't enroll I wouldn't be saving myself from any hardship, rather I would be upset with myself for not going back sooner. Some of the best things to happen to us are on the other side of the scary things we need to get through first.

**Any advice for people who are on the edge or feeling like it is too late to go back to school?**

The advice I have for those who feel like it is too late is to stop comparing yourself to those who have chosen a different path than you. Everyone's path is different and just because you chose



to go to school later in life does not mean you are wrong, or behind, or late. What helped me is focusing solely on where I wanted to be in three years, and the only time I look back is to see how many courses I have done. Each course you take is one more than you did yesterday, and it is important to celebrate the little wins and accomplishments toward your goal. Sometimes taking baby steps make it easier when focusing on a big, scary goal like completing a degree. Remember, you are not behind! You are right where you are meant to be. Everyone is special and unique, and our journeys should reflect that.

**What's your most memorable AU course so far, and why?**

My most memorable AU course has been IDRL 215. I'm not quite sure if it is because of the circumstances I was in during this course or because of the course content itself or maybe a mix of both. This course was part of my very first semester at AU and I had greatly underestimated the amount of time it would take to complete a course. With only about a month and a half left I decided to tackle this course and only a few days in did I realize what a mistake I had made! I had made great headway in all my other courses, but this course talked about so much I had never heard of. It truly was all new to me. So, I remember crying at my kitchen table completely succumbing to all my worries, feeling defeated and knowing full well it was all my fault for underestimating the time that was necessary to put into a course. However, after wiping the tears and self-doubt away I concocted a master schedule to complete this course on time and with good marks. Every spare moment I had from the moment I woke up to the moment my head hit the pillow I focus on IDRL 215. Not only did I pass with flying colours, but I learned so much about Labour Unions that I plan to choose more courses for my electives that expand on the topic. This course taught me so much more than information about unions. It opened my eyes to the work necessary to put into a course, as well as my own abilities and that if I stick to something, I can get it done. Also, to never ever procrastinate on a course again because that is a horrible feeling!

**What have you given up to go to AU that you regret the most? Was it worth it?**

In all honesty, there really isn't anything that I have given up going to AU and I think that might be the most beautiful thing about AU. If anything, AU has given me one of the greatest gifts: the ability to learn time management! I still get to do all the things I love; with all the people I love. The only difference is how I spend the 24 hours I have in a day. Instead of watching two episodes on Netflix I will watch one and then do schoolwork. Instead of sleeping in on a Saturday I wake up a little earlier to study, and as a bonus I get to see the sunrise and hear the birds chirping. The university's flexibility has given me the chance to still be me and focus on myself as well as receive a higher education.

**How do you find communications with your course tutors?**

Initially when starting this AU journey, I was worried about the communication that I would encounter at AU. My questions would race in my mind and I would wonder about what if I was completely confused and frustrated, would they be able to help? If I have issues understanding an assignment would they be helpful? If I couldn't get an assignment in on time would they be understanding and help me in that regard? I found out one very important thing quite quickly the first time I was confronted with one of those situations. The tutors are humans too! With empathy! And a caring nature! I have been so pleased with the communication offered by my tutors thus far. From a 45-minute phone call on a topic because I couldn't wrap my mind around it, or the time a tutor so graciously offered an extension (without me even asking) because she could tell from my voice I was stressed. The communication is always prompt, effective and above all it is caring.

**What's your biggest pet peeve, if you have one?**

People that are late! I could write an essay on this topic but since I don't have the room, or the audience that would care to read it I will spare you all! However, to touch on it lightly, I was taught from a very young age that there are no such things as being too early, but that even if you get there right on time, you are late! Though a lot of this has to do with not wanting to be late in general, I also believe it shows your level of respect for the person or people you are meeting up with. Time is precious and I believe in respecting every person's valuable time.

**What famous person, past or present, would you like to have lunch with, and why?**

I would love to have lunch with the Queen. I would love to get a first-hand account of everything she has been through and seen. I cannot imagine a life where you are always in the public eye and that all the people you love are being scrutinized as well. She must truly have so many interesting stories to tell about all the people she has met and all the places and events she has been to. I think one of the main reasons I would love to meet her is because I know I would never have been able to be put in the same situation as Queen Elizabeth II. I believe it takes a special person to be Queen for as long as she has, and that the age she is.

**Describe the proudest moment in your life.**

I think currently this AU journey is part of the proudest moment of my life. From a very young age, probably since birth, I have been full of anxiety and worry. My worry over an outcome of a decision I would make would stop me from making it. I would first see all of the things that could go bad in a situation and then wouldn't have the energy to see the good. Jumping into this AU journey is exactly the kind of thing I would normally be much to terrified to even attempt! But here I am! Finishing up my 1st year at AU and keeping up the momentum with grades I am happy with and even more passion and commitment to complete my Bachelor's!

**What is the most valuable lesson you have learned in life?**

The most valuable lesson I have learned in life is that showing up and being hardworking are about the most important attributes to have. It helps put things into perspective when I am worried about whether I am doing enough, or if my priorities are straight. This works for so many aspects of a person's life. At work are you consistently showing up on time and are you always working hard at your tasks? At school are you showing up consistently and working hard when you allotted that time to do your schoolwork? In your relationships are you showing up consistently and being that continuous support and are you working hard to maintain those relationships. Consistently showup and always work your hardest, whatever that may be!

**Have you travelled? Where has life taken you so far?**

When I was younger, I went to Holland with a few of my family members but I am too young to remember any of it so I would like to go back. I have been to two different parts of Mexico on family vacations and went on a class trip down to California. The rest of my travels have been inside of Canada. I have visited Jasper and Banff on several occasions and it truly is such a beautiful place. I am hoping my next great adventure to Jasper or Banff includes some kayaking through the mountains.

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





## Porkpie Hat Life During Wartime

Darjeeling Jones

*"Transmit the message to the receiver*

*Hope for an answer some day"*

- Talking Heads, "Life During Wartime"



There is a battle raging all around us, a deadly skirmish in the only war that has ever mattered: the struggle between the opposing forces of love and fear. It's a senseless conflict, one that should never have existed, but when has "what should be" ever really mattered? Like it or not, we are conscripted. There is no sitting this one out, there are no conscientious objectors; if you have a conscience, a heart, a soul, you're in the trenches.

We are the soldiers, we are the civilians. We are the thinkers, the watchers, the dreamers, the lovers, the scientists, the artists, the poets. Obviously, it is not a war we can win with violence. We must engage them with guerilla tactics in the steamy jungles of the soul. Ideas are our bullets, small gestures of decency and inspiration are our spycraft, joy is our plastique.

For a long time it will seem as if we're making no headway. Our enemies are powerful and sly, with nearly unlimited resources. They will throw everything they have at us to try and crush our spirits. Many of us will find ourselves living in apparent poverty in shantytowns and hovels on the outskirts of the citadel. They will believe we are desperate and shattered.

But in reality, we have merely been driven underground, where we will hone our skills and lead far richer lives than the bastards can conceive of. We will construct an intricate subterranean network lit with glitter balls and candles, bright and splendid as a palace on the moon. We will stockpile ideas, weaponize logic, construct silos filled with beauty.

In our day-to-day lives on the surface, we will communicate with each other on crystal sets and numbers stations, using wavelengths of caring the armies of fear can never access. Patiently, by degrees, we will undermine their propaganda. We will exchange coded messages in a myriad of forms. Sometimes they will look like a thesis or a ballot. Sometimes they will look like songs, or dance, or sonnets. In reality, they will be calls to action, they will be messages of hope. To the vicious-minded demagogues, their counsellors of greed and corruption, and the herds of carnivorous sheep who follow behind them, there is nothing more dangerous than the defiant belief that things can—things must—be better.

Of course, there are many amongst us who will find the struggle too long and too hard. Some of us will ultimately give up hope. Some of us have given it up already. Things are looking dark, and they seem to be getting darker. The polar caps of light are melting, and the black waters are rising all around us. Some days, even at noon, the sky is black as carbon. Many unnatural events are occurring. Monsters have taken over the parliaments, and time is now flowing backwards. Sometimes it seems as though progress is the cruelest of all illusions.

The reality is, though, that dark times have happened before, and we have always overcome them. Human beings have always been capable of nobility and brilliance, as well as their opposites. In the end, this is a war we can win if we have the courage to wage it; one heart, one mind at a time. As our great battle poet Leonard Cohen once advised us, “First we take Manhattan/ Then we take Berlin.”



## We Were There

Jeff Shermack



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Sports championships come and go so often and across so many leagues that their historical impact seems insignificant in light of their annual passing. They hardly seem memorable in comparison to other major milestones. Regardless, a primal psychological satisfaction is linked to the nostalgia of answering the question “where were you when [this historic event] happened?” and there is an evocative romance about being able to look back on an event in history and answer the question by saying “I was there”.

For many of us, championship sports games are simply a reason to gather and socialize. This was the

case for my friends and I when we crowded into an overflowing bar in Calgary to watch what would be the final game of the 2019 NBA championship. Our individual levels of interest ranged from die hard Raptors fan to die hard nachos fan. The occasion was as much an excuse to meet over drinks as it was to express a mild, sports-related patriotism for Canada’s only NBA team, but even the nachos fans were cheering and screaming by the game’s conclusion.

The building was filled with a vibrating crowd of Toronto Raptors’ fans that night; except for one Warriors’ fan whose sad, lonely clapping could be heard across the silent bar each time the opponents scored. The cacophony of cheering and roaring that rose each time Toronto scored was so powerful and thrilling that, even as a disinterested participant, you could not help but be enthralled by an overwhelming wave of raw enthusiasm. Our subdued socializing and casual conversation gradually transformed into impassioned shouting as the Toronto Raptors came closer to their historic victory.

The atmosphere in the bar during the last minute of that final game was like the silent stirring of the air before a thunderstorm. The Raptors were seconds away from winning and each blow of the whistle seemed like a new chance for it all to slip away. The silence snapped at the sound of the final buzzer and the bar erupted with the thunderous cheering of every person within, except for maybe that one Warriors’ fan. Each of us in the bar that night became characters in a story that seemed more significant than our own personal histories. Despite our individual interest in sports, or basketball, or the Toronto Raptors, we were all absorbed by the momentous fervor that

spread throughout the crowded bar and we sang, with one unified indomitable voice fueled by blazing vigorous pride: “O Canada!”

Our voices joined in unison with thousands singing through the broadcast in Toronto and across the country that night. At least three of us may never watch an NBA game again in our entire lives, but we will all be able to look back on the night that the Toronto Raptors won their first championship and say that we were there.

*Jeff Shermack is an English student at Athabasca University who writes fiction and non-fiction about a variety of subjects.*



## Course Exam

**Brittany Daigle**

PSYC 228 (Introduction to Human Development) is a three-credit introductory psychology course that has students studying the basic concepts and mechanisms inherent in the process of human development from birth to old age, with an emphasis on the physical, cognitive, and socioemotional changes associated with each life stage. PSYC 228 has two precluded courses, which includes PSYC 257 and PSYC 323. This means that PSYC 228 may not be taken for credit by students if credit has already been obtained for PSYC 257 or PSYC 323. There are no prerequisites for this course and there is a Challenge for Credit option if you are interested.

Introduction to Human Development is made up of eight units, and requires eight quizzes worth five percent each, a critical review assignment weighing fifteen percent (three percent for the approval and twelve percent for the assignment), a research participation assignment for another five percent, and the final examination worth the remaining forty percent. The eight units discussed in this course cover the process of human development, which includes infancy, early childhood, middle and late childhood, adolescence, emerging and young adulthood, middle adulthood, and late adulthood. To receive credit for PSYC 228, students must successfully complete all quizzes and the assignment and must achieve a composite course grade of at least a “D,” which is equivalent to fifty percent and a grade of at least fifty percent on the final examination.

Dr. Bob Heller joined Athabasca University as a tutor in 1989 and joined the faculty in 2001. He has been the coordinator for PSYC 228 since 2001 and he explains that “during that time, PSYC 228 has evolved from a child development course to a lifespan course covering cradle to grave change.” Alongside PSYC 228, Dr. Heller also coordinates PSYC 381 (Psychology of Adult Development), PSYC 375 (History of Psychology), and he coordinates and tutors PSYC 355 (Cognitive Psychology).



I gave Dr. Heller the opportunity to introduce himself to students and he stated “I obtained my Ph.D. in Experimental Psychology in 1992 at the University of Alberta and held a Post-Doctorate Research Fellowship, from 1992-94, in the Centre of Excellence on Aging Research Network where I conducted research on driving, dementia, and aging. I joined the Centre for Psychology at Athabasca University in 2001 as an associate professor and became interested in conversational agents and their role in distance education. This research has evolved into an investigation of animated historical figures as pedagogical agents and their place in immersive worlds. See <http://psychology.athabascau.ca/faculty/bheller/>.”

When asked to describe PSYC 228 to students, he explains that “Psychology 228 covers development from birth to death and the preparations before and after. Given the scope of coverage, it is easier to divide the lifespan into seven stages or epochs: Infancy, early childhood, late childhood, adolescence, emerging adult, middle adulthood, and old age. In this course we spend a couple of chapters on each epoch covering the physical and mental change that occur along the way. There are a number of theoretical approaches to explain and understand the changes that we also cover.”

As for the structure of the course, he states that “There are eight units in the course, one for each epoch plus an introductory unit to describe some theories and methodology. There is one online quiz for each unit consisting of a combination of multiple-choice questions and some long answer question and each quiz counts 5% towards the final grade. There is also a paper worth 15% where students investigate a topic of their choosing by identifying and summarizing an instructor-approved review article. A review article is a special type of scholarly article that summarizes other research on a focused topic. There is also a research participation component worth 5% that offers students an opportunity to participate in an online research study conducted by faculty at the psychology department. Finally, the final exam is worth 40% and structured much like the quizzes with a combination of multiple-choice questions and long answer questions.”

He explains that “Based on the feedback provided so far, PSYC 228 is seen as average or fair in terms of the workload.” Furthermore, despite there being very little participation for PSYC 228 on the [AUSU Course Evaluation website](#), the reviews from the students are very positive.

When asked if he had any advice for students who are considering enrolling, he states “Make the course work for you. Have some aging parents? Are you a first-time parent? Are you emerging into adulthood? Use the issues that face you today to guide your choices when it comes to the review paper.”

As for who he recommends this course to, he explains “Quite honestly, I do not think there is a single student that would not benefit from a course like PSYC 228. It is like an owner’s manual for life.”

When asked what he believes students will take away from this course, Dr. Bob Heller believes that it is “The paper. Most students remember the papers they write in the courses they take. I hope that students take the advice mentioned above and use the assignment to investigate something of personal interest.”

Though the paper is also what he believes students struggle with the most, stating “Sometimes structure is very helpful, especially in new situations. Having too much freedom can be daunting.”

Whether PSYC 228 is a degree or program requirement of yours, or the topics discussed above are of interest to you, this course will have you learning a lot of interesting material surrounding the topic of human development.

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



## The Unexpected Perks of Victimhood

Wanda Waterman



"You can either be a victim of the world or an adventurer in search of treasure. It all depends on how you view your life."

- Paulo Coelho

Victimhood can help you get away with being a schmuck. This strategy was writ large in Cabbagehead, a character invented by the eighties comedy troupe the Kids in the Hall. Cabbagehead was a professional victim if ever there was one, using the fact that he was born with a cabbage for a head as an excuse

for his extreme rudeness. If that didn't help him get sexual favours from women he would claim he'd had a hard childhood.

By "victim" I don't mean those who find themselves oppressed by circumstances over which, at the moment, they have no control. There is simply nothing good about a situation like that. You could argue that pain and suffering build character and will pay off later, but "pay off later" are the key words here; there really is nothing desirable about pain in the here and now unless you're the cursed sadist causing all the pain.

The state of deliberate victimhood has, however, much to commend it. Choosing to remain a victim does come with benefits; do *not* pretend it doesn't.

Let's start with how it gives you a break from the obligations of life. If your house burns down, you've been unjustly condemned to prison, you've lost a loved one, or you've been mugged, decent people will cut you some slack. For at least a little while you can avoid doing those things you had to do but didn't especially want to. You can wait a spell. This is a good thing.

So is the fact that someone will (or should) rush to comfort you. We all need human kindness, and sometimes being a victim is the only way to get it. Sucks, but there it is. It's one reason why many people deliberately try to remain sick, depressed, imprisoned, or drugged up even when offered a means of escape.

Then there's the glamour. Being a victim grants a certain panache. The tragic elegance of tea beside a rained-on window while listening to sad songs in a torn wedding dress, eyes bright with tears; it's imagery of timeless mystery. You can even glamourize such unsavoury circumstances as homelessness, alcoholism, and broken dreams. Those of us who haven't much to endear us to the world can usually count on misfortune to grant us at least a smidgen of allure.

Victims are often in line for legal settlements. Winning such settlements depends on proving significant amounts of pain and suffering, so it behooves us to suffer as much as possible in order to guarantee a win. No pain, no gain. Those piled-up settlement sums are not for the stoic.

Victimhood can also be a great way to hurt your opponents, because opposing or persecuting a victim nearly always makes people look bad and brings them social disapproval. (How dare they turn down your request for a loan! Don't they know you have a terminal illness?)

Victimhood invites rescue. Well, not really; your knight in shining armour is actually more interested in nailing an heiress than he is in saving your sorry arse from the dragon, but myths die hard. Stay a victim long enough and some poor sucker may just want to save you, even sticking around until they realize they're doing all the giving and getting nothing in return.

Victimhood can be a great way to defend your vices and avoid accountability. You're addicted to crack because your girlfriend dumped you, you rob convenience stores because your stepfather beat you, you shoplift because you were molested, etc. Many people will excuse you for your evil deeds and leave you to your destruction. Isn't that what you wanted?

Of course, the downside of victimhood is that it becomes your prison, preventing your survival, reining in your independence, halting your personal growth, reducing your self-actualization, and squelching your inner power, which only comes from standing on your own two feet and fighting your own battles.

But why bother? With so much to commend it, why not just remain a victim?

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



## Scholarship of the Week

Digging up scholarship treasure for AU students.

**Scholarship name:** ATCO Indigenous Education Awards

**Sponsored by:** ATCO

**Deadline:** July 15, 2019

**Potential payout:** up to \$1500

**Eligibility restriction:** Applicants must be a Canadian Indigenous person, be enrolled full-time in a high school or an accredited post-secondary institution or training program, and not be the child of an ATCO employee.

**What's required:** An online application form, along with proof on enrolment for the upcoming school semester, your most recent transcript, a reference letter, and a 500- to 1000-word essay describing why you are a suitable candidate.

**Tips:** Read the [application guide](#) for tips on using the online application form and FAQs.

**Where to get info:** [www.atco.com/en-ca/our-commitment/indigenous-partnerships/indigenous-education-programs.html](http://www.atco.com/en-ca/our-commitment/indigenous-partnerships/indigenous-education-programs.html)





## The Struggling Student Rants

### Man-Power or Gas Power: The Lesser of Two Evils

Angela Pappas



Gas prices across Canada are not going down anytime soon. Just this past April, prices went up in all of our provinces as the federal carbon tax kicked in. According to Global News, in late April, the price of gas in British Columbia almost reached \$2 a litre, with some unsuspecting vehicle owners waking up to empty tanks (2019). Whether you support the oil & gas industry or not is a topic for another day. What I would like to point out, though, is that we all need a means of transportation in this vast land we call home. AU students do have an advantage: we don't need to get to a physical campus to complete our post-secondary education. You might, however, have to hop in the car to get to work and back, or to go for your weekly grocery run. Personally, when it's

minus 30° Celsius out there, you couldn't pay me enough to walk to the grocery store.

We can do something, however, to save both the planet and our pockets, now that summer has arrived in full swing. For those able to do so, there is little excuse for not venturing outside and getting some fresh air. One means of getting our vitamin D and getting to work could be cycling. Yes, the good, ole' fashioned "hop on your bike and push the pedal to the metal" kind of cycling. You can even pretend you're one of the protagonists on Netflix's hit series *Stranger Things*. I'm not saying you should attempt this if you have a 2-hour commute each way. I do applaud the die-hards who do get to work on their bikes year-round, even with ten feet of snow; we had a few people do this in my previous organization. For the rest of us who use the Canadian weather as our excuse, now that it's nice out and we're all venturing outside like sun-starved zombies, for the few months we are afforded the luxury of above zero temperatures, I urge everyone to check out the local garage sales and pick up a nice set of wheels, helmet, and knee pads. How is this frugal living, you might ask? The initial cost of a nice bike (used or brand new) and decent cycling gear can be pricey. Compared, however, to the costs you incur by choosing to drive, or any of the other alternatives, a bike can save you money in ways you may not have even thought of. Plus, I'm not even factoring in how much fun it is, feeling like a ten-year-old all over again!

### Healthcare

According to Gee & Takeuchib, sitting in rush hour traffic day, day after day, increases stress levels (2004). Traffic stress decreases our well-being, including lower physical health levels and higher depression. Concerns over traffic, among other vehicle-related issues, were significant, long-term, stressors faced especially by those of us living in highly congested areas. The truth is, I don't need Gee & Takeuchib to tell me this; I have thought about pulling over and just walking home hundreds of times while stuck in traffic on my commute from the office. Every time, just as this thought crosses my mind, I see the guy on the bike whiz right past us all, with a grin on his face and surely thinking to himself "Adios, suckers!"

Contrary to being stuck in traffic, frequent exercise from cycling improves cardiovascular endurance, reduces stress, improves mental well-being, promotes weight loss, and builds muscle. All this, in turn, improves our overall health ([Arthurs-Brennan, 2019](#)).

So, how does this save us money? Healthcare costs, associated with heart disease, obesity, and other common musculoskeletal issues, pop up as we age and the less active we are. All these things can end up costing thousands of dollars each year, even for us in Canada with our universal healthcare system or those with private healthcare plans. Consider how cycling can strengthen muscles and joints, improve heart health, lower cholesterol, prevent diseases and lower body fat percentage. It's easy to see how consistent cycling can lower your annual healthcare bills for massages, physiotherapists, joint & arthritis pain-relief balms and ointments, and all the things we try to use to take away the aches and pains.

### Daily Transportation

The cost of vehicle ownership is not just buying the car itself, contrary to my husband's stubborn opinion. According to the Government of Canada "Vehicle Lease or Buy Calculator", a \$30,000 vehicle, purchased from a dealership, on a 4-year payment plan, even at 0% interest, means a payment of \$718.75 every month ("[Vehicle Lease or Buy Calculator - Spending Smarter Calculators - Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada](#)", n.d.). Add registration fees, insurance premiums, gas, and maintenance to the pot, and stir. You will then produce the true cost of vehicle ownership for each month of the year. In Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta, the vehicles of choice tend to be SUVs or pick-up trucks, due to road and weather conditions; so I can approximate with confidence that truck ownership will be double any of the above calculations. My point is, even if you spend \$500 up front for a nice bike and decent gear, annual costs to commute to work, as a cyclist, will average \$40-\$50 per month, the first year. After that, it's free sailing—or riding. This adds up to some significant savings if you ask me.

### Gym Memberships

A membership at your local gym tends to cost upwards of \$20 per month, or \$240 a year. The kicker is, most people don't even go to the gym after the first two-three weeks, myself included. While you might have to spend a bit up front if you don't already have a bike, helmet, and riding gear, once you buy the required equipment, there really isn't anything else left to buy. A good bike should last you for years if it is well maintained and taken care of. This translates to extra savings for you, and a

### AU-thentic Events Upcoming AU Related Events

#### Searching with Discover

Tues, Jun 25, 10:00 to 11:00 am MDT  
Online

Hosted by AU Library

[library.athabascau.ca/orientations.html](http://library.athabascau.ca/orientations.html)

No pre-registration necessary

#### Undergrad Program Orientation for New Students

Tues, Jun 25, 5:00 to 6:00 pm MDT  
Online

Hosted by AU Faculty of Business

[business.athabascau.ca/event-details/business-undergraduate-new-students-information-session-062019/](http://business.athabascau.ca/event-details/business-undergraduate-new-students-information-session-062019/)

Register online at above link

#### Online MBA Info Session

Wed, Jun 26, 3:00 to 4:00 pm MDT  
Online

Hosted by AU Faculty of Business

[business.athabascau.ca/event-details/online-mba-executives-information-session-2019-jun26/](http://business.athabascau.ca/event-details/online-mba-executives-information-session-2019-jun26/)

Register online at above link

*All events are free unless otherwise specified*

cheaper way to get in shape than that unused gym membership.

### Parking

Once you start cycling, chances are you'll take your bike out for a spin more often than not—it takes 21 days to build a habit. This means that when you venture out, to go to the movie theater, the shopping mall, or downtown, you won't spend countless hours trying to find and pay for parking. Just thinking of all the times I've driven around the same block, in circles, until I managed to find parking raises my stress levels, which takes me back to point number one I mentioned, healthcare costs.

If your argument is that you can't go to the mall on a bike and with five kids in tow, I can agree to that. However, my counterargument will be that you can go to the office on a bike when you're not with the kids. The good news is some employers now provide free bicycle parking for any employees that work in core business districts. These bike-parking accommodations can take the form of free indoor bike cages, in underground parkades, or outdoor city racks; it all depends on where you work. I urge you check out if bike-parking perks are part of your work package, and if they aren't, bring it up with management or HR. It's an excellent way for the company to promote environmental responsibility and show that they care about their employees' health and wallets.

### Productivity

Finally, riding a bike to work instead of driving increases overall productivity by getting your brain going and reducing your stress levels before the day begins. Lierop & El-Geneidy at McGill University completed a study that showed that drivers have the lowest odds of feeling energized at work, and the highest odds of arriving to work late (2017). Cyclists, on the other hand, have the highest odds of being energized and punctual. While it is possible that individuals who already have an active lifestyle are self-selecting to commute by bicycle, previous research has also found that physical activity increases alertness and personal well-being (Biddle & Mutrie, 2008).

While all this fancy research might not seem like it translates to any type of monetary value, comparing your productivity with that of you're the guy in the next cubicle makes for a pretty good argument when it's time to ask for that raise during your annual review. You're welcome.

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*Angela Pappas is a part-time AU Certificate student who enjoys learning and discussing anything personal finance and personal development related.*



## The Study Dude

### If Lonely at AU, Woo Yourself a Pal

Marie Well



*“If you go looking for a friend, you’re going to find they’re very scarce. If you go out to be a friend, you’ll find them everywhere”*

(Zig Ziglar as cited in K. D.).

At AU, you might miss the friendships found at physical universities. You might even feel isolated or lonely. “Friendships are important—if not crucial—for our well-being” (K. D., p. 1). But no need to fret, because below are five tips for making pals:

**Join local clubs or groups related to your interests.**

“When you pursue hobbies and activities you enjoy, you have a good chance of meeting people with similar interests” (K. D., p. 2). I’d love to join a Bollywood dance class. And a bubbly artist teaches Thursday night classes nearby. I might drop in one day, when I can afford it. So, “commit to 2-3 clubs that you really enjoy and care about” (K. D., p. 7). In university, my two steadies were the university television station and the gym.

**When considering clubs to join, ask yourself, “What hobbies would you love to do with your soul mate?”**

Activities I love to do with my partner include gym time, reading, meditating, and working on his business goals. But I would never want to do any of the following with even a friend: camp, party, travel, or consume toxins. Just not my things. So, figure out what activities you would love to do with your soulmate, and join those clubs. “Make a list of places, groups, clubs, classes and social networks where you might meet the kind of person above” (K. D., p. 8). I need to join book clubs but steer clear of vintage French wine.

**Once you find a pal place, make pals the date-night way:**

“While not everyone has the courage to actually do it, most of us know how to pursue a crush. Send flowers to their office. Invite them to a concert featuring a band you know that they love. Ask them to check ‘yes’ or ‘no’ under the question ‘will you go out with me?’ (Oh wait, are we not in third grade anymore?). Apply similar (but less romantic) tactics when pursuing the potential friend” (K. D., p. 3). When you haven’t any cash, drum up a hundred ways to say, “I love you,” through acts of kindness.

**When you find new friends, fish for points of compatibility:**

“One of the easiest ways you can see friendship compatibility is to see if you are into the same things. Just like on a date, you want to float things you enjoy and see if they do too .... Bring up a new sport / class / book you have been wanting to dive into and see what they say” (K. D., p. 8). Long ago, my beloved work colleague asked me to go snow shoeing with her. But I was overweight and barely able to walk two blocks to the bus stop. In hindsight, I wish I had been fit

enough to snowshoe with her. You build memories with friends when you put dibs in their delights.

### **Bask your partner—and friends—with unconditional love.**

I read the first three *free* chapters of a book called *Lessons for a Happy Marriage*. It teaches how to treat your partner with unconditional love. It says to *always* treat your partner like you're in the courting stage. In other words, give without expecting anything in return; always dwell on your partner's finer qualities; never speak ill or think unkindly about your partner; and do much more. But I think we should give unconditional love to not only our soul mate, but also our family, friends—and enemies. "So ... court your companions. Flirt with friends. Date your peers. I want you to think about making friends like dating, but without the heartbreak" (K. D., p. 5).

Now, even you AU introverts have five secrets for building buddies. So, go out and woo the world. But first, peer at your bookshelf to get a sense of the pals that'd make life most fun.

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## **Student Sizzle — AU's Hot Social Media Topics**

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

#### **AthaU Facebook Group**

Lynette seeks advice to help her face her first test in 25 years; plenty of support from the community. Chanelle was disappointed with an exam that didn't reflect course content; responders urge her to report this to the course coordinator and also on the course evaluation. Emily wonders if she should invest in a printer for AU course materials; responses suggest that other students' print requirements vary widely.

Other posts include medical withdrawal, accountability thread, getting detailed course info before registering, and courses ACCT 253, CRJS 370, and PSYC 402.

#### **reddit**

A student posts detailed course reviews on ACCT 250 and ACCT 253.

#### **Twitter**

@AthabascaU tweets: "Our biggest congratulations to former #AthabascaU writer in residence, Esi Edugyan! Esi was awarded an honorary doctorate of letters from @UAlberta yesterday! <https://bit.ly/2zeOKs0> #UAlberta19."

@austudentsunion tweets: "Do you want to get cheaper dispensing fees on prescriptions? How about free delivery, anywhere in Canada? AUSU has partnered with Alliance Pharmacy & Direct2U prescriptions to bring you pharmacy savings - switching is fast and easy! <https://bit.ly/2Y0tZul>."



## Women of Interest

### Amani Al-Khatahtbeh

Barb Godin



By Rhododendrites - This file has been extracted from another file: Rewriting the Story panel (81776).jpg, CC BY-SA 4.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=74567269>

Amani Al-Khatahtbeh is the editor and cofounder of MuslimGirl.com, which is the number one blog for Muslim women in the United States. As a result of her tireless work on Muslim Girl, at twenty-three years old Amani was named to Forbes 30 Under 30 in media. Forbes 30 Under 30 is issued annually with the American list acknowledging 600 businesses, where 30 individuals are selected from each of twenty industries. As well, Amani Al-Khatahtbeh is the author of the book *MuslimGirl: A Coming of Age* which was released October of 2016:

“It is a blunt observation, reflective of the potent message she delivers to her readers, a skillful unraveling of the myth of the submissive Muslim woman and a timely introduction to those other, very American and largely unheard 9/11 kids who bear the destructive burden of that one day, every day.”

An American Muslim woman who was born May 6, 1992 in New Jersey, Amani Al-Khatahtbeh grew up following the Muslim traditions and culture. At 13 years of age her family decided to move to Jordan due to the growing tensions and violence displayed against the Muslim community in America following the 9/11 attack on the World Trade Center. The family were forced to move back to America when Amani's mother became ill. This experience brought Al-Khatahtbeh closer to her Muslim roots,

and because of the pervasiveness of Islamophobia she chose to wear a hijab as representation of Muslim women.

During her high school years Amani was part of a small group of Arab American kids, however she was not accepted by her fellow students. So, at the age of 17 she founded MuslimGirl.com, a place where Muslim girls her age could identify with their cultural roots and traditions. MuslimGirl.com offers information from the perspective of a Muslim woman, including culture, lifestyle, and politics. In 2009 MuslimGirl.com began with a volunteer staff and by 2018 its readership had documented 1.7 million hits.

Amani Al-Khatahtbeh does not discuss her relationships or private life; she has chosen to keep this confidential. Plus, she has never been seen with a significant other, with whom she may assume to be involved. As a result speculation looms about whether she is in a secret relationship, or even married. Amani is a strikingly beautiful woman, with charming personality and an obvious intelligence. She has been acknowledged as one of CNN's top 25 most influential Muslim Americans. Amani credits poet and woman of color, Maya Angelou, as an inspiring figure in her early life. On March 27, 2017 Amani Al-Khatahtbeh created Muslim Women's Day, as a means of celebrating Muslim Women and assuring their voices would be heard. Further information is



available at the following website: <https://www.cnn.com/2018/03/26/middleeast/muslim-girl-amani-al-khatahtbeh/index.html>

She can be found on Facebook and Twitter <https://twitter.com/xoamani?lang=en>

*Barbara Godin is a graduate of AU and writes the "Dear Barb" column. She lives in London, Ontario with her husband, and two dogs. She can be reached on twitter @BarbGodin*

## The Fit Student Laugh your Way to a Perfect GPA

Marie Well



A happy brain could make you a superstar student. One Harvard study showed that “happiness is positively associated with GPA for students in grades 4-12.” Another study “revealed a significant correlation between happiness and academic success.” So, if happiness boosts GPA, why waste time being sad?

In the undergrad, depression dipped my grades. Due to peer pressure, I cried every day for a year. I could hardly focus on studies, often stumbling over concepts that once came easily.

At my grad ceremony—while on stage—a student shoved me while another

knocked off my grad cap. As I accepted my degree and shuffled off stage, stripped of confidence, a kind-hearted professor ran up to me and embraced me in a hug. I hid my watering eyes in her shoulder. Later, the professor said she appealed to have the two students disciplined. But I never learned how it turned out. And that professor has since passed away. Bless her heart.

When I went into grad studies, the tide turned. Some of my harassers were now my students. (That is, until they dropped my class.) I grew fit and healthy. I won a scholarship for \$24,000, which enabled me to buy a professional wardrobe. I started a full-time job at a prestigious research lab while I worked on my thesis. And I fell in love with my ultimate friend.

So, never give up. Just hanging in there can turn your world around. But here are six better ways to find happiness—and higher grades:

### **Do high intensity aerobics for high intensity happiness.**

In other words, alternate between walking and running on the treadmill. Or do sprints on an exercise bike. Or do interval skipping where you skip hard for two minutes and then take a break—five rounds. Or do sprints on a grass surface as grass is easy on the joints. Flood your brain with feel-good chemicals.

### **Smile while you eat fruits and veggies—but eat ‘em raw.**

According to a study done at the University of Atago, New Zealand, “people who ate more uncooked produce had lower levels of symptoms related to depression and other mental illnesses,

compared to those who ate more cooked, canned, or processed varieties.” An apple a day keeps sadness away; but apple pies make grandma cry.

### **Chow on food that boosts your mood.**

Foods rich in tryptophan play roles in producing the “feel good” neurotransmitter serotonin; in fact, “the only way to increase serotonin is by ingesting tryptophan.” Of tryptophan-rich foods, I eat nuts, salmon, beans, pumpkin seeds, and dairy (such as organic yogurt and kefir milk). Chicken and turkey are great sources, too. A turkey’s life may not be so bad, given its high levels of tryptophan.

Of fruits and veggies, eat bananas, which brim with tryptophan—and butternut squash, which “can increase your energy levels and mood if you consume it regularly.” But also munch these feel good fruits and veggies: “carrots ... apples, dark leafy greens ... grapefruit, lettuce, citrus fruits, fresh berries, cucumber, and kiwifruit ... celery, cabbage, red onion, tomato, and mushrooms.” But eat whole foods. After all, a Papa John’s veggie pizza works until it doesn’t.

And cut out caffeine: “In people with sensitivity, caffeine may exacerbate depression.” But do sneak a taste of caffeine-rich dark chocolate: “dark chocolate stimulates the production of endorphins, chemicals in the brain that create feelings of pleasure.” Dark chocolate is an angel of temptation.

### **And clean your happy home with citrus essential oil.**

I use a mixture of forty drops of orange essential oil, half a cup of vinegar, and three cups water. It not only cleans the home but gets me whistling while I shine. And it polishes wood cupboards, too. Plus, “while many people diffuse Wild Orange essential oil to purify the air, this oil can also help uplift mood and increase feelings of energy.” So, sniff the citrus to twitch the smile.

### **Be the early bird with a smile.**

I read that the body starts repairing itself by 10 pm:

At 10 p.m., your body goes through a transformation following the rise in melatonin production. This ... phase of sleep is associated with .... the repair and restoration of your body .... If you are awake past 10 p.m., this process of free radical removal becomes interrupted, and your body’s ability to remove the effects of free radicals is significantly impaired.

So, I now go to bed by 9 pm. To my delight, I need one less hour of sleep to feel refreshed.

### **And meditate.**

I replace that missed hour of sleep with a half hour meditation. When I meditate, my headaches stop—and my moods skyrocket. Good thoughts knock out bad.

In one study,

participants learned a form of meditation known as loving kindness. Loving kindness meditation is a ‘technique used to increase feelings of warmth and caring for self and others.’ Results showed that this meditation practice produced increases in ... positive emotions, which in turn, produced increases in ... personal resources (e.g., increased mindfulness, purpose in life, social support, decreased illness symptoms).

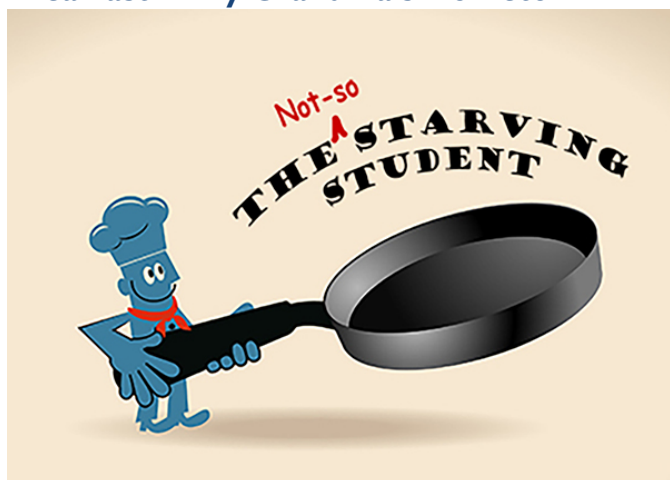
Show loving kindness to even your foes. When you hold no ill will, you feel no ill will.

So, those are six hacks for honing happiness. Now, turn your frown into a smile—and any C-minus into a perfect GPA.

## The Not-So Starving Student

### Breakfast in my Grandma's Hometown

Xin Xu



Recently, I had the pleasure of visiting my grandma's hometown of Hefei, China. The city has a population of three million and is one of the fastest growing cities in China. In a bustling city, I had the opportunity to try some of the traditional breakfasts locals have on a day to day basis. Being a busy student, I've lived on cereal and quick oats for the past 4 years of my life. However, having the opportunity to sit down for a proper breakfast this summer was one of the most appealing items on my agenda. And sitting down for breakfast in my grandma's hometown meant more to me than words could express. Here are some of the most memorable breakfast options in town.

#### Soymilk:

Unlike the traditional cup of milk for breakfast, bowlled soymilk is a common breakfast item in Hefei and many other cities in China. Soymilk has all the characteristics of a glass of milk except perhaps the fragrant bean scent. At first glance, it looks as if a bowl of rich 2% milk.

#### Green Chives Cake:

While most of us have heard of green onion cake, many have not encountered its infamous twin, the green Chives cake. The green Chives cake is a close competitor in taste but is more authentic to mainland China. For one, green chives cake isn't a cake at all. It's a pan-fried, vermicelli and egg filled perfection that is hard to put into words.



#### Chinese crepe:

"Jian Bing" or, directly translated, "pan-fried cake" is a variation of crepe with savory flavors. This breakfast item is well-known all over China and has made its way to street food joints in North America as well. The crepe contains a sweet paste, crunchy fried biscuit, cilantro, and optional eggs or Chinese doughnut. The ingredients are then rolled into a thin crepe that folds perfectly onto itself. The flavors profile is complex with a unique texture that is both crispy and soft.







### Soft Tofu:

In the morning, many locals sit down for a hearty bowl of soft tofu. Soft tofu has a pudding-like consistency and is flavored with a highly savory sauce that is mixed in with the tofu. This popular breakfast item goes along perfectly with other pan-fried items and balances out the grease from the former. Soft tofu is quite unlike any other tofu you've had. In fact, this tofu is so intensely soft that it can be drunk right out from your bowl.

### Shao Mai:

often known as Siu-Mai in North America, this beautiful creation is as uniquely delicious as it looks. Inside the translucent wrap is a mixture of sticky rice, ground pork, and mushrooms. Together, the wrap and filling are steamed and served hot.

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



## Fly on the Wall Happy Saint-Jean-Baptiste Day



## Jason Sullivan

### Celebrating the Uniqueness of Quebec and our Athabasca Unity!

265 000 students have graced the proverbial halls of Athabasca University since it opened in 1970. Despite differences of age or geography, we all share an intellectual bond as members of the academic diaspora that is AU. Turns out, we are not alone in sharing a unique bond with those who are surrounded by a different and larger culture. At AU we're all a bit like Quebec! Monday, June 24th is Quebec's *Fete Nationale* so let's join in the

celebrations and appreciate the unique awesomeness that is *La Belle Province*.

The Quebecois people who descend from the founding of New France in 1608 have some natural affinities with we at AU: our status as distance students belies our tenuous and largely invisible link with our proverbial motherland up in Athabasca itself. Wherever we are at in our studies, we are all part of Athabasca. Quebecois likewise are bound to one another across the world by their shared ethnicity as ontological denizens of their province. They celebrate this bond in places as diverse as Tokyo, Brussels, Mexico City, Acadie-Bathurst and New Orleans.

Saint-Jean Baptiste Day is thus a special celebration of all that is unique about that bastion of Francophone elegance that is Quebec. The first recorded celebrations of the date were in 1646 “on the banks of the Saint Lawrence River with bonfires and shots from a cannon”. In modern times, it attained statutory holiday status in 1925.

### **Wherever We Go, There We Are...As AU or As Quebecois**

Quebecois I have personally known love being here in my home province, the ol' *Columbia-Britannique*, but they are also quick to share with me their longing for the joys of their homeland in Quebec. There's something comforting in the air when one is back at home. We too, at AU, can feel cut off from the larger concrete infrastructure of a regular university campus; distance education can lack a certain settled sense of belonging and leave us ill at ease with our status as students. A certain *AmpUtation* may even be said to have occurred; where in a previous academic incarnation many of us had a tangible campus to call home we now wander the nebulous halls of an online university like beheaded ghosts from a spectral past.

Here Saint-Jean-Baptiste Day serves not only to illustrate the glories and tragedies of Quebec's history but also a key aspect of the relative isolation of AU life: we're not wholly in academia in that our spatial surroundings are a far cry from the ivory towers of so-called higher learning. This may be cause for celebration of our intellectual independence, but, nonetheless, the apparent incompleteness of our AU existence bears the scar of shattered origins. Many of us, not to mince words, flunked out of college and had to re-enter academia at a later date. AU is a place where we built our identity as scholars outside and even in opposition to the surrounding cultural life of our lived environments and even universities themselves. Likewise, Francophone culture possesses a special identity in contrapuntal opposition to the predominant Anglo cultural reality of North America. Saint-Jean-Baptiste day may evoke little recognition outside of celebrations in Quebec but its slogan of “8 millions d'enticelles” (8 million sparks) symbolizes the energy of the actual citizens of Quebec (<http://montreall.com/la-fete-nationale-celebrate-saint-jean-baptiste-in-montreal/>)

### **Quebec: A History of Biblical Proportions**

The namesake of Quebec's national party reminds us of the conflicted origins of modern-day Lower Canada. (To know the day Biblically is, well, more than to know it as a euphemism often associated with college life shenanigans though history. But we college kids at AU are here to learn more than to fornicate, even if we do know how to throw a good party.) The Bible story goes as follows: A particularly stimulating dance was performed by “the daughter of Herodias”, a noble princess. Perhaps the dancer was lasciviously enlightening or perhaps she was philosophically stimulating, or perhaps a bit of both but who is to say, as the Bible lacks illustrations. In any case, the crowd went wild. The key figure among the audience was one King Herod; to show his appreciation he offered the fulfilment of a wish and, much obliged, Herodias called for the decapitation of the famous evangelist and baptizer named John. Shortly he was tracked down and his head severed ISIS-style before being brought forth and presented, *Top Chef* style, on a silver platter. Ugh! (Not to mention mixed metaphors: double ugh, maybe?) Herod was a man of his word and, although he regretted it, he kept his promise. As AU students we too experience a certain decapitation as our lofty academic brains often experience grave distance from our non-scholarly corporeal surroundings. This sort of separation also characterizes the historical position of the Quebecois people vis a vis their incipient ruling class.

### **Original Beginnings;**

On September 13th of 1759, on the Plains of Abraham outside Quebec city, the British general Brock defeated his French counterpart Montcalm and thus the subordination of Quebec to Anglophone rule began. Some historical theorists have termed the era that followed, and

continued at least until Rene Levesque and the quiet revolution of the 1960s, as a *decapitation*. Professor Fyson from the University of Laval summarizes: " In the classic view, summed up in the "decapitation thesis", the Conquest resulted in the wholesale replacement of a francophone elite by a new, anglophone one. There were of course nuances to this: on the one hand, the persistence of fragments of the old elite of New France, notably the seigneurs and the curés, who allied themselves with their new masters; and, on the other, the growth, from the beginning of the nineteenth century, of a new fragment of the francophone elites, based on the liberal professions and on small-scale, local merchants. Both these fragments of the elites, however, were subordinated to the dominant British elites; further, both drew their power in large part from rural areas" (<http://www.profs.hst.ulaval.ca/Dfyson/LocalJudiciary.htm>)

Like John the Baptist, Quebec was symbolically defeated and humiliated by the British on the Plains of Abraham. Decapitation thesis suggests that incipient and upwardly mobile bourgeoisie scrambled (and were ejected) back to France and other colonies along with their businesses, as did landed aristocrats with their inherited wealth; both groups were largely replaced by English overlords. The language of rule became English and this alienated French speakers; it wasn't until the past half century that French became the official language of Quebec street signs and government itself. An enforced conformity to English was a hallmark of Quebec life in somewhat the same way as we at AU may be expected by peers to fit the mold of university students even though we don't.

Culturally, the symbolic language of university students is more about dorm parties and coming of age than actual academic studies. Although the average age of undergrads at AU is 23 it's a different sort of 23, with a different personal language, than that of a student who remains sequestered on a college campus since graduating high school. Whatever our age, our life experience prior to and outside of AU belies our rounded experience as AU students. In a sense we at AU lack the trappings of a typical university experiences in the way Quebec has historically lost the usual path to nationhood that history takes. After all, countries like Italy and Germany were only united as nation-states at around the time Canada came into being! Yet, I think we can all agree that AU benefits us greatly with its flexibility; our schooling is what we make of it and the Quebecois of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century have made their culture and homeland a beloved and valuable part of the Canadian nation-state.

### **Being Ourselves as We Learn And Grow; Our Own Personal States of Evolving Self**

Free-thinking is often thought but less often spoken; many a student remains mum in a class while quietly harbouring fascinating and ingenious viewpoints on the subject matter. A joyous part of AU is that we can, with our tutors' guidance and consent, investigate academic realms that might be a little off topic in a typical brick and mortar classroom setting or that we are too uncomfortable to bring up in a class discussion. Confidence often comes from writing and then speaking to others afterward, and this is one great virtue of an AU education; we hone our minds such that we increase our personal pedagogical capacities.

As Quebecois know, immersed as they are in the hegemony of an English-speaking country, the whims of the masses limit certain discourses. Yet we can speak truth to power. A classic French fable illustrates this fact in fine fashion. It's called *The Wolf and the Lamb* and its outcome serves as a reminder not to blindly trust those with authority in any setting. LaFontaine's story goes as follows: Once upon a time a lamb ambled up to a stream and began to lap its refreshing water. Slaking itself in thirsty bliss, the little creature failed to notice the approach of a wily wolf who, confronting the woolly fluffball, announced that the lamb was stealing from the wolf's stream. How can this be, asked the lamb. Surely the waters were free for all. The wolf (we might name him *Nestle* (<https://www.corporate.nestle.ca/en/ask-nestle/water/answers/nestle-waters-british-columbia-overview>) replied that no, he alone was sovereign over these lands, a canine king of the



castle, and the waters were his too. To this he would brook (no pun intended) no dissent and the lamb was unable to dissuade him from the wolf's right to claim unquestioned ascendancy over the stream. With time for discourse over, the wolf promptly killed and ate the lamb with no silver platter involved. Lafontaine's poem summarizes its theme of how might makes right with the following refrain: "The right of the stronger is always better; and we will prove it right now" ([http://www.lieder.net/lieder/get\\_text.html?TextId=5710](http://www.lieder.net/lieder/get_text.html?TextId=5710)). By seeing the injustice of this state, the poem illustrates a truth that may be overcome with righteous virtue; there's a reason that those in the know refer to Saint-Jean-Baptiste day as a bigger party than Canada Day. Celebrating their uniqueness carries a special energy with it for Quebecois.

So, as we have seen, the will of an English majority in Canada has been the historical fate of Quebec. But on Saint-Jean Baptiste day people celebrate their unique heritage and the ties that bind them together in their French culture. In fact, due ostensibly to 88% of rental leases expiring on the 30<sup>th</sup> of June each year, July 1st is in Quebec colloquially known as 'moving day' (<https://www.cooksinfo.com/moving-day>). Some celebrate Canada Day too but the real party is June 24<sup>th</sup>. Likewise, we at AU are always a bit out of step with regular university campuses simply by our difference and isolation. It's our diversity and difference from ordinary colleges that makes AU a special institution; a plurality of voices populate our virtual campuses and hopefully find polysemic expression here on the pages of *The Voice* magazine.

So, historically bloodied but far from unbowed, the Quebecois today are a resilient and delightful people; whether in Pincher Creek or Port Alberni I can speak to my experience as one of fascination and appreciation of Quebecois culture: not one encounter has lacked a memorable charm on the part of my French interlocutor. Quebecois in my experience know how to have fun in the way we at AU know how to relish our studies. Like the Quebecois, we know we are part of something larger than ourselves. From such sentiments our AU nation is born. So let's celebrate the National Party of Quebec with our AU heritage, be it long or short, in mind!

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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.*



Dear  
Barb

Barbara Godin

## Meet the New Boss

*Dear Barb:*

*Recently, I began working at a small company doing administrative work for the summer. I'm halfway through my degree in business and looking forward to graduating. Most of my summer jobs have worked out well, but this one is challenging. My boss is in her early thirties and this is her first time as manager. Her position seems to be going to her head! She is very demeaning towards all the staff. There are three full-time staff and three part-time, summer staff. I spoke to the permanent employees and they said she used to work with them and then got promoted. They said she used to be great but changed a lot when she got promoted. Apparently, the office has been running the same way for ten years and now she has decided to change everything. Some of the other employees have tried to challenge her, as a result she treats them poorly and gives them the shitty jobs, and therefore people are backing off. I don't think this is right and I do not feel we have to put up with this, but we are fearful if we go over her head, the situation will become worse. Do you have any advice for us? Thanks, Cathy.*

Hey Cathy:

Thanks for sharing your very important issue. Having daily problems with your boss can make for a very unpleasant place to spend your days. Has anyone spoken to your boss about how she makes them feel. Often people don't realize

how their words can make another person feel. As you said this is the way she treats everyone, not just you, therefore all the employees need to get together and share their experiences. Once this done, and there seems to me a common consensus, arrange to have a staff meeting with your boss where everyone can share your feelings with her. If she is not open to this, then you will have to go to her superior.

Since she was promoted into this position, it must be difficult for her as she went from being on the inside of the circle to the outside. She also has to find her place in the hierarchy. Also, it is possible she wasn't trained properly to assume this position. By bringing the situation to everyone's attention, changes can be made. In the meantime, there are things you can do to better cope with the situation. For example, try not to take things personally. Some people are very sensitive and creating a tougher exterior may allow you to let the small things go. However, if you feel your feelings are valid and you were belittled, bring it to your boss's attention right then. This will give her a chance to explain what she meant, or at least to realize how she made you feel. Keep in mind, this is a big step in your boss's life and everyone needs time to adjust. Thanks Cathy.

*Email your questions to [voice@voicemagazine.org](mailto: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.*





Poet Maeve  
Natural Gifts

Wanda Waterman





## Students are Voting

**CASA**

# CASA | ACAE

Canadian Alliance of Student Associations  
Alliance canadienne des associations étudiantes

### And they Care About Jobs, Education Affordability, and Climate Change

OTTAWA, June 18, 2019 – The Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA) released a polling report today, showing that post-secondary students are very motivated to vote in the upcoming federal election, and that political parties all have a chance to gain their support by addressing their main concerns.

It is a common belief that young people and students are not reliable voters. However, this report unveils a trend of increased voter turnout among young people and students in the past several

years, with 93% of post-secondary students reporting that they plan to vote in the upcoming federal election. Given that those from the Millennial and Gen Z generations (which make up the majority of post-secondary students) will be the largest voting group in the election, it is crucial that political parties pay careful attention to the issues they care about.

Students made their top priorities for Canada clear:

- 1. Creating good job opportunities for young Canadians**
- 2. Making college and university more affordable**
- 3. Dealing with climate change and the environment**
- 4. Making housing more affordable**
- 5. Improving Canada's health care system**

In addition to providing insights into where students' current political leanings lie and the issues that will inform their vote, the report addresses other top student concerns. For instance, it sheds light on how concerned students feel about their student debt and the effects of automation on their future career prospects. It also delves into issues of sexual violence on campus and doing more to provide post-secondary education to Canada's Indigenous population.

Adam Brown, Chair of CASA and Vice-President External of the University of Alberta Students' Union, says, "CASA and student associations across Canada are developing a non-partisan voter mobilization campaign, called Get Out The Vote, to ensure as many students as possible get to the polls and have their voice heard in the upcoming federal election. Political parties would be wise to consider the power of the student vote and the concerns that are top-of-mind for this group."

The information on this page is provided by the AU Students' Union. The Voice does not create or edit this content. Contact AUSU at [services@ausu.org](mailto:services@ausu.org) with any questions about this article.

## IMPORTANT DATES

- **June 30:** [Deadline to apply for course extension for Aug](#)
- **Jul 10:** [Deadline to register in a course starting Aug 1](#)
- **Jul 15:** [Aug degree requirements deadline](#)
- **NOTE:** No Council Meeting in July
- **July 31:** [Deadline to apply for course extension for Sept](#)
- **Aug 10:** [Deadline to register in a course starting Sep 1](#)

## AUSU Year-Round Bursaries

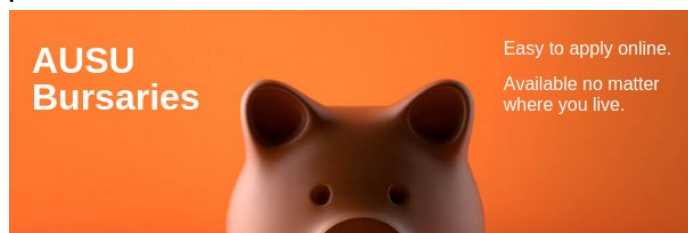
AUSU has a number of year-round bursaries available for members **in financial need**.

**Computer Bursary** - provides new laptops for members who need one for their AU coursework.

**Emergency Bursary** - can pay for AU course extensions, late exam, or supplemental exam fees for members who require them due to unforeseen circumstances.

**Travel Bursary** - can pay student travel or accommodation costs required for their AU studies, such as travelling to convocation, labs, exams, or practicums.

Find complete details or apply online [here](#).



## AUSU Executive Blog

AUSU's June Executive Blog is posted!

Our new VPFA, Brittany Daigle, gives an overview of what the first month as an AUSU executive has been like and what council has been up to!

Check out our recent blog online [here](#).



## AUSU Council Retreat

AUSU just held its annual working council retreat in Edmonton! Your AUSU student council met up in Edmonton, from across Canada, for a 2-day whirl-wind planning, brainstorming, and networking session!

Some highlights of the retreat include:

- Fantastic student social event bringing together AU students from across Canada
- Student service overview and new opportunity discussions
- Member engagement review and brainstorming
- In-Person Meeting with AU AVP, Student and Academic Services, Dr. Alain May
- In-Person Meeting with AU Chief of Staff, Gilbert Perras
- Brainstorming and prioritizing advocacy initiatives
- Policy and Budget development and planning
- Overview of AUSU strategic plan and executive work plans
- In-person public council meeting
- Hosted a recording of the "AUSU Open Mic" podcast, (to be released soon!)
- Council team building and networking

Overall, it was a fun and productive weekend, with lots of plans, ideas, and discussions about how AUSU can best serve you, our members!

View more pictures on our website [here](#)!



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# CLASSIFIEDS

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Classifieds are free for AU students!  
Contact [voice@voicemagazine.org](mailto:voice@voicemagazine.org) for more information.

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## THE VOICE

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