



THE VOICE

Vol 27 Issue 42 2019-10-25

Minds We Meet

Interviewing Students Like You!

Ray

A Bittersweet Birthday

Dark Arts

Bring on the Fear

Plus:

*Reviewing Frankenstein's Origins
The AU Alumni Awards
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,
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 Halloween Budget

Karl Low



Yesterday, Premier Kenney released the UCP's first Alberta budget, and while I haven't had the time yet to do a deep dive into it, I can tell you from first impressions that this is going to hurt. For those wondering, AU has announced that they're looking at their base operating funding to be cut by 3.6% and their infrastructure maintenance will be cut by 100%. This is extremely worrisome when you think about how AU has been classifying their communications technologies as "infrastructure". As the various technologies for mobile learning are advancing and changing by the day, the UCP government seems to have decided that AU, an institution based on that technology, really doesn't have any need to maintain it. Let's hope all the virus makers and hackers decide to take the next year off.

AU has noted that they're running a 14 million surplus, so it should be possible to manage the cut, but no word on how tuition will be affected. Given previous conservative governments, I just have to say that if you're an out of province student, you may

want to start seeing if you can get additional financial aid sooner rather than later.

It's also been noted already that while almost all the secular schools are seeing cuts to their budgets, many Christian schools are not. I haven't checked this out personally, so take it with a grain of salt, but you can bet that part of my time away next week will be used investigating it.

Which brings me to my next topic, there will be no new issue of The Voice Magazine next week, as I'm taking another short holiday to prepare for Halloween (the best holiday, if you ask me) do some winterizing around the house, and in short catch up on all the stuff I should have been doing since the summer.

Fortunately, this week's issue is slightly larger than usual, and filled with good stuff, including a straight up article from me on attending the AU Alumni awards. But better than that, we've got our feature interview with a student who wants to bring music into healing, and is seeking her Bachelor's of Psychology to help her with that task.

Also this week, we have a look at the nature of fear, as we explore whether it's even a useful emotion any more and why people still have it. Two writers this week take differing sides on the topic, with Darjeeling Jones finding the communal side of it and how fear can serve to bring relief from reality, while Wanda Waterman explores how fear is constricting and damaging to our becoming fuller human beings. And I can't forget to mention Barb Godin with an article about a loved one being lost. Barb has unfortunately had to deal with more than her share of tragedy, but I find that her writings about it tend to uplift and connect with a lot of readers.

We also have a review that looks at a book which explores the origins of one of the great Halloween monsters tales, *Frankenstein*. While it may be a tale that resonates with us even now, John Buhler takes a look at a book showing us how it connected even more strongly with the people at the time it was written.

Plus, we of course have course reviews, events, scholarships, advice, and more. Enjoy the read!

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karl".

MINDS WE MEET



Psychology major, Ayla Ulriksen, took a few moments out of her busy schedule in Okotoks to talk with the Voice about her desire to use music to heal, and how her AU studies fit into helping to make that a reality.

Could you introduce yourself? Who are you, where do you live, and what program are you enrolled in?

I am Ayla Ulriksen, situated in beautiful Okotoks, Alberta. I am in the final year of my Bachelor of Arts in Psychology Major. I love the program and I am eager to begin a career in line with my core values of caring and nurturing, equality, love of nature, friendship, and justice.

Could you describe the path that led you to AU? What made you realize you wanted to go back to school, and what pushed you into the Bachelor of Arts with a major in Psychology?

I had taken a couple years after high school to pursue a music teaching path, but after reading the book *This is Your Brain on Music* I had a deep desire to further my education to help bring the healing benefits of music to myself and the world. I began my undergrad at Ambrose University in Calgary, completing a practicum at JB music therapy. After two years of schooling,

I took a break to travel and work in the field as a family support counselor and a supportive room mate. After two years of that, I couldn't ignore the desire to finish my degree. I knew with a son and home to care for I needed flexibility.

I enrolled at Athabasca and am so grateful I have been able to come this far as a single mother! I still am unsure where I will end up but am more certain than ever that having an undergrad will open me up to finding a path that increases my potential as a woman, mother, and human. The more I see what Athabasca University has to offer, I see the vast amounts of support and guidance needed to secure an enriching career that suits my needs and wants.

Do you have any advice for people who are on the fence about going back to school?

My advice is to be persistent and be gentle. Keep moving forward and there is no room for judgment! All progress is good progress, and doubt kills more dreams than failure ever will!

What do you do like to do when you're not studying? Any hobbies?

I enjoy creating art, music, gardening, being in nature, making food, dancing and spending time with my family and community.

What are your plans for this education once you finish? What would be your dream career?

I dream of working with women to assist in overcoming trauma. I see music as a universal language that can tap into our deepest emotions. I appreciate a wide range of therapies and would love to integrate music therapy with counseling, sound and energy healing, and movement

practices like dance and yoga. Another dream would be open a retreat center that brings all these healing practices together.

Who in your life had the greatest influence on your desire to learn?

My challenges have always pushed me to find support as I grow and learn through them. None of this would have been possible without skilled guides by my side. I have had many teachers that have inspired me to keep growing, along with my mother, grandmother, and mentor.

Describe your experience with online learning so far. What do you like and what do you dislike?

I found it extremely challenging taking on three courses at a time. I had to adjust and find ways to stay dedicated amidst all the distractions of life, balancing working, mothering, and school. I like the flexibility and being able to work out of my home, but I also miss meeting new people and having physical contact with my Professors. The support is still out there with online schooling, but it is harder to connect without the face to face at times, as I tend to forget it is there.

Was there a point that you wavered about continuing your schooling? What caused it and what got you through it?

I had a tough time during a period where a not-so-helpful mentor talked me into leaving formal education to pursue metaphysical studies at a pseudo-science school. I have a love for the mystical, and my first School was a Christian University, so they didn't exactly mesh. Thankfully, I am back to finish what I started, but I did lose credits and opportunities dropping out and transferring, which still gets to me at times.

Are there any AU courses that you are excited to take?

I am so glad that Athabasca University offers courses that inspire my spiritual side, such as WGST 333 (Goddess Mythology, Women's Spirituality, and Ecofeminism) that I will be taking next September!

Is there anything that you have given up while attending AU? Was it worth it?

Living as a single parent student has meant less money and time to enjoy certain things, such as traveling, social events, and owning a home. I see this as the way it has to be for a time, to finish something important to me. Though I feel it will be worth it in the end!

How has communicating with your tutors been like?

I have found it to be acceptable, but I do miss walking into an office to have a chat with professors, counselors, etc., to talk about certain topics and assignments.

Do you find that your tutors reply to you quickly and provide enough feedback?

Overall, the tutors I have had respond fairly quickly and answer most of my questions adequately. It is the face-to-face aspect that I really miss the most.

What's your pet peeve if you have one?

The way we take more than our planet is capable of giving. Thankfully, it seems to be a prevalent issue, with things like single-use plastic awareness picking up. There is just too much that is wasted.

Describe the proudest moment in your life.

The birth of my son. He is the first grandchild to bless my parents and grandmothers. Celebrating four generations and becoming a mother were both very profound moments for me.

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

If I had to pick one, it would be to not try to do anything in my own power.

Could you elaborate on what you mean by trying not to do anything in “your own power?”

I have come to see how the Universe/God, Mother Spirit, and Christ all want to support me. I am blessed with a spiritual community that I can reach out to for inspiration and dialogue. I feel that decisions made in isolation are not as efficient, so it is important to remember to reach out! It truly does take a village and we are made for connection. There is truth that we are all connected at a physical level with the stars, planets, nature, and our breath. Life is more than what we see with our eyes. So, taking time to connect with my spiritual family has been instrumental in my life.

Have you done any travelling? Where has life taken you so far?

I find myself most at home in the forest, so I am grateful my home is near the Rocky Mountains. I have travelled through British Columbia, Europe, and Thailand as well. A trip to Mexico with my family was another wonderful travel experience!

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



Porkpie Hat Dark Arts



Darjeeling Jones

When I was younger, I was very much drawn to classic slasher-horror films, such as the *Friday the 13*, *Hallowe'en*, and *Nightmare on Elm Street* franchises. The reasons for this, I guess, were pretty typical. For one thing, it was escapist entertainment for a troubled, angst-ridden teen; after all, my life may have felt pretty bleak and overwhelming at the time, but it was not quite as bad as having one's head split open by an axe-wielding maniac, or being ripped to shreds by razor-sharp claws. For another thing, the tension and catharsis being

experienced while sitting in the darkened movie theatre, eating popcorn beside my friends, was a communal event. We were cringing together, holding our breath together, shrinking into our seats together, jumping in fright together, laughing together, displaying mock bravado and nonchalance together. For an eccentric and essentially introverted kid who often felt isolated and out-of-step with peers, it was good to feel in this way connected, at least temporarily, to others. (I also remember feeling the same way—free and alone, yet part of some communal happening—out on nightclub dance floors, the subsonic bass vibrating in my chest bone, surrounded by others who were similarly being transported by the music.) As well, the violence in these gory b-movies was gloriously excessive, and lavishly cathartic - almost operatic. In a world that often felt numbing, monotonous, and bleak, it was like a sweet burst of adrenaline, as opposed to a steady drip of novocaine. Finally (and I had no awareness of this at the time, but all the same I have come to realize this last point is the most significant to me) witnessing atrocities faked in the name

of art somehow made me feel *better* about the world. Far from making me afraid or depressed, seeing these horror films somehow *comforted* me.

I think I understand now why this is so. From a very young age I had been a pretty creative child, forever drawing, making up stories, playing games of make-believe. In my experience, there are few things in this life that are not a double-edged sword, and the price to be paid for having imagination is fear. And, of course, being immersed in the existential human condition means there is never any shortage of things to be afraid of. As a young child, those fears took the shape of ghosts, shadows, the dark, parental violence. As a teenager, they visited me in the forms of loneliness, sexual confusion, and the inky blackness of the cold war nuclear shadow.

But, if imagination was the venom, it was also the antidote. Imagination, in the form of art, was a means of exploring fear in a satisfying and transformative way. Like a good blues song, those old horror films refused to turn away from the troubles of life. Instead, they confronted them on their own terms - in the domain of fantasy. In doing so, they managed to perform a sort of alchemy, transmuting anxieties into some psychological substance that seemed vital, exciting, and strangely beautiful.

Over the years, my tastes have broadened. I'm still fond of Wes Craven, but overall I prefer to get my dosage of dark aesthetic vibes and angst-filled dystopian visions from the films of Kubrick, Bergman, and Fincher, from the novels of Martin Amis, Chuck Pahlaniuk, and Margaret Atwood, from the music of Tom Waits, Portishead, and Nick Cave. I will always have an appreciation for all those old slasher flicks, though, and the part they played in helping me through some shitty years.



Ray

Barb Godin



Ray was my brother-in-law for over fifty years. He passed away on my birthday this year. When I heard he was in the hospital and things were not looking good I kept thinking, “not on my birthday, I don't want to have to live with this memory.”

Ray was a special person. I know everyone says that about someone after they pass away, but Ray truly was a special person. I cannot remember a time when Ray was not a part of my life. Ray and my sister genuinely had a remarkable love. One which produced four children and numerous grandchildren. I didn't pay much attention to Ray while I was growing up; he was just the guy that everyone liked. He had a big presence and a bigger voice, and his hugs made you feel all warm and cozy. Ray made everyone he met feel they mattered to him and every person who met Ray remembered him, even if they only met him once. He always wore his signature red shirt and was often seen with a Tim Horton coffee in hand.

When I began writing he often critiqued my stories and more often than not played the devil's advocate with my Dear Barb column. If Ray suggested an alternate answer it frequently gave

me pause to reconsider. A couple of times Ray even sent questions in to The Voice signed "BIG RED." I had to laugh because I knew who it was. Ray and I had verbal sparring matches, but they never became serious or hostile. We shared a mutual respect. Ray wasn't the type of person you could get angry at, as his heart was in the right place. His love for his family was enormous and it was mutual.

As he began to physically decline, no one wanted to see it. He had been losing weight and had been having dizzy spells. He was hospitalized on a couple of occasions and diagnosed with having mini strokes. He seemed to come through them with no ill effects and quickly returned to being "Uncle Ray", as he was affectionately known. My heart broke when my sister called me the night before my birthday to tell me Ray had collapsed and was in the hospital, diagnosed with a brain bleed. He peacefully fell into a deep sleep and passed away the following day with family and friends gathered around.

Ray's funeral was huge, with hundreds of people attending and sharing all their special memories with my sister. In the six months since he passed, I think about him most days. I know he would have been proud that I won first place from the Professional Writer's Association of Canada for a story, congratulating me with one of his bear hugs. Ray was my brother-in-law, but he always felt more like a brother to me. I will always miss our special times filled with laughter and love. Ray possessed a unique gift that anyone would be grateful to have, and he will be remembered by all who knew him. But my birthday now will always be a bittersweet day, as my heart will be heavy with memories of the loss of my dear brother.

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



Why Fear?



Wanda Waterman

"The desire for safety stands against every great and noble enterprise."

-Tacitus

You have to love this oft-repeated horror flick scene: Our hapless hero or heroine is lying in bed when they hear a noise and feel driven to go out looking for the unknown menace, even if that means entering a dank basement or a cobwebbed attic. Of course, the lights don't work, and they have to use a flashlight or candle to light their way through the gloom, and this only adds to the sense of dread.

None of it makes any sense, but then, it isn't meant to; the scene has been set up to fill us with the thrill of intense fear, something we're willing to pay to experience vicariously.

Why Be Afraid?

But why is fear even there inside us (except to be exploited by the movie industry)? Sure, we hear about those rare instances when someone faced with imminent danger instantly and instinctively does the right thing and saves the day. But when most of us are afraid we either get aggressive or we let reason fly out the window, doing or saying things that don't help at all. Worse, fear sometimes paralyzes us just when we need to be getting out of the way.

The fight-or-flight response may have helped our ancestors survive wild animal attacks, but it's a bit of a liability nowadays. (The same might be said for the ability to gain weight and keep it on; this might have kept our forebears from starving, but in the age of refrigeration, factories, and mass transport it's rather a bother.) We need to know how to keep ourselves safe, but swift running and skilled combat are no longer of great advantage, especially when we fear losing a job, a cherished loved one, a good reputation, a sense of power, or a big chunk of change.

These latter, milder, low-lying but long-term fears are what create much of our stress, pushing us to fret our way through reams of pointless tasks to secure whatever we think matters. This fear-based stress takes a big toll on our health, our relationships, and our careers.

The Right Use of Fear

Stress isn't the only way chronic fear affects us in a negative way. There's also the drawback pointed out by Tacitus in the quote at the start: A desire for safety very often restrains us from moving to the next stage in our lives.

Fear holds you back. For example, perhaps your career would actually advance if you had the courage to speak up a little more, blow the whistle, ask for a promotion, or stop grabbing the dirty end of the stick every time it was handed to you. Maybe your health might improve if you were brave enough to change a few lifestyle habits. Perhaps your relationships would grow stronger if you could be more open about your feelings. And your social life might improve once you start seeing strangers as fellow travelers instead of threats to your well-being.

There's a special kind of fear (what Tacitus calls "a desire for safety") that can actually stand between you and your highest goals. When you refuse to confront this fear, instead choosing the comfort of the familiar, you stand to lose big. When you accept the fear of change and allow yourself to endure it patiently, you get to move on to the promised land. How do you make this special kind of fear work for you and not against you? It's simple: submit to becoming a chrysalis.

Being a Chrysalis

Imagine you're a nice fat caterpillar. You've already shed your hide several times, so you're used to regeneration, which means saying good-bye to something old while welcoming in something new (a change of skin). But what you're about to experience will be so radical that it's positively terrifying: you're going to change from a cute, chubby little creature with stubby legs into a glorious flying splendor. Everything about your soft little leaf-bound body is going to change inside the chrysalis.

As you experience metamorphosis you're going to be scared. You'll know that every last bit of you is turning into something else. There's nothing you can do about it but accept the fear, resting quietly in it and trusting nature's promise.

Caterpillars don't have a choice in whether or not they'll turn into winged beauties. The Source of All Life in its wisdom decreed it as their destiny. But we humans can choose whether or not we'll become what we were meant to be. When we sense changes occurring within us or hear life calling us to something more, we can move forward, through the fear, or retreat into our

comfortable routines. Many who've achieved greatness have been almost forced to do so because their lives provided little comfort to retreat into. Yet for every Louis Armstrong who's accepted the fear of change and moved forward there've been scads of orphaned children who've resigned themselves to lives of petty crime or wage slavery. Why? To avoid the greater terror of radical change.

Loving Fear

The fear of change is one you need to push through. You'll feel it as a tight sensation in your stomach, or even a dull ache. You may feel shaky, unsteady. You may be emotionally sensitive. But don't call it a broken heart, grief, or martyrdom. Don't deny it or try to repress it. Admitting that this is no more than a fear of change and simply riding it out is your ticket to the next stage of your own development. Love this fear and be attentive to it, remembering that the knot in your stomach is your power rising as your fear subsides.

As you're coming up to Halloween think of what your best self might look like as a costume. Wonder Woman? Pegasus? Paul Bunyan? Melinda Gates? The Dalai Lama? Ella Fitzgerald? Go for it. And, yes, embrace the fear.

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



Women of Interest Sybil Ludington

Barb Godin



Sybil Ludington was an American War Heroine who became famous for her horseback ride through various towns in Danbury, Connecticut, and Putnam County in upstate New York. On the night of April 26, 1777, Sybil Ludington rode 64 km during the dark of night to warn the militia that the British Forces were burning and pillaging in the area. Along her ride Sylvia used a stick to fight off would be attackers and was successful in reaching her destination. What makes her story so remarkable is that she was only 16 years old at the time. She is believed to have travelled twice the distance of Paul Revere's famous ride. Ludington's story was first published in 1880 and later recounted in a book about her father's life "[Colonel Henry Ludington: A Memoir](#)" which was published in 1907.

Some historians doubt whether this ride really took place, stating that the town of Danbury had already been alerted to the arrival of the British Army. It is also questionable whether Ludington volunteered for this momentous ride or was ordered by her father. In 1907, Louis S. Patrick, Ludington's great nephew, who was a historian in Connecticut, wrote an article and claimed Sybil's

father commanded her to take a horse and ride through the night advising the militia to be at his home by daybreak. When she returned home, Sybil was met with 400 militia. Although they were unsuccessful in defending Danbury, they were later able to force the British to withdraw in what became known as the Battle of Ridgefield. This was the last inland battle fought in Connecticut during the Revolutionary War.

Sylvia Ludington was born in Kent, New York, on April 5, 1761, and died February 26, 1839, and was buried in the same cemetery as her father in Patterson, New York. Her father was a volunteer in the militia who served as an aide to General George Washington. Sylvia married Edmond Ogden and they had one son.

Sylvia's hometown was renamed Ludingtonville in honor of her heroic deeds. In 1935 several notable markers were erected along Sylvia's legendary ride and in 1961 a statue was constructed near Carmel, New York. Several smaller statues were constructed in front of the Public Library in Danbury, Connecticut and the Elliot and Rosemary Offner Museum at Brookgreen Gardens, Murrells Inlet, South Carolina. On March 25, 1975 Sylvia Ludington was honored with a postage stamp in the "Contributors to the Cause" United States Bicentennial series, which can still be purchased today.

Several books have been written about her famous ride, including "Sylvia Ludington: Revolutionary War Rider"

Additional information about this remarkable young trailblazer can be found at the following websites:

<https://www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/sybil-ludington>

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smithsonianmag/was-there-really-teenage-female-paul-revere-180962993/>



The Not-So Starving Student KFC vs Popeyes

Xin Xu



One of the most classic comfort foods that come to mind is fried chicken. The juicy chicken legs coated in a layer of light, crunchy batter makes for a savory treat after a long exam season. However the fried chicken business is growing and customers now have many purchasing options. For example, during my pre-exam craving last week, I had to ponder long and hard about which vendor had the best fried chicken. Particularly, I compared a couple popular fried chicken chains and broke them down into a few criteria, including the taste, price, and the unique factors for each chain.

Popeyes:

Popeyes is a popular chain that originated in Louisiana, therefore (as you might have guessed) the flavors are uniquely representative of Southern United States with a strong hint of Cajun and spices. Besides fried chicken, there are also other specialty items from fried seafood to biscuits. Personally, as a committed fan of fried chicken, I usually only order purely chicken-based offerings including chicken tenders.

Taste: ★★★★★☆

Popeyes offers the unique choices from mild to spicy versions of their fried chicken. Their fried chicken is also encased in a crunchy batter that has a bigger crunch than some of its competitors. I personally love the larger crunch factor contrasted with the tenderness of the chicken that makes a great combo. However, my last order of Popeyes did not have the best spiciness level despite having ordered the spicy option.

Price: ★★☆☆☆

When it comes to fried chicken, Popeyes is fairly more expensive than its competitors with a whopping \$29.99 for a 8 piece with some sides.

**KFC**

The iconic KFC with its smiling white bearded Colonel has become a sensation in the world. Particularly when it comes to comfort food, KFC has it all. Particularly, KFC boasts their unique combination of 11 herbs and spices (Entertainingly enough, their Instagram page follows all 5 spice girls and 6 random men named Herb). For many, the Tuesday Special holds a special place on the dinner table (called Tooney Tuesday before recent inflation). What's unique about KFC is its offering of coleslaw and macaroni sides which make a great contrast to its chicken.

Taste: ★★★★★☆

While the taste is highly debated topic. For some friends, KFC is greasy, soggy, and unappetizing while for others the chicken is juicy and tender. Personally, I was always a die-hard fan of the chicken and have had vastly different experiences depending on the individual franchise. While some vendors had more freshly fried chicken, others were indeed soggy and dry.

Price: ★★★★★☆

Compared to competitors, KFC is oftentimes a better bang for your buck. For example their 8 piece meal comes in at \$31.00 but offers large fries, gravy, and a choice of two medium sides whereas Popeyes' choice of sides is much more limited with only 1 side and some biscuits. Moreover, KFC's infamous Tuesday Special helps fried chicken lovers to enjoy chicken at a much lower cost.

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



AU Alumni Awards

Karl Low



On Monday, October 21, while many people settled down in front of their televisions or with groups of fellow minded citizens to watch the results of the federal election roll in, a small group of AU staff and faculty, and an even smaller number of students, gathered in Fort Calgary to celebrate the AU Alumni Awards.

At this event, two awards were given, the Future Alumni award, honoring a person currently attending AU who it is felt would be making a significant

difference in the world on their graduation, and the Distinguished Alumni Award, honoring an AU alumnus who embodies the AU experience and the positive effects that it can have on people. Each award comes with a limited edition print representing the Athabasca region.

If you've never been to one of these and you get the opportunity, you really should go. And not just for the free drinks that are offered. The event took place in an upstairs room at the Fort Calgary interpretive centre. Walking in, we quickly got handed pre-printed name-tags from the many still left on the table. Each one came with two tickets for free alcoholic beverages, and we were reassured that non-alcoholic beverages were also available for free. Having arrived about a half hour into the initial meet-and-greet of the event, it was a bit surprising to see how many name-cards were still on the table at the time, but many of those got taken up as we approached the official award ceremony.

As we mingled, we were able to help ourselves to various small hors d'oeuvre that had been made available for the evening. Both hot and cold were available, but the hot ones tended to get snapped up so quickly there wasn't time to be able to get a good photo of them, you can even see it happening in the background of each of the pictures here. You'll just have to trust me that they were quite tasty.





And while this was welcome, the real reason for the evening came when the award winners were officially announced, and each asked to give a short speech. Barb Tiedemann, the recipient of the Future Alumni Award gave a speech about her passion, developing mental health programs for young girls—giving us statistics along the way that pointed out the desperate need for this to happen, and how AU was helping to make her goals possible. Her speech was well received by the crowd, even as she had to break a couple of times from the wealth of emotion brought forward by explaining her goals and the recognition of the award. To me, these breaks, where she frequently referred to a bet she had with one of her family members as to whether she'd cry or not while giving the speech, served to humanize her even as she inspired.

The second recipient, Esmail Bharwani was also an inspiring story-teller, but for him, the story was of a struggle from being unable to take even his high school education back in Tanzania, to eventually attaining an accounting degree and practice, gaining a Bachelor's of Administration from AU, and going on to take and practice law. He has been vigorously dedicated to his own learning, and to helping other students learn, for literally longer than I've been alive.

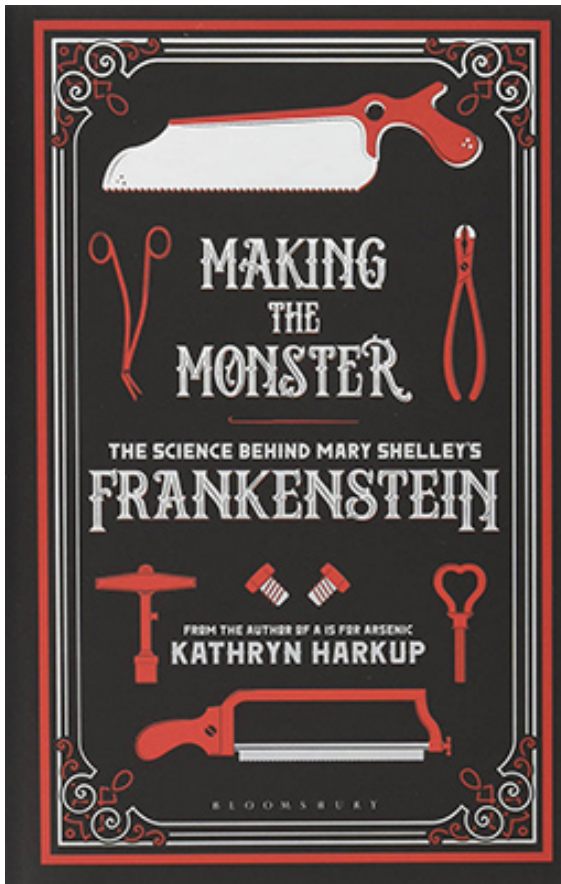
But simply hearing me tell you about how their stories and speeches are inspiring doesn't hold a candle to hearing it yourself. Fortunately, you can do that, as AU has [recorded the event](#), and it's absolutely something you should take some time to watch if you're having any doubts about your own progress with AU.

My biggest complaint about the evening is that when it was just the crowds mingling, the noise in the room reached a volume that would rival many a bar, and made it difficult to hear even the person right beside you. I didn't even mind missing watching the election coverage, though I wonder if it might have made more sense for AU to have planned the night for when there wasn't a federal election being announced. My biggest complaint with the event as a whole is simply that AU does not seem to push these things strongly enough. One of the detriments at AU is that it can be hard for student to develop a sense of identity and community about their university. They should make extra efforts to ensure that events like these are not only well attended in person, but well publicized online, so that all students can share at least a little bit of the experience.

Karl has used his AU degree in English (with great distinction, he likes to add) to finagle a position as the Voice Magazine's Managing Editor. For some reason, his stories always get published.

Book Review

John Buhler



Soon it will be Halloween, and the classic horror film depiction of Frankenstein's monster—with the flat skull and bolts on either side of the neck—will be a common sight in toy stores and seasonal pop-up costume shops and may even be seen on a few doorsteps. Although *Frankenstein* certainly fits into the horror genre, it's also the first science-fiction novel ever written. The story—about a scientist who pieces together a creature from corpses, brings it to life, and as a result loses everyone he loves—is over two-hundred years old. At least part of its enduring relevance may be found in the ethical questions it raises about scientific experimentation. The novel has been invoked in the development of genetically modified foods (“Frankenfoods”), the threat posed by nuclear weapons, the implications of manipulating the human genome, and the consequences of artificial intelligence.

While modern readers may see the novel as relevant to today's concerns about scientific progress and ethics, science writer Kathryn Harkup illustrates how the book reflects the reality of Enlightenment era science. In *Making the Monster: The Science Behind Mary Shelley's Frankenstein*, Harkup explores a period marked by a burgeoning interest in the internal workings of the human body, a thriving trade in grave-robbing, and ghastly

experiments on corpses.

Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin was still a teenager when she started to write the legendary work. She was living with the English writer Percy Bysshe Shelley, who was still legally married to his first wife Harriet. Mary, Percy, Mary's stepsister Claire Clairmont, poet Lord Byron, and Byron's physician, John Polidori, holidayed together in Switzerland during the summer of 1816. In “the year without summer”, the weather was far from enjoyable, as ash from a volcanic eruption in Indonesia the year before had caused a global decrease in temperature. Violent storms kept the group indoors and to amuse themselves, the party read ghost stories. Byron proposed that each of them should write their own supernatural tale. As a result of this challenge, two stories were published, and neither one was written by either of the established authors. Polidori wrote *The Vampyre*, and Mary wrote *Frankenstein*.

The original title of Mary Shelley's book was *Frankenstein; or, the Modern Prometheus*. Prometheus, a figure from classical mythology, is punished for stealing the secret of life from the gods, and using it to bring a man fashioned from clay into being. Harkup shows the reader how the theme of a creature made from the earth is reflected in a number of cultural traditions, but surprisingly she doesn't include the Bible story of God forming the first man from clay in Genesis (2:7). Given that Victor Frankenstein is a man taking for himself the role of God, the reference would have been particularly suitable.

Victor Frankenstein, however, doesn't form his creation out of clay, but rather from dead bodies. In eighteenth century, he wouldn't have been the only person seeking corpses; in England, the study of anatomy had become a required course for students studying medicine, and many

enterprising anatomists set up their own private anatomy schools. These developments spurred a great demand for corpses, and too few were available through legal means. But eventually it was Britain's legal code which helped to put more bodies into the hands of students and educators.

In 1752, parliament passed "An Act for better preventing the horrid Crime of Murder", commonly known as the Murder Act. Many crimes were already being punished by hanging, and politicians wanted to make the sentence for murder especially humiliating for criminals and their families. With the enactment of the Murder Act, the bodies of executed criminals were handed over for public dissection as part of the sentence.

Harkup describes how the hanging and anatomizing of criminals sometimes led to horrifying incidents. The short-drop hangings used at the time didn't break the prisoners' necks, but instead killed them through slow strangulation. Death can sometimes be difficult to prove today, but was more challenging in Shelley's time, when stethoscopes had not yet been invented, and the determination of death relied on the absence of a heartbeat. In some instances, it was actually reported that executed criminals – though presumed to be dead – regained conscious as they were being cut open by anatomists.

Even with the supply of additional corpses provided by post-mortem punishment under the Murder Act, there were still too few bodies. This prompted gangs of grave-robbers, also known as resurrectionists or sack-'em-up men, to raid cemeteries at night to meet the need. It was a lucrative career for those willing to do the work. With his own background in grave-robbing, the surgeon and anatomist, John Hunter used gangs of grave-robbers to supply his private anatomy school and acquire anatomical specimens for public display. According to Harkup, Hunter also had an interest in trying to resuscitate the dead, and may have inspired Shelley's portrayal of Victor Frankenstein.

The first edition of *Frankenstein* provides no explanation of how the scientist brings his creation to life. In the introduction to the 1831 edition, however, Shelley mentions galvanisation, or electricity, as the source of this animating power. Harkup delves into the eighteenth century's interest in electricity, including its effects on animal and human bodies. Luigi Galvani investigated the source of muscle contractions, believing that electricity—known as "animal electricity" (now called bioelectricity) —was the cause of neuromuscular activity. His experiments used the severed legs of frogs to demonstrate how static electricity caused the muscles to contract, and the legs to move. Years later, Giovanni Aldini, Galvani's nephew, began using slaughtered animals for his electrical experiments. Eventually, he conducted public exhibitions in which he applied electrical shocks to human corpses, in particular the body of George Forster, who had been convicted of murder, executed by hanging and his body was handed over for dissection. Electrical shocks were applied to the corpse's head, producing a wide-range of facial contortions. Shocks to the body caused limbs to flex and move. As Harkup suggests, it's easy to see how demonstrations like those performed by Aldini helped to foster the belief that an electrical charge could reanimate dead tissue.

So when Mary Shelly wrote about a scientist giving life to a body that he had assembled from a collection of tissues, it did indeed seem to be within the realm of possibility.

Harkup presents a rich historical and scientific background for *Frankenstein*, but also shows how Mary Shelley's own education and experiences influenced the story. Shelley's travels to the European continent, her parents' social circle and their writings, her husband's interest in science and the occult are also examined by Harkup. By itself, *Making the Monster* is a fascinating book, but it will make the reader look at *Frankenstein* with a greater understanding of Mary Shelley's world. Or, it might just might provide a spooky read at Halloween.

John has his BGS from AU and started writing for The Voice Magazine while he was taking it in 2003.

Fly on the Wall

Ghosts in the Academic Machine

Jason Sullivan



It's Like an enemy repeatability coming back to life, the fact remains that even our best academic efforts are no guarantee of success. Putting in the study time, like doing good works seeking heaven, may not guarantee us a happy ending. And that's scary! Scary too is the fact that learning itself is dependent upon approval from authority structures; sometimes the right answer depends on who you ask.

Martin Luther, by realizing the forces he unleashed by liberating people from the chains of an authoritative church, at some level anticipated the YouTube era where

anyone without a textbook or assignment deadline can watch some online videos and pronounce themselves *edumacated*.

Friedrich Engels, in his assessment of the peasant uprising that followed Luther's revolutionary pronouncements about the need for liberation from an authoritarian institution, wrote of how the dreams of the time almost became a nightmare for those with much to lose. The peasants saw potential for great improvement in their lives at the expense of their wealthy masters.

“The lightning thrust by Luther caused a conflagration. A movement started among the entire German people. In his appeals against the clergy, in his preaching of Christian freedom, peasants and plebeians perceived the signal for insurrection. Likewise, the moderate middle-class and a large section of the lower nobility joined him, and even princes were drawn into the torrent. While the former believed the day had come in which to wreak vengeance upon all their oppressors, the latter only wished to break the power of the clergy, the dependence upon Rome, the Catholic hierarchy, and to enrich themselves through the confiscation of church property. The parties became separated from each other, and each found a different spokesman. Luther had to choose between the two. Luther, the protégé of the Elector of Saxony, the respected professor of Wittenberg who had become powerful and famous overnight, the great man who was surrounded by a coterie of servile creatures and flatterers, did not hesitate a moment. He dropped the popular elements of the movement, and joined the train of the middle-class, the nobility and the princes. Appeals to war of extermination against Rome were heard no more. Luther was now preaching peaceful progress and passive resistance” (Engels, 1850)

AU allows us freedoms far surpassing those at a traditional university, and, yet, our schooling still requires deference to authority. So much depends on our solitary selves as we forgo the brick and mortar security blanket. But we don't want to wall ourselves in like some horror movie victim. That'd be an awful way for our academic dreams to die.

Reminding us to retain levity in the face of a leviathan, Desiderius Erasmus' *In Praise of Folly* a half-millennia ago used irony to illustrate the foibles of earthly institutions. “Wisdom commonly

makes men scrupulous, which explains why these men are usually to be found in hunger, poverty, and smoke; they live unheeded and inglorious as hated men. The fool on the other hand, seems to live in a profusion of wealth, and sometimes as the head of state” (Erasmus, 160). Not a few college students live up to their stereotype as pseudo-academic clowns with little wisdom but much entitlement; at AU we don't have to don that Hallowe'en mask, however. Our academic setting enables the virtue of being our own classroom of one (or in grouped study a few more but only connected by invisible wire). Erasmus would have appreciated our unmediated contact with coursework, I think, as he poked fun at the corruption and bias that circulates wherever humans abide in hierarchical social structures.

Erasmus was speaking theologically, but academically there are many parallels. The simple belief that hard work will be rewarded is perhaps one of the greatest myths of brick and mortar schooling. Even if we theoretically excel at a subject we must, in classrooms, learn to tow the line with our instructors and give answers expected of us of us. This can retard our creativity and shackle our thoughts even as we receive good grades in a gilded scholarly cage. Erasmus wrote of the ability of some folks to play the game without much critical thought: “Almost all Christians being wretchedly enslaved to blindness and ignorance, which the priests are so far from preventing or removing that they blacken the darkness and promote the delusion: wisely foreseeing that the people (like cows, which never give down their milk so well as when they are gently stroked), would part with less if they knew more...”

(<https://www.azquotes.com/quote/497953>) And AU education provides a beacon to our free-thinking and fearless minds.

Escaping the Labyrinth by Thinking Outside the Outside

Accepting our fate to be naturally more gifted in some disciplines than others can be like accepting that there will be nightmares; as adults they rarely trouble us the way they did as children. The greatest nightmares, though, are, of course, ones that turn out to be real. Displacing the sense that

AU-thentic Events **Upcoming AU Related Events**

BComm/CPA Info Session

Mon, Oct 28, 5:00 to 6:00 pm MDT

Online

Hosted by AU Faculty of Business

business.athabascau.ca/event-details/bcomm-cpa-information-session-1019/

Register online at above link

Learning to Learn Online

AU's massive open online course (MOOC)

Oct 28 to December 2

Online

Hosted by AU

news.athabascau.ca/events/learning-to-learn-online-athabasca-universitys-massive-open-online-course-mooc/

Register online through above link

Online MBA Info Session

Wed, Oct 30, 10:00 to 11:00 am MDT

Online

Hosted by AU Faculty of Business

business.athabascau.ca/event-details/online-mba-executives-information-session-2019-oct30/

Register online at above link

Fall 2019 FHSS Research Talks

Fri, Nov 1, 2:00 to 4:00 pm MDT

Peace Hills Trust Tower, 12th floor, room 1217, 10011 109 Street, Edmonton AB

In person and livestream

Hosted by AU's FHSS

news.athabascau.ca/events/fall-2019-fhss-research-talks/

Access livestream through above link

Library Resources for Psychology

Tues, Nov 5, 5:00 to 6:30 pm MST

Online

Hosted by AU Library

library.athabascau.ca/orientations.html

No pre-registration necessary

All events are free unless otherwise noted

we must suffer with coursework beyond the scope of our capabilities is like fighting demons that are impossibly large and scathingly viscous. Sometimes we just have to pinch ourselves to arrive at a place of scholarly serenity. We all have talents and engaging with them will lead us to victories; there's no dishonour in picking our battles. School may not always be fun, but it ought not be torture!

The concept that all hard work will be rewarded is based on a logical assumption beyond which lie abysses and expanses in all directions. Sometimes logic itself is the problem; Sometimes instead of our usual flashlight we may need to illuminate the truth differently; trying out some relevant material prior to taking a course is a great step. It's not bad to test our limits and we may be pleasantly surprised; after all, our own internal logic may limit our potential. Questioning our preconceptions is a bit like enjoying Hallowe'en for all its camp. We know ghosts and monsters are fiction, but don't these untruths reveal new realities hitherto unthought?

Beyond the cozy comfort blanket of logic's confines lie terrifying and intriguing possibilities. Even Ockham's razor, the axiom where the most obvious answer is probably correct, brings a certain creepy vivisection on reality. Our academic abilities are many and our potential can surprise us; many a student, myself included, underestimates their abilities and especially (such as when fearing math like it were a swamp monster) when our fears define part of our identity.

But AU allows us to personalize our academic passion and give ourselves purpose in whatever way works for us. We have limits but they too are limited in a reflexive way. And that fact is unquestionable. Like pinching oneself during a nightmare, we can, with lucidity, conquer any fear if we set realistic goals (less coursework done well is better than more time spent in half-hearted fashion) with realistic assessments of our true interests and inborn abilities. Lipstick on a pig may be a hilarious Hallowe'en costume but if we really aren't machinic mathletes, or erudite essayists, then no amount of hard work is going to yield the rewards we are hoping for. Scary as it is, our lives are sometimes not our own. Yet we need not be haunted by our shortcomings. Once identified we can open our eyes from the nightmare of possible failure and see the bright and beautiful possibilities for success in reality.

Out of the Scary Woods And Towards the Castle of Success

We at AU know how much hard work goes into achieving our good grades. Like Luther seeking the good graces of God without earthly human intervention, the fear of failure easily grows for us because we don't have a safety net of fellow students and a student services office down the hall. No comfort ponies for us, that's for sure. And no class picnics on sunny fall days either. It's just silent study at any hour of day or night. Sometimes it can feel like a day of the dead if we wear ourselves out with our coursework; yet the sense of accomplishment, on our own time and as our own master, is unparalleled. Like vanquishing any cyber or sidereal beast, success at AU means our dreams are coming true.

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



The Study Dude

How to Finish Your Degree

Marie Well



Dawdling with your AU degree? You're not alone. So, how can you gain momentum to finish your degree? Faithann Brown, author of *Returning to School as a Busy Adult: 8 Practical Tips for Succeeding in Your Degree Program*, reveals tricks to successfully speed up your path to convocation.

Don't stop taking classes. Author Faithann Brown reveals the secret to getting your degree: "Any nontraditional student who is serious about completing a degree, especially their first associate's or bachelor's, can dramatically

improve their chances of graduating by following one piece of advice: keep taking classes" (71%). Simple, isn't it? You can technically achieve a degree by taking two classes a year, but it would take you 20 years.

So, gain momentum.

You don't just need to keep taking classes, but also gain momentum. Faithann says that "Research of national student data has shown that academic momentum in the first year of enrollment is a powerful indicator of whether or not a student will complete his/her degree" (74%). But what defines academic momentum? Well, "the most important factors are these: accumulation of at least 20 credits during the first year of enrollment, earning more than four credits during the summer semester, earning grades that place you in the top 40% of your cohort during your first year of enrollment" (74%).

Gain momentum to avoid derailment.

Be warned: "The longer your degree program, the more likely you are to face at least one major life challenge while you're attempting to complete that program" (71%). After all, "you don't want to spend the rest of your life deferring family and social events, putting off starting a family, or postponing vacations because you're still getting your degree" (74%). So, if you plan on starting a family, then try finishing your degree before giving birth.

But gain momentum the smart way.

Faithann lays out a strategy for momentum: "If you're a new graduate or undergraduate student studying part-time and working full-time, begin your first semester with six credits [2 courses] just to get your feet wet. As long as you've passed those courses with a B or better, add another three credits [1 course] and continue taking nine credits [3 courses] each semester until you need to reduce your course-load for a life emergency. If you've gotten less than a 3.0 GPA your first semester, remain at six credits [2 courses] until your GPA reaches 3.0 and then add the third course" (74%). In my first year, I started with one course and then took two courses. After that first year, I took three courses each semester until I graduated. My lowest grades were two B+'s. I won the silver medallion and went into grad studies. To say this differently, you don't need a five-course load to succeed academically. But if you can manage a five-course load with a high GPA, more power to you.

Cut back on classes whenever slammed with less than a B-minus.

Heed the advice from author Faithann Brown: “Take as many credits as you can reasonably take and still make A’s and B’s in most of your courses and maintain at least a 3.0 grade point average” (74%). If you’re struggling to make a B, it’s not because of lack of smarts. I guarantee this. The struggle is likely because of time management issues, ineffective study habits, too many classes or responsibilities, or a need for more background. Try cutting back your responsibilities or classes, so you can ace the grade.

Avoid anything less than an A-minus in grad school.

During my first semester in full-time grad school, I scored a B and a B+ in two of my classes. In other words, I barely passed. You see, in grad school, a B-minus is a fail. The next semester I scored all A’s and A-minuses. But, due to my first semester, I didn’t make the 3.80 GPA needed for entry into a PhD program.

In grad school, if you score less than an A-minus, cut back on classes or on responsibilities. “It’s okay to begin a graduate program slowly to get your feet wet, but after the first semester of testing the waters, consider adding an extra course just to get accustomed to working at a more demanding pace” 976%).

Keep going even if you don’t gain momentum.

If you don’t meet the definitions of academic momentum, don’t worry. In my first year as an undergrad, I didn’t acquire 20 credits, but I wound up with a graduate degree. I didn’t have work or family commitments either, which you might face. If academic momentum seems too tough to achieve, then stick with the first rule: keep taking classes. When you feel ready, trim back your responsibilities and add one more class. Gradually gain momentum to finish that degree.

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Scholarship of the Week

Digging up scholarship treasure for AU students.

Scholarship name: Digital Excellence Scholarship

Sponsored by: iGotcha

Deadline: December 1, 2019

Potential payout: \$1000

Eligibility restriction: Applicants must be Canadian or U.S. residents, and enrolled in college or university.

What's required: A two-stage process: first, submit a message to introduce yourself and describe your passion and involvement in the digital world. Applicants passing the initial screening will be invited to submit a 500-word essay on a topic to be provided.

Tips: Include proof of enrollment with your initial message.

Where to get info: igotchamedia.com/en/igotcha-digital-excellence-scholarship/



Course Exam**Brittany Daigle**

ANTH 277 (The Archaeology of Us: First Humans to First Civilizations) is a three-credit introductory anthropology course that is designed to provide students with an understanding of world prehistory from the time of the split between human and chimpanzee lineages four to six million years ago (or possibly earlier) to the rise of the first cities and civilizations roughly 5,000 years ago. This course has no prerequisites. It comes with an online e-textbook and has a challenge for credit option if you're interested.

The Archaeology of Us: First Humans to First Civilizations is made up of four units containing thirteen subunits, discussion activities worth ten percent, one assignment weighing fifteen percent, a second assignment that weighs twenty percent, two quizzes worth a total of fifteen percent, a midterm examination for twenty percent, and the final examination for the remaining twenty percent. The thirteen units within this course cover topics such as our early ancestors, where and how we lived, what we ate and did in our spare time, how we diversified, modern day humans, and much more. According to the syllabus, to receive credit for ANTH 277, students must complete ten discussion activities, two quizzes, two essay assignments, and must write the midterm and final examinations. Students must achieve a minimum grade of fifty percent on both the midterm and final examinations, and must achieve an overall grade of at least fifty percent for the entire course.

Students should note that the midterm and final examinations for this course must be taken online with an AU-approved exam invigilator at an approved invigilation centre.

Melissa Degenstein-Roelofs began studying at Athabasca University in May of 2019 and she is currently enrolled in the Bachelor of Arts majoring in Psychology and minoring in Anthropology program. With her transfer credits from Lethbridge College she is approximately halfway done.

"I'm 23 years old and from Lethbridge, Alberta.", she says, "I originally started my post-secondary education at the Lethbridge College, but when I realized I wanted to get my bachelor's degree I switched to AU. I was working at a cell phone Kiosk until August; this semester I've decided to take some time off and focus on school, as well as my volunteer position as the Undergraduate Representative with the Canadian Psychological Association. In my spare time, I typically am doing yoga, binge-watching something on Netflix, or hanging out with my cats and rabbit!"

When asked to explain the course to other students, she states "Anthropology 277 (The Archaeology of Us: First Humans to First Civilizations) covers the archaeological record and what it told us about the life of human beings from our descent to the ground to about when we built the first cities. The textbook covers in detail about various ancient people, from our primate ancestors to Neanderthals and the various hunter-gatherer societies and further on. I learned a lot about humanity from this course, it really gives you an appreciation for how far we have come as a species."

As for the structure of the course, she explains that "This course has three quizzes. In the syllabus online it mentions a discussion forum but that is incorrect; I believe it was replaced with a quiz. It has two written assignments; both of which you can pick a topic from a list of preselected topics that are designed to help you build up knowledge you will need for the exams. The first written assignment is three essays together of about 750 words. The second assignment is a research

paper of about 2000-3700 words. There is a midterm and a final exam; both consist of multiple choice and a written component. You must read the textbook to pass this course. I would strongly recommend really making sure that you can answer the learning objectives, the key concepts, and the practice questions in the study guide section of the modules. If you can answer these, you will surely get a good grade.”

Melissa would recommend this course, stating “I didn't find this course to be difficult because I was really, really interested in it. However, if you don't find ancient history interesting; you may find it to be a bit boring. That is something I have heard from other students who have taken this course or a similar course. But I loved this course and would highly recommend it.”

As for tips and tricks to completing this course, Melissa states “Make sure to answer the learning objectives, know the definitions of the key concepts, and answer the study questions. Pay close attention to details in this class.”

When asked how communications with her tutor has been, she explains “My tutor for this class was excellent. Her feedback was extremely constructive; every time I received feedback, I learned something new. My marks were always in very quickly, the mark for my final exam was on the same day I took the quiz and she responded to emails really quickly.”

Whether ANTH 277 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 information surrounding the topic of first humans to first civilization.

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

Alyssa expresses frustration that she can't get through to financial aid; other students reply they're having trouble too, and a student union rep suggests contacting AUSU or AUGSA. Amanda seeks info on whether current AU students need to pay application fees for AU grad studies; AU itself responds that application fees are one time generally, but some grad programs have a separate fee.

Other posts include financial need threshold for bursary applications, taking notes, course extension fees, and courses ECON 321, ENGL 255, HUMN 309, and PSYC 406.

Twitter

@AthabascaU tweets: "Were you aware that it is #NationalBookMonth? Head over to

@au_press to see what they have to help you celebrate. <https://bit.ly/2zZMIfi>."

@austudentsunion tweets: "Our latest Exec Blog is posted! AUSU President, Brandon Simmons, gives some insight about AUSU advocacy and why it is important that #AthabascaU students pledge to vote! <https://bit.ly/2BnXywh>."



The Fit Student

The Art of Criticizing

Marie Well



The more I study how to criticize, the more I avoid criticizing. Criticism takes someone else's shortcomings and makes them our business. But are they our business?

Author Emeka O. Godwin says it depends: do you aim to crush a soul or build it up? Emeka says, "criticism is like a sharp surgical knife in the hand of a surgeon. If used properly it may cause pain and bleeding, but the end product will be satisfactory. If used wrongly all it will produce is pain and no gain" (5%).

So, we must tread carefully with criticisms. Emeka O. Godwin lists several rules for how to best dish out criticisms in the book *Please Don't Take It the Wrong Way: How to Criticize People Without Crushing Their Souls*. Five of these rules follow below:

The first rule: Criticize only those in your jurisdiction.

I once criticized a boss. He would sit at my desk and go through my emails while I went for lunch. So, I scolded him. But, "the safest and wisest policy to adopt regarding criticizing others is to restrict your criticism to only those whom you have jurisdiction over. ... Your criticism would be more effective and well received if it is delivered to those you have authority or control over" (9%). So, never criticize your boss, unless you want a career change. And never criticize a parent.

I don't believe we have jurisdiction over our spouse, friends, boss, or parents. But I do believe we have jurisdiction over our children and employees. "Make no mistake about this; you will get a hostile pushback if you go outside your jurisdiction to proffer correction or criticism" (10%). So, what do you do when others misbehave? "Here is the thing you need to know about jurisdiction—disapproving of someone's behavior is not a license for criticizing them. There are times when people misbehave in front of you and all you must do is hold your peace and let the right people do the criticism" (12%).

The second rule: Criticize only once you get the facts.

"There is no quicker way to lose credibility and self-respect than to engage in a fact-free criticism. If you want to be a credible critic, you must take the time to gather up facts before commenting on anybody's life or behavior" (17%). Furthermore, "Your criticism of others should never come from suspicion or perception, but from inspection and objective conclusion" (18%).

But whether you've got the facts or not, never criticize your spouse. Author Paul Friedman says in his course by the [Marriage Foundation](#) that even constructive criticism is destructive. By avoiding criticism, you and our loved one will both wind up happier.

The third rule: Use criticism only out of love.

“The best form of criticism ... comes from a pure motive. As a matter of fact, there is nothing constructive about a criticism that emanates from an impure heart” (24%). In other words, make sure your criticism does not come “from a place of hate ... from jealousy ... to condemn rather than convert ... from a moral superiority complex” (27% - 38%).

I like to replace criticism with positivity. In a video by the Marriage Foundation, Paul Friedman says to not identify with our negative emotions. We are not our emotions, he says. When we identify with our negative emotions, we tend to fuel them with passions like hate or jealousy. Thus, we snowball our negativity into worse mayhem. Instead, we should stop our bad feelings from “gaining momentum.”

So, if you feel like criticizing anyone, stop that thought in its tracks. Think of something beautiful about that person. By doing this, you stay positive.

But, if you must correct a child or employee, be guided by the five rules in this article.

The fourth rule: Deliver criticism in a kind way.

According to author Emeka O. Godwin, “Here is one thing I know about good critics: they always take people’s feelings into consideration when criticizing” (42%). A friend of mine has a merciful and empathic nature. She can’t criticize another without it weighing heavily on her soul. So, she handles criticism gently. “A person with sufficient wisdom understands that there are better ways to get a point across without being blunt or abrasive” (46%).

As for passive aggressive criticism, author Emeka O. Godwin says, “I am always amazed at folks who before they criticize you would say, ‘Please don’t take this the wrong way.’ The only way I would not take your criticism the wrong way is if it is presented to me the right way! ... That’s like stabbing me with a knife and telling me not to bleed” (50%). I agree that we shouldn’t deliver the words, “Please don’t take this the wrong way.” But I try to graciously receive those words, as they provide clues into ways I can improve.

Paul Friedman in his Marriage Foundation course says that even “I statements” harbor passive aggressive criticisms. So, I avoid “I statements” that couch criticisms. After all, “I statements” never felt harmonious to me—and only led to conflict.

The fifth rule: “Mind your own business.”

“Let people do what they need to do to make them happy. Mind your own business and do what you need to do to make you happy” (66%). In other words, “deal with your own shortcomings first, and then you can start addressing other people’s shortcomings” (67%). I don’t have time to focus on other’s faults. I’ve got too many of my own to repair. So, I try to mind my own business.

In sum, I believe your faults are no-one’s business but your own. And, although I try not to dish out criticism, I do try to accept it. That’s how I grow. But, as for criticizing children or employees, I’m on the fence with that. I prefer to act like a helper—a teammate—rather than a soul-crushing knife.

As a challenge for you, my dear reader, try going two weeks without criticizing anyone. I tell you, it’s freeing.

References

Godwin, Emeka O. (2018). *Please Don’t Take It the Wrong Way: How to Criticize People Without Crushing Their Souls*. E-book.





Dear
Barb

Barbara Godin

The Difficulty with Divorce

Dear Barb:

I want a divorce, but my husband doesn't and I don't know what to do! We have been married for seven years and have two beautiful children. I just don't feel the love for my husband any longer. We have been growing apart and rarely do anything together. We are almost like a divorced couple just cohabitating. Nothing happened to cause this; I just don't have any feelings for him. Well I shouldn't say that, I do care about him, but only as the father of my children. Dan says he still loves me and wants to make our marriage work. How can I convince him I want out of this marriage, and what should I do in a legal sense? Needing advice, Megan.

Hey Megan:

My first question is, are you 100% sure this is what you want? Have you been to counselling alone or together? The decision to seek a divorce is one of the most life changing decisions you can make and should not be taken lightly. Are you sure you are ready for all that is involved in going through the divorce process—as it is difficult for everyone? There are several things you need to ask yourself, beginning with whether you still have feelings for your spouse, you say you don't love him, but you obviously care about him. Are the problems you are experiencing a result of your relationship, or possibly financial- or work-related unhappiness. There are people you can see to help discover what is really causing this unhappiness. Therapists,

counselors and even mediators may be able to help you to make sure this is the right decision.

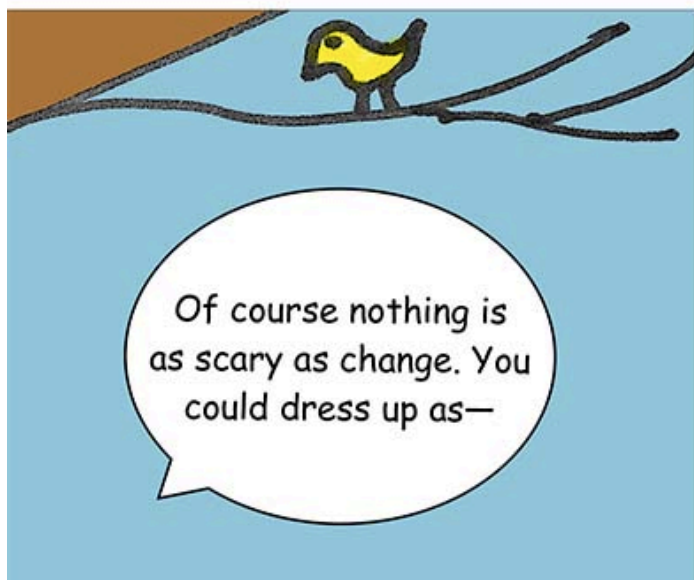
You may be feeling excited for a new start and be thinking about what it will be like with a new partner, but consider all your options carefully as research has indicated that children are never happy about their parents divorcing. Children want their families intact and their parents to stay together. One of the consequences of divorce will be that most likely the custody of your children will be split 50/50. That means you will only see your children half the time. Plus there will be people in their lives that you don't know and there really is nothing you can do about it. Your ex will be making decisions for the children that you may or may not agree with. Eventually you will both meet other people and that's another hurdle to cross, as your children may not accept a new person, or you may not like your ex's new partner. I don't mean to sound negative, but all these things need to be considered. I am not saying that you and your husband cannot work through these issues, as many people do, but you need to be prepared. However, if the situation is abusive, then you have no choice but to seek immediate intervention for the sake of safety. The place to begin is with a visit to your family physician that can refer you to a therapist or marriage counselor. Good luck in the future and thanks for writing Megan.

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.



Poet Maeve Scary Costumes

Wanda Waterman



Relationships and Ethics In and Out of the Anthropocene: Indigenous methodologies, eating in the oil sands, alliances with nature & maternal-child health.

Friday, November 1st, 2019
2:00pm to 4:00pm

.....
FEATURED SPEAKERS:
.....

Josie Auger

Obtaining ethics approval
at Athabasca University
using an Indigenous Research
Methodology

Suzanne McCullagh

Solidarity with the More Than
Human World?

Janelle Baker

Eating in the oil sands:
Sâkawiyniwak (Northern Bush Cree)
experiences with wild food
contamination

Kharah Ross

Close Relationship Quality and
Maternal-Child Health

- + Room has been reserved in Edmonton Peace Hills Trust Tower (AUE 1217).
- + The talks will be live-streamed on Adobe Connect:

Conference Number(s): 1-855-228-6652 | Participant Code: 1362638
Adobe Connect link: <https://athabascau.adobeconnect.com/fhss-research/>

The information on this page is provided by the AU Students' Union. The Voice does not create this content. Contact AUSU at services@ausu.org with any questions about this article.

IMPORTANT DATES

- **Oct 21:** [Canada Federal Election](#)
- **Oct 30:** [Deadline to apply for course extension for Dec](#)
- **Nov 1:** [Deadline to apply for AUSU Awards & Bursaries](#)
- **Nov 10:** [Deadline to register in a course starting Dec 1](#)
- **Nov 15:** [Dec degree requirements deadline](#)
- **Nov 21:** [AUSU Public Council Meeting](#)

Last Chance to Pledge to Vote

Have you [pledged to vote](#) yet? The Canadian Federal Election is October 21, so there are only a few days left to pledge to vote and be entered to win great prizes!

By pledging to vote at getoutthevote.ca, AUSU members will **automatically be entered** in a draw to win a variety of great prizes from AUSU, including:

- **FREE undergraduate course at Athabasca University** (2 available)
- **Amazon Gift Cards** (up to \$100 each, 5 available)
- **Free Online AU Exam Invigilation through ProctorU** (\$40 value, 20 available)

Visit the AUSU website [here](#) for more details.



AUSU Executive Blog

Your AU Students' Union President, Brandon Simmons, gives some insight about advocacy work that AUSU does on behalf of AU students! He also gives some insights on our Get out the Vote campaign and why it is important that AU students pledge to vote!

Check out the October blog online [here](#).



Tips for Voting

The Canada Federal Election is on October 21, 2019. Your voice matters - it is crucial that all students get out and vote. This is one of the best ways to have a say in the future of your country! Here are some tips to prepare you to vote:

Where to Vote:

Visit [Elections Canada Voter Information Service](#) to find your assigned polling station.

What to Expect:

Check out [this video](#) from Election Canada for information about what to expect on voting day!

Who to Vote for:

When you vote in a federal election, you are voting for your [local Member of Parliament \(MP\)](#), who will represent you in the House of Commons in Ottawa. Though you do not vote directly for the Prime Minister of Canada, your vote indirectly has an impact on this role. The political party who can get the support of the most MPs (i.e. fill the most positions) will form government and appoint their leader as the Prime Minister.

Visit Elections Canada [here](#) for a list of election candidates in your area.

You can check out the individual party platforms online [here](#).

On October 21, Get out and Vote!



CLASSIFIEDS

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

THE VOICE

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