



# THE VOICE

Vol 28 Issue 17 2020-04-24

## **COVID-19 & Seasonal Workers** The Affect of Canada's Restrictions

## **Writing Short Stories** A Creative Spark for Extra Cash

## **On the Nature of Time** When Seconds Don't Matter

*Plus:  
Women of Interest  
Homemade is Better  
and much more!*



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**The Voice Magazine**

www.voicemagazine.org  
301 Energy Square  
10109 – 106 ST NW  
Edmonton AB  
T5J 3L7

**Email**

voice@voicemagazine.org

**Publisher**

AU Students' Union

**Editor-In-Chief**

Jodi Campbell

**Managing Editor**

Karl Low

**Regular Contributors**

Francesca Carone, Barb  
Godin, Barbara Lehtiniemi,  
Angela Pappas, Jason  
Sullivan, Wanda Waterman,  
Xin Xu, and others

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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

### Moral Hazards

Karl Low



This week, our feature article is one where Natalia Iwanek digs into the human rights issues faced by seasonal and temporary foreign workers who come into Canada, especially now, with COVID-19 affecting, well, everything.

This seemed especially timely given the recent outbreak of COVID-19 in the Cargill meat plant. Cargill hires a large number of temporary foreign workers to work in its slaughterhouse operations, one of the largest facilities in Canada, processing between 4000 – 4500 head per day over two shifts. That's just under five every minute.

Alberta's Chief Medical Officer of Health Dr. Deena Hinshaw has noted that the living conditions of workers made following proper separation particularly difficult, including many people living in a single household, and carpooling being required for them. So when the disease was brought home from one person's job at the continuing care centres that have already had outbreaks, it spread quickly to multiple people in the family who then took it to Cargill

where it spread even further.

Having such a concrete example of why these temporary foreign workers need to have their human and employee rights better protected during COVID-19 really brought home Natalie's article for me, and I urge you to give it a read.

Beyond that, this week, Jason Kenney, accompanied by former AUSU president Jason Nixon in his current capacity as environment minister, took to the stage to announce some details of the federal government's recently announced billion dollar assistance plan to clean up orphaned and abandoned wells here in Alberta.

I've seen a number of questions as to why we aren't requiring the companies who owned the wells, or the oil and gas industry as a whole, to pay for this clean up. While I would agree that would be the ideal situation, and there have been some inadequate steps taken in Alberta to start to address this issue, the sad fact is that these wells are out there now, they need to get cleaned up, and, quite frankly, our provincial government is afraid to drive away the industry that's enabled them, for decades now, to avoid having to make hard choices as to whether Albertans need to pay more taxes for the services we demand.

The government could simply create legislation that requires immediate payment, right now, to handle the public liabilities that the industry as a whole has places upon us. Such legislation could divide the total clean-up bill by the percentage of oil revenues that current companies are receiving, but the likely response of these companies would be to, after first going to court over it, simply leave the province earlier than their current plans have them doing. So, unfortunately, it's a taxpayer funded clean up or nothing, and now is about as good as time as any to do it – when Alberta companies can hire cheap labour and so get a lot done for the money.

Still doesn't mean I like it though.

Meanwhile, we still have scholarships, events, news, recipes, advice, and more. So, take some time and enjoy the read!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karl', with a stylized flourish at the end.

## Canada's Recent COVID-19 Restrictions Affecting Seasonal Agricultural Workers

Natalia Iwanek



While COVID-19 has the ability to take a toll on all members of society, various marginalized communities face disproportionately high risks. Earlier last month, the Canadian government announced the closure of the Canadian border to anyone except Canadian citizens and permanent residents, leaving many individuals, including temporary foreign workers (TFW), unsure of their future. However, on March 21, 2020, the Canadian government lifted restrictions on these workers.

Although details are not yet clear, exemptions to travel restrictions are planned for various TFWs, including seasonal agricultural workers, fish and seafood workers, and caregivers. Specifically, the Ministry of Agriculture and Agri-Food has revealed that the horticultural industry, lead by Foreign Agricultural Resource Management Services (FARMS) plans to charter, as well as pay for, planes for agricultural

workers. Like all other travellers, TFWs will be adhering to a two-week isolation upon arrival.

Economically, critics feared that restrictions for workers would have ruined Ontario's fruit and vegetable grower industry for the upcoming season. Specifically, many employers worried about a restriction on workers in the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program (SAWP) leading to eventual grocery store shortages.

The 50-year-old SAWP program, operating between the Canadian government and participating countries, allows employers to hire TFWs in primarily the farm agricultural sector if not enough Canadian citizens and permanent residents are available to do the work. Under the program, workers from Mexico, Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, Montserrat, St. Kitts-Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago are permitted to stay in Canada for a maximum of eight months. A 2015 estimate states that in British Columbia, this included nearly 7,000, while last year alone, 18,000 workers came to Ontario. Canada-wide, the current number is approximately 60,000.

In Southern Ontario, which relies heavily on seasonal workers, Conservative Chatham-Kent-Leamington MP Dave Epp had asked the government to "revisit" its decision. Other critics included the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, and the Asparagus Growers of Ontario. When contacted for a statement, Keith



Currie, President of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture stated, “For some time now, Canadian agriculture has had a growing labour shortage that has been greatly reduced through the use of seasonal foreign workers. Having the Canadian government permit access to bringing in foreign workers will greatly reduce that labour shortage, and assure Canadians that the safe secure food supply they have come to trust and enjoy, with be maintained during the Covid-19 pandemic.”

However, while media continues to predominantly focus on economic aspects, various non-profit groups and rights organizations work tirelessly to bring awareness to this issue’s human rights perspective. Canada-wide, various groups are working for temporary workers’ rights, including seasonal agricultural workers, as well as others vulnerable in this pandemic, including undocumented individuals, refugees, and those living in poverty.

The Migrant Rights Network is currently collecting signatures with a set of demands for COVID-19, including healthcare for all regardless of immigration status, as well as worker protections, stopping detentions and deportations, and community support. The Okanagan’s Radical Action with the Migrants in Agriculture (RAMA) is a grassroots movement, which supports the over 5,000 TFWs working in the valley, while in Ontario, Justicia for Migrant Workers (J4MW), a volunteer-run political collective, strives to promote the rights of migrant farm workers.

When contacted for statement, Amy from RAMA directed *The Voice* toward Justicia’s website’s statement, which “is urgently demanding action from both the province of Ontario and the government of Canada with respect to the dignity of migrant workers during the COVID-19 pandemic.” Demands include healthcare for all, regardless of immigration status, including those who do not have health cards, as well as supporting waiving health card requirements and waiting period requirements. In addition, they are asking that workers not be repatriated, terminated, or deported if they fall ill during this pandemic. The full statement is available on Justicia’s website.

Justicia’s Chris Ramsaroop is calling for both the federal and provincial governments to provide workers being brought to Canada with full healthcare and employment insurance in case of job loss or illness. When contacted for comment about the focus on economics and how Canadians

## AU-thentic Events Upcoming AU Related Events

### RefWorks Migration Webinar

Tue, Apr 28, 2:00 to 3:00 pm MDT  
Online

Hosted by AU Library

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

No pre-registration necessary; access through above link

### Talk to a Librarian Drop-In Session

Wed, Apr 29, 9:00 to 9:30 am MDT  
Online

Hosted by AU Library

[news.athabascau.ca/events/talk-to-a-librarian-drop-in-session-april29](http://news.athabascau.ca/events/talk-to-a-librarian-drop-in-session-april29)

No pre-registration necessary; access through above link

### MBA for Executives Webinar

Thur, Apr 30, 10:00 to 11:00 am MDT  
Online

Hosted by AU Faculty of Business

[news.athabascau.ca/events/mba-for-executives-webinar-20200430](http://news.athabascau.ca/events/mba-for-executives-webinar-20200430)

Register through above link

### Bachelor of Professional Arts-Communications Studies Webinar

Thur, Apr 30, 11:00 am to 12:00 pm MDT  
Online

Hosted by AU

[news.athabascau.ca/events/bpa-cs](http://news.athabascau.ca/events/bpa-cs)

Register through above link

*All events are free unless otherwise noted.*

can help migrant workers, Ramsaroop stated that ultimately, businesses are protecting the bottom line “at the expense of workers and their health and safety,” believing that “each one of us needs to be concerned.” Ramsaroop expressed concern regarding food security, stating that greenhouses in Leamington have been converted into cannabis production, as opposed to food production to “maximize profit.” Ramsaroop also stated that that Canadians need to “fundamentally rethink our relationship to food and the people who put food on our table.”

No One is Illegal Toronto, a voluntary grassroots migrant justice organization, has also recently issued a public statement regarding COVID-19 that demands the end the policing of asylum seekers at the border; ensuring status on arrival; investing public funds in public health, housing, and jobs for all, regardless of status; releasing all migrant detainees and non-violent offenders; halting deportations; and status for all. A comprehensive COVID-19 resource list for non/precarious status people is available on their website as well.

Recently, on April 11, the federal government revealed plans to expand financial supports, such as Canadian Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) to seasonal workers who do not currently qualify. According to the Migrant Rights Network, non-permanent residents with a valid SIN can apply. However, these supports will not extend to those without a valid SIN number. According to Syed Hussan, the executive director of the Migrant Workers Alliance for Change, this is a problem as some workers cannot obtain a SIN because they have just arrived, or cannot renew with closed Service Canada offices.

Fears for seasonal agricultural workers during COVID-19 are not unwarranted, as workers have often dealt with rights violations Canada-wide, even before this pandemic. In particular, British Columbia’s provincial regulations regarding government inspections was changed in 2018 after the Mexican government alleged that workers were living in unsafe conditions in the Okanagan Valley. Unfortunately, this was not the first time. There have been 2012 allegations in Abbotsford, and, in 2019, complaints about working and living conditions in Kelowna. Neither has Ontario been immune, with allegations of abuse in 2018 in Leamington.

Although plans are underway to provide employers with \$1,500 per worker to modify accommodations, subsidize wages, and deal with other costs during the pandemic, fears about the workers’ living conditions continue. On April 1, the first COVID-19 related outbreak occurred in a Kelowna nursery, affecting nineteen workers. Many rights organizations worry about workers’ living conditions exacerbating the crisis, as many live in cramped housing with inadequate bathrooms. In addition, although workers coming into Canada are now guaranteed wages during their two-week mandatory quarantine, reports are surfacing of workers unable to access food or support from their employers, as well as being told to repay wages at the end of the season. Rights groups suggest unannounced inspections and hotlines to report unsafe conditions, as well as providing access to clear information in the workers’ native languages. Migrants Rights Network is calling for “enforceable requirements on employers” that must be met before workers arrive.

Also, concern exists regarding the effect that increased police powers will have on marginalized communities, including various temporary workers. As police now have increasing abilities to fine and arrest those who do not abide by self-isolation rules or limits, rights advocates worry about misunderstandings due to language barriers. Jargon such as “social distancing” may not be clear to many. In addition, many individuals work predominantly in the gig economy, in shift work, or in essential low-wage positions, and will be unable to simply self-isolate.

*Natalia Iwanek is currently completing her Bachelor of Arts in English at Athabasca University and is also a freelance editor and writer. She can be contacted at <https://www.nataliaiwanekediting.com>.*



## The Creative Spark

### Making Extra Cash Writing Short Stories

Marie Well



Students need extra dough as badly as chocolate bars need chocolate. Extra dough is the difference between chomping on day-old macaroni and ketchup—versus dining on Steak Neptune.

Yet, the economy has shrunk with COVID-19. So, what can students do to earn extra cash? Write, of course! Under a time-crunch, students can make extra dough writing short stories.

You might wonder how you go about writing a short story. Well, here are 7 tips to get you started on your writing journey:

**Tip #1: Short stories use less than 7500 words, more than 1000.**

Author N. A. Turner explains, “The word count must not exceed 7,500 words. Technically, a short story can exceed this, but then you’re talking about a novelette or novella. If it’s less than 1,000 words, you’re talking about flash fiction” (3%). You can self-

publish a short story once every week, if you’ve got the grit and know-how, and I bet you’ve got both. One author says she makes more money writing romance shorts than she makes writing full length fiction. That means you could pay down student debt faster and gain writing skills.

**Tip #2: One event may be all you have time for in your short story.**

N. A. Turner says, “In a short story one usually deals with problems which can be resolved quickly and in a short time span” (3%). One key event is all you need for your short story.

**Tip #3: Here are two biggies you need for plotting your short story: inciting incident and climax.**

N. A. Turner asks, “How do I plot my short stories? I start with my story idea and build a premise” (40%). One YouTube author [ShaelinWrites](#) starts with an inciting incident and a climax. She says the inciting incident can be one sentence, one paragraph, or longer. Scrap the lead-in and wind-down, and get straight to the action.

**Tip #4: Define your inciting incident.**

An inciting incident is the first event that draws the main character into the first conflict. Each conflict causes the next, ideally even bigger conflict, until the climax. Think of it as the match that starts the bed on fire that starts the house on fire that starts the neighborhood on fire—and so on—until the big bang.

**Tip #5: Short stories should start with a bang.**

“How you start your story, how you set up the first scene, can make or break it. You have to lure the reader in straight away .... Often writers start with a great character moment .... This could be an emotional moment or something that frustrates the character. Another interesting way to start a story is with a conflict between your main characters” (54%).

Have you ever noticed that movies start with a bang, too: an amusement park, a Ferris wheel, a car race, a party? That’s because the cinema is a highly visual medium. But who doesn’t love a



party? In your short story you can start, well, anywhere—in outer space, in a world of “wee people,” in a forest of talking birds, or in the afterlife.

Try to blend that first scene with something that makes your reader fall in love with—or at least root for—your main character. In short, make the scene wild and your character lovable, at least sympathetic, and you've got a captive reader.

**Tip #6: Your main character should “shift.”**

N. A. Turner discloses, “I think about what insights I want my main character(s) to have at the end” (35%). This is a tricky one. YouTube author [ShaelinWrites](#) says the ending in short stories should show a change in the character—at least reveal something new about the character. That character reveal serves as the crux of your short story. Every sentence should orbit around that crux.

I read Chekov's short stories, loved the writing style, but abhorred his bleak endings. He writes about the darker—bleaker—sides of humanity. I hope to write stories that reveal the beautiful sides. I believe we've all got more beauty coursing through us than do gardens of singing flowers.

**Tip #7: Make every line in your short story count.**

Make every sentence in your story lead to your big character reveal. N. A. Turner says, “Every sentence must do one of two things: reveal character or advance the action” (40%).

If you want some great short story ideas, see [N. A. Turner's website](#).

As for me, I want to write about the quest of spiritual beings in the afterlife to end all evil. At the very least, we should write to end our student debt—and day-old macaroni.

*References*

Turner, N. A. (2019). *How to Write a Short Story: Everything You Need to Successfully Write and Publish Your Short Stories*. Turner Stories.



## Scholarship of the Week

### Digging up scholarship treasure for AU students.

**Scholarship name:** Student Essay Contest

**Sponsored by:** Fraser Institute

**Deadline:** June 1, 2020

**Potential payout:** \$500 to \$1500

**Eligibility restriction:** Applicants must be students (high school, undergrad, or grad) studying in Canada, or Canadian students studying abroad.

**What's required:** A completed online application form, along with an essay of 1000 to 1500 words exploring the connections between economic freedom and other freedoms or aspects of the human condition.

**Tips:** Read the [rules](#) carefully for essay requirements.

**Where to get info:** [www.fraserinstitute.org/education-programs/students/essay-contest](http://www.fraserinstitute.org/education-programs/students/essay-contest)



## Porkpie Hat On the Nature of Time

Darjeeling Jones



Time is most definitely not consistently equivalent. Time is relative, mercurial, capricious. It is linked to and calibrated by our state of mind and our visceral awareness of the world, where we are currently placed on the psychological spectrum between trauma and ecstasy. A split second poised at the top of a roller coaster, for example, does not have the same chronological value as a split second spent idly noticing a butterfly perching upon a petal. Although they may objectively be measured in the same number of seconds and minutes, an hour spent in an ER waiting room anxiously awaiting news of a loved one is not remotely similar to an hour spent fly-fishing on a quiet river. Some hours and days are a stroll through the pleasure dome, whilst others are a haunted house, with all the lights turned out and bottomless holes in the floorboards.

Like many of us, I believe, I have been thinking

about the nature of time quite a bit during this year of isolation and plague. Time, for once, is a resource that seems in ample abundance and, like any other precious and non-renewable resource, I am hoping to start making worthier, more conscious use of it. But, again like many of us, I have been frittering it away, squandering it recklessly and mindlessly. Napping and bingeing, dreaming and drooling; all the usual things. This doesn't make me feel too anxious, because I've always believed that skylarking and wasting time are essential aspects of my personality, and I've never felt much burdened by any sense of protestant work ethic.

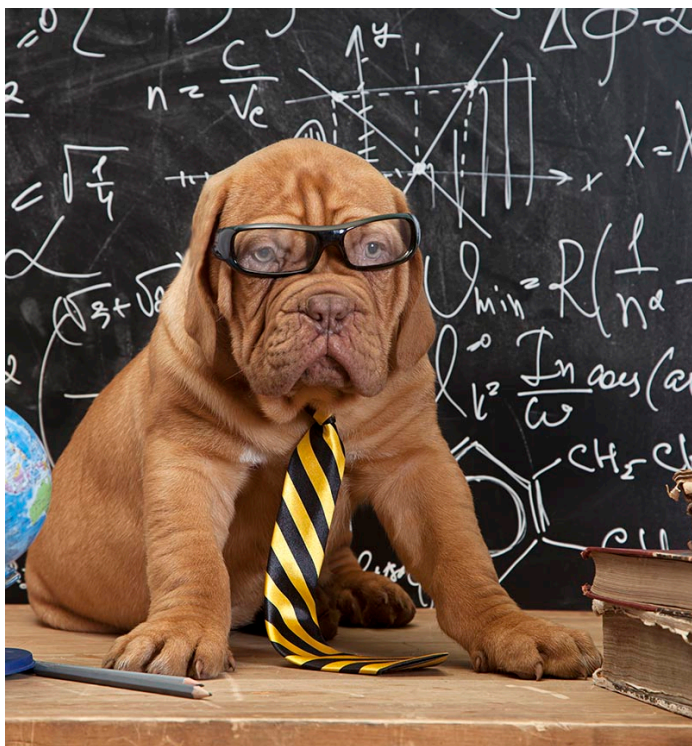
Still, I feel as though this current thickening and gelling of time, glowing like a vein of gold inside the dark mineshaft of the pandemic, is a real opportunity, a chance to deepen and enrich the way I think about the passing of days. Attempting to thoughtlessly kill time can be a tricky and dangerous business. Sometimes you simply can't kill it. It won't die. Like a vampire, it rises from the coffin, looking to do you harm. Like a ghost, it is patient, and can hang about for quite awhile. So, rather than try to kill it, I think I want to embrace it a little more open-heartedly.

One of the ways I am trying to do this is by designating two days per week as "technology-free zones". As with most things in life, I can't get by without a little bit of cheating, so I do allow myself the use of my turntable and kitchen utensils. Still, no Netflix, no Tik Tok, no Google Play, Twitter, or Crave. Although I am separated from my loved ones for a while, I have been keeping pretty good company during these times. This Saturday, for instance, I spent the day with James Joyce, Puccini, Miles Davis, Kate Bush, and Johnnie Walker. I lined the edge of the bathtub with whatever half-melted candles I could find, and read Joyce's strange, wonderful, poetic Ulysses until the water grew cold. Then, I listened to opera and jazz as I prepared moussaka. After dinner, I went for a long walk along the banks of the river, marveling at the austere, haunting beauty of the dark flowing water and the mostly-still-bare branches of the April trees. I woke up this morning, feeling renewed, and ready to face whatever sorts of time the next few days bring my way.

## The Study Dude

### Become AU's Top Science Influencer

Marie Well



You You're one of those gifted left-brain thinkers who wants to make a splash in the science world? Well, look no further.

You could become the next David Suzuki. Believe it! But first, consider what The Open University claims is your responsibility as a scientist:

"As research scientists you have the opportunity to inspire others to become scientists, or to become interested in scientific issues. Of course, not everyone will want to become a scientist. This does not mean that these individuals are not interested in science, however" (47%).

Do you agree it's your role as a scientist to recruit future scientists? If so, here are five ways to become AU's top influencer for science education:

#### **Influence science tip #1: Create a science blog.**

"Demonstrate that you can communicate in an engaging way with the public by developing a weblog (also known as a blog) on your PhD research, recording the progress of your research and training for at least one month" (91%).

You don't have to pursue a PhD in science to blog about science. You don't even have to be a scientist. You just need an interest.

I once did off-the-wall experiments in my home. I used curved glass pot lids of various sizes, light sources, a double glass balcony door, my rental video camera, and my bicycle. If you can capture interesting phenomena, document them with interesting stories.

Tools you'll need: Free Wix Website with blog, YouTube account, cell phone camera, and your beautiful imagination.

**Influence science tip #2: Participate in science events.** "Demonstrate that you can communicate in an engaging way with the public by participating in an outreach activity, or public engagement event, e.g. in a local school, through a public lecture, participation in a consultation exercise or active participation in National Science Week" (91%).

You probably want to be in at least your second year of a science program to do a public outreach. You could call up or email schools to talk to children about some of the fun science you've learned—maybe perform an experiment with bubbles, gas, or lights: anything a kid would find delightful.

Or you could select five local scientists and host your own public engagement event. Rent a space and sell tickets—or host it for free. Just make sure you get a professional speech writer to touch up each lecture. Outreach should be fun, not overly formal.



Tools you'll need: Access to a free or low-cost meeting space. Use of sites such as Eventbrite to sell tickets to your free or fee-based event. Poster design (a Word document with images would do). Basic marketing through social media and an optional free Wix Website.

Oh, and you'll need your winning smile. Yes, you can charm agencies to post your event to their members.

**Influence science tip #3: Interview on news media.** Go on news media to discuss whatever is topical in your research.

Simply call up the local television and radio stations. Ask for the PR person responsible for booking media interviews on your topic. Write press releases to news outlets.

But don't just wing it with the media interviews. Give them several ideas you'd like to talk about. Then script a one- to two-minute reply for each idea. (Ask how much time you have for the actual interview). If there's dead air, lead into your next idea. Put your script on cue cards and practice several times a day right up to the interview date.

Tools you need: A little powder on the face to lower the shine, a mono-color shirt (not red), no striped clothing, a big smile, and your gutsy spirit.

**Influence science tip #4: Publish in peer reviewed journals.** "The most important medium for knowledge production and exchange between scientists is the peer-reviewed academic journal" (71%).

You'll probably need to be a graduate level student to publish in a peer reviewed journal, and you often need to do original research or compile prior studies in an original way.

For most of us AU students, a PhD in science is a ways away, but if you've got the ambition, I bet you achieve it.

Tools you need: mostly A's and A-minuses, good relations with your faculty, a goal to get a PhD, nonstop effort, and your indomitable spirit.

**Influence science tip #5: Become the next David Suzuki.**

"Overtime, if you are successful in these activities, you will publish articles and become more widely known, gaining a reputation for a particular area of expertise. This, in turn, can lead to others trusting in your skills, e.g. as a scientist and a communicator, thereby increasing your chances to influence these areas" (73%).

On the first day of a grad studies class, I considered dropping. That is, until the professor said he wanted to become the next David Suzuki. The next day, the professor asked why I didn't drop. I then secured a contract with him and the National Film Board. But I didn't go ahead with writing the script. So, the professor stopped the project.

It's a realistic goal for you to become the next David Suzuki. The more credentialed you get, the better, and you've got something else just as special. You might be funny, charming, or analytical, or you might have a gift with magic shows. You might be nurturing, friendly, or gentle, or you might have a quirky way of telling stories. Whatever it is, you've got positive traits that make you compelling to watch. Zero in on your gifts until a star is born.

Tools you'll need: contact information for an NFB producer, a proposal, preferably photos or your own footage (visuals that advance your story), and a deep-dive into the NFB documentary submission guidelines.

Seek out NFB workshops in your city. Consider smaller NFB project funding or larger-scale funding from multiple sources. Oh, and of course, you'll need your love of science.

Claim your spot on stage. Gain your fan base. Become AU's top science promoter. Once you gain steam, everyone will want a piece of you.

#### References

Open Learn: Free Learning from The Open University. (2016). *Postgraduate study skills in science, technology or mathematics*. The Open University. E-book excerpt of course.



## Homemade is Better Pao de Queijo (Cheese Bread)

**Chef Corey**

This past week I had chosen to make food from Brazil. My main dish was supposed to be a stew with a variety of different meats in it, but for whatever reason it was difficult to find the meats at my local grocery store and a related large chain store. I was still able to make two out of three dishes. I made a dessert that was whipped cream, chocolate, and cookies. It was delectable, but super rich! I also made these cheese bread balls. Other recipes call for a few different ingredients, but after trying it I thought I could change a few things around and make it little better.

I would love some feedback from anyone regarding my recipes. You can email me at [cwrenl@athabascau.edu](mailto:cwrenl@athabascau.edu).

This coming week I am showing a group of Cub Scouts I volunteer with how to make natural sourdough starter and sourdough bread. But right now I am about to experiment with make sourdough pretzels. If I love it, I'll post my recipe next week.

### Pao De Queijo – Chef Corey

#### Ingredients

½ cup butter  
1/3 cup water  
1/3 cup milk  
½ tsp Kosher salt  
2 cups tapioca starch – I used Bob's.  
¾ cup cheddar cheese  
2 beaten eggs

#### Directions

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F (190 degrees C).
2. Add to a saucepan the butter, water, milk, and salt and place over high heat.
3. When the mixture comes to a boil, remove from heat immediately.
4. Transfer to a mixing bowl or stand mixer and add in the tapioca flour until smooth.
5. Set aside to rest for 10 to 15 minutes.
6. Mix in the cheese and eggs until well combined, the mixture will be chunky.
7. Drop rounded, 1/4 cup-sized balls of the mixture onto an ungreased baking sheet.
8. Bake in preheated oven until the tops are lightly browned, 15 to 20 minutes.



## Fly on the Wall Springing Into Sitting

Jason Sullivan



### Writing, Creating and Remembering as Key Aspects to Our Transformation

As spring's fervid grasp permits life to flourish, we at AU might take a moment to record our progress as we arrive at this season of rebirth. Foremost among methods of self-germination may, for we studious AU students, be the act of writing itself. Each essay has affected us as a dialectic between the course material and our existing natures; experience meets education in the manner of water on freshly seeded soil. To write about how we feel about our

studies can help us associate writing with more than just coursework.

Henry Miller described writing as a transformative process, a miracle far surpassing the sum total of the input of ideas and the output of text: "Words are never just words, even when they seem just words. For the hand that writes there is the mind that reads, the soul that deciphers. Some write syllabically, some cabalistically, some esoterically, some epigrammatically, some just ooze out like fat cabbages or weeds...Writing is not a game played according to rules. Writing is a compulsive, and delectable thing. Writing is its own reward. The men of 2500 A.D. will enjoy reading this little passage, I am sure" (Miller, 104). Our coursework plants the seeds of our future selves, and it is with these protean possibilities in mind (and the universal potential we hold to burst forth into best possible versions of ourselves) that I'd suggest we approach the season of spring. Time may be in limited supply as the outside tantalizes us with more options, but it is the inner garden, the garden of our academic spirit, that also bears fruit from our tending.

### Writing is a Form of Remembering

Jacques Derrida notes that writing, like remembering, allows us to cut through the underbrush of our unspoken assertions. Just as colonial mentalities see nature as only a beast to be harnessed, and a careerist student sees each course mostly as a means to an end, we want to be aware of why we are here in the now in our studies, lest other momentary priorities displace the moments that our big picture requires to achieve fruition. Sometimes writing a journal can help us to feel those hidden expectations that are barely conscious but nevertheless gnaw at our souls and quiver in the margins of our being. When we write we are "reawakening or revealing the present past in its truth" (Derrida, 214).

Only when we become aware of the barriers we erect to a broadening of our expansive potential do we realize how to get where we're going. Writing, that great process by which we ennoble our learning through active participation and acute representation, comes to be a grand act where we broaden our essential selves whilst accumulating course credit. Credit in the cosmic sense is thus added to credit on the mere pagination of a transcript.



So how do we know how much we've grown at AU? One method of gauging our progress is to look back at our past essays. Writing rewires ourselves, after all, and this isn't limited to the keeping of journals (although spring is a great time to sit outside and just record thoughts and observations such as the passing of two redwing blackbirds in hot pursuit of a sultry female). The emergence of nature in Spring reminds us of the creativity, not to mention essential animality, of our selves. Writing can even be said to provide us with a mirror to our ever-evolving soul.

For his part Derrida suggests that we ought to think of "writing as 'breaching' in the psychical repetition of this previously neurological notion" of thought (Derrida, 214). The outcome of our thinking and learning cannot be reduced to synaptic charges that fire sparks but do not embody the essential poetry of our being. Rather, our writing is a process, "opening up its own space, effraction, breaking of a path against resistances, rupture and irruption becoming a route, violent inscription of a form, tracking of a difference in a nature of a matter which are conceivable as such only in their opposition to writing. The route is opened in nature or matter, forest or wood, and in it acquires a reversibility of time and space. We should have to study together, genetically and structurally, the history of the road and the history of writing" (Derrida, 214). Writing thus becomes what it is not, or has not been previously, in the sense of our memories of school days of yore.

Inscribing our brains out onto paper or screen is no mere rote process of regurgitating what we learn, like the lined limits of the paper forcing us into its narrow strictures just as cultural norms dictate a limited realm of acceptable words, gesture, or actions in a given situation. Writing for Derrida becomes an act of participatory liberation whereby our writing allows us to surpass our past selves. Although the act of writing only vaguely transcribes what's been appearing in our minds during a given moment of our development, to see our words on the page is, nevertheless, to render ourselves anew. Here lies the essential link between forging forward—"spring"ing as it were—and remembering or "fall"ing backward so as to recall from where we arose. Memory and recall in writing unite to become catalysts for the creation of our best self moving forward.

To think spring as more than another season is to partake of an erasure of seasons and the limitations of managed demarcations. Whatever the date on the calendar, our unique personal experience of life is ours alone. Life transcends. Memories and the future are thus linked in their essential nature as landscapes of potential, rather than avenues of limited options. Think of Robert Plant's famous lyric from "Stairway to Heaven": "there's two roads you can go by/but in the long run/there's still time to change the road you're on". Only two roads, perhaps only past and future? Even if binary logic stretched to an Autobahn-esque width, there would still be more limit than leeway to the highways of the mind. Growth is our common denominator and it's precisely that growth potential we realize here at AU.

If we think of life as a grand prairie meadow stretching all the way to the ends of the earth then we see our past choices and future options not as a series of 'or's' but indeed as a series of 'ands'. Life's basically a circle, just as are the seasons and the planet. And at AU we come full circle, returning to school, because we are lifelong learners. Life becomes a landscape of unlimited potential and we are the nerve running through this living realm. So let's do spring as a verb!

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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.*



## Women of Interest

### Mona Louise Parsons

Barb Godin



Mona Louise Parsons was the only Canadian female civilian to be imprisoned by the Nazis during the Second World War. Parsons and a few of her closest friends formed a resistance group with the intention of hiding Allied airmen who had survived being shot down over Holland. Parsons and her millionaire husband built a secret apartment in the attic of their home, Ingleside, where they could safely harbour British airmen. Unfortunately, things did not turn out as planned.

Parsons was born on February 17, 1901 in Middleton, Nova Scotia. She began her career studying acting and taught elocution at the Conway Central College in Conway, Arkansas. Parsons moved to New York City in 1929 and became a chorus girl in the Ziegfeld Follies. After a brief time in the arts, Parsons became a nurse and worked in a doctor's office on Park Avenue. Parsons' brother introduced her to a Dutch businessman, and on September 1, 1937, they married. Willem Leonhardt and Mona Louise Parsons spent six months traveling across Europe before returning to Amsterdam to build their dream home, Ingleside. They managed to hide many Allied airmen before the resistance was infiltrated by a Nazi mole. Upon that

discovery Willem went underground, assuming that the Nazis would leave Mona alone as she was a female. Within days, she was captured and sent to jail.

On September 29, 1941, Parsons was sent to Weteringschans Prison in Amsterdam. Her trial followed on December 22, 1941, where she was found guilty and sentenced to death. After an appeal, her sentence was commuted to life with hard labor. Parsons worked on an assembly line where she frequently became ill and lost a tremendous amount of weight. She was moved to another prison in Vechta where she was subjected to more abuse and was kept in a tiny cell with four other inmates who slept on a bed of straw. On March 24, 1945, the prison was bombed and Parsons and another prisoner escaped. During the next three weeks they walked 125 km through Germany before becoming separated. Parsons met a Dutch farmer who was able to assist her in getting to the Nova Scotia Highlanders.

Mona and Willem were reunited after the war, but Willem died soon after. Following his death, Mona discovered Willem had had a mistress. One quarter of his estate was left to this mistress and the other three quarters were given to his biological son, of whom Mona had not been aware. Subsequently, Mona was involved in a legal battle for many years, but lost and ended up with nothing. Parsons returned to Nova Scotia and became reacquainted with a childhood friend and they married and lived the rest of their lives in Lobster Point, Chester Nova Scotia.

Nothing was even mentioned about Mona Parsons' heroic acts until Andria Hill-Lehr wrote Mona's biography in 2000. *Mona Parsons: From Privilege to Prison, from Nova Scotia to Nazi Europe* describes Parsons' courageous and daring acts attempting to save British Allied airmen from

capture and death. Further recognition for Parsons came when Historica Canada released a Heritage Minute about her arrest and eventual escape. A statue was erected in Wolfville Nova Scotia in Parsons' honor titled *The Joy is almost too much to bear*. Mona Parsons died November 28, 1976 and is buried in the family plot in Wolfville Nova Scotia.

*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 @BarbGod*



## The Not-So Starving Student DIY Cranberry and Oatmeal Cookies

**Xin Xu**



One of my favorite past-times recently has been baking. With the stress of COVID-19 hanging over our heads, baking can be a therapeutic activity. In distracting myself, I've found a sense of peace whenever I hear the rhythmic sound of the electric mixer or the scent of freshly-baked cookies. Moreover, with reduced trips to the grocery store, my snack stash has been running at an all-time low and baking has become more of a necessity to feed my snacking appetite.

Recently, after many rounds of trial and error, I've managed to cook my own cranberry oatmeal cookies. These cookies have a higher fibre content that helps add nutrition to your quarantine snacking. Baking has helped me stay busy and productive in the past month. Particularly, exploring new recipes and experimenting with my own have been helpful in creating the perfect cranberry oatmeal cookies. For those who follow my columns, I'm not a huge fan of sweets, hence most

of my recipes have greatly reduced sugar content which makes for a healthier, guilt-free snacking. Due to recent COVID-19 concerns, I've greatly reduced the number of trips to the grocery stores and have been using ingredients in my pantry. If you're not a fan of dried cranberries, alternatives can be used such as raisins, chocolate chips, coconut shreds and even M' and M's!

Total preparation and cooking time: 30 minutes

Difficulty: ★★☆☆☆

### Ingredients:

- 1 cup butter, unsalted
- 1/2 cup brown sugar or white sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 2 cups all purpose flour (or mix 1 cup whole grain flour with all purpose flour for a granier texture)
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon (alternative: 1 tsp cocoa powder)
- 3 cups cooking oats
- 1/2 cup dried cranberries (alternative: raisins, chocolate chip, coconut shreds)





**Directions:**

1. In a large bowl mix the butter, sugar, vanilla and eggs with an electric mixer or whisk until thoroughly blended. Set aside
2. Add baking soda, salt, cinnamon/cocoa powder slowly into the mixture until mixed evenly
3. Slowly add dried cranberry or raisin into the mixture
4. Spray a thin layer of vegetable oil on a cooking sheet to preventing cookies sticking on sheets
5. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F for 5 minutes
6. Use an ice cream scoop or regular spoon and add dolops onto the baking sheet. Flatten each ball into cookie-like shape
7. Place each cookie dough at least 1 inch apart
8. Bake for 20 minutes
9. Cool cookies for 5 minutes
10. Serve

Stay tuned for more quarantine recipes in the upcoming weeks!

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



## Beats from the Basement Janet Jackson



## Milica Markovic

**Artist:** Janet Jackson

**Album:** *janet*

Every time I go to a wedding, the playlist mostly consists of 90s tunes. It's not surprising, since it was a time when the music industry was transitioning out of the power ballads, new wave experiments, and post-disco funk that dominated the 80s to genres that would take these elements off the stage and onto the dance floor, including punk, grunge, adult contemporary, and even more styles of pop.

It is funny I mention weddings though, because our album of the day is probably better suited to the party afterward.

Considering her famous family—especially her older brother Michael—Janet Jackson had many expectations to subvert if she was to prove her

independence as an artist. Vocally, I never felt she had much control or personality when compared to powerhouses like Celine Dion and Mariah Carey.

However, she had other skills going for her. Whether she's sassy or socially aware, Jackson could draw you in with her lyrics. She's also an undeniable showgirl with genre-hopping dance moves. Speaking of genre hopping, it certainly helped show her passion for intrigue and trendsetting to be open to incorporating rock, R&B, hip hop, opera, jazz, house, and new jack swing when producing *janet*.

What's noteworthy about the album is that, unlike other "pop princesses" that either start off singing suggestive songs or gradually lean in that direction, Jackson shed her ascetic image between albums, marking her intent to tackle themes that were taboo at the time yet important for young people and especially women, such as being sexually responsible and embracing what makes you feel good.

Listening in, her vocals tend to fade in the background--sometimes an effective way to create ambience, other times simply underwhelming—and the songs don't always take full advantage of the different styles that were promised, but there were still plenty of hits to come out of *janet*. One is "If", whose music I am almost positive inspired Jackson's 1995 "Scream" duet with Michael. It's as if the Backstreet Boys were raunchier and more aggressive than their attempt with "Everybody (Backstreet's Back)".

That little coo in her voice works well in "Again", a sweet throwback to the 80's synth love ballads. It blends maturity with innocence, rendering the production magical. The other slow songs usually have a smoother sound creating the aura of a mysterious candlelight romance, with "Any Time, Any Place" being my favourite of them. It has this pronounced, reverberated beat that closes with thunder and rain in the background. I love that, because it reflects both the storm and serenity that come with intimacy.

The track that captures my attention the most is "Whoops Now", in which Jackson prioritizes fun with her friends over extra work at her job. Not only is it peppy and cute, a departure from the rest of the album, it implies a message I'm sure many of us grapple with: that we should work to live, not live to work. It's not often possible, to be sure, but this current time indoors for the majority could be an opportunity to rethink our attitudes a bit.

*janet*'s success paved the road for the next generation of influential performers like Beyoncé and Britney Spears in terms of creative expression and owning their respective images over time. The idea that you can be dignified in your sexuality while being mindful of your choices is certainly at the forefront of this trend; the best example I can think of is Christina Aguilera's "Genie in a Bottle", which talks about the need for a meaningful relationship before taking that next step.

Newer artists, including Ariana Grande, have gone further by basing some songs on sexual liberation, so it's been interesting to see more of them taking even bigger risks to entertain and encourage audiences to explore their interests since *janet*.

*Milica Markovic is a Toronto AU student enrolled in the MA-IS program with a BA in criminology and political science.*





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

National Volunteer Week (April 19 to 25) has almost slipped by, but it deserves to be marked this year and every year.

**They don't grow on trees, you know!** Tammy Lee Moore shows the volunteer spirit—and learns a valuable lesson about root vegetables. "I had imagined lovely trailing plants with interspersed potatoes growing on them: much like pumpkins..." A Bug in Your Ear: The Good Things, October 9, 2002.

**Volunteers of all stripes.** Bill Pollett pays tribute to a friend who lives her life large. "Certainly she's the only one I know who has ever done time in a Mexican prison for being involved in a politically motivated street riot (she claims it was all a misunderstanding)." Lost and Found—Ode to a Loudmouth, April 6, 2004

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

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

### AthaU Facebook Group

Thomas expresses concern that he hasn't had a confirmation for an exam request with an early May write date; an AU rep responds that AU is working through the backlog of requests in order of write date. Miranda wonders if bathroom breaks are permitted during ProctorU exams; responders say they've been allowed.

Other posts include courses extension approvals, federal government aid for students, challenging a practicum placement, and the undergrad admission fee.

### Twitter

@AthabascaU tweets: "With all the changes that COVID-19 have brought, we wanted to help #AthabascaU learners navigate the process of booking online exams through @ProctorU, so we created this page [t.co/JOfiI4JlPG](https://t.co/JOfiI4JlPG)."

@austudentsunion tweets: "Hey #AthabascaU Students! Take this survey about how COVID-19 is impacting students! The info you provide will be used to help develop assistance programs for students during and after the pandemic. Make sure the voices of AU students are heard! #cdnpse #igo2AU #oneAU." (StatsCan survey link: [t.co/wzYlHVEg3T](https://t.co/wzYlHVEg3T).)

### Youtube

AU's new television spot "A Long Distance Relationship That Works" in 30-second and 2-minute versions.





Dear  
Barb

Barbara Godin

## Connecting Through Quarantine

*Dear Barb:*

*As a result of being in isolation for so long I believe we are probably all learning something about ourselves and our relationships. The people I thought I would hear from I don't, yet other people who rarely contacted me before the virus are checking in and making sure I am okay and if I need anything. Two months before self isolation I began seeing a great guy. It was a relationship that I thought had a future, but now I'm starting to wonder.*

*He contacts me daily through video and text messaging but I'm finding that I am not looking forward to hearing from him. I am thinking of ending the relationship. But, on the other hand, maybe it is just the situation. We don't have a lot to talk about because we didn't know each other that well. Would that be really cruel to end the relationship now in the middle of this pandemic, I know it is not cool to end a relationship through a text message, but this is different, isn't it? Looking for a second opinion.*

*Thanks, Adrianna.*

Hey Adrianna:

Great question. These are uncharted territories, so I can only offer a guess at what would be ethical. Since you just met him, I think you should give it some more time. Of course, you don't have much to talk about because you are not doing anything; day in and day out is pretty well the same. You could take this time to learn about each other's growing up years and families. Following is a great site to

help get to know someone. Included are [21 questions to ask a guy](#).

These are questions that would help you get to know each other and will undoubtedly lead to deeper conversations. I'm sure he is having similar concerns about what to talk to you about. Also, you don't need to talk all the time, as I'm sure you know there are games you can play with each other and friends, either online or by setting up a good web camera (like charades).

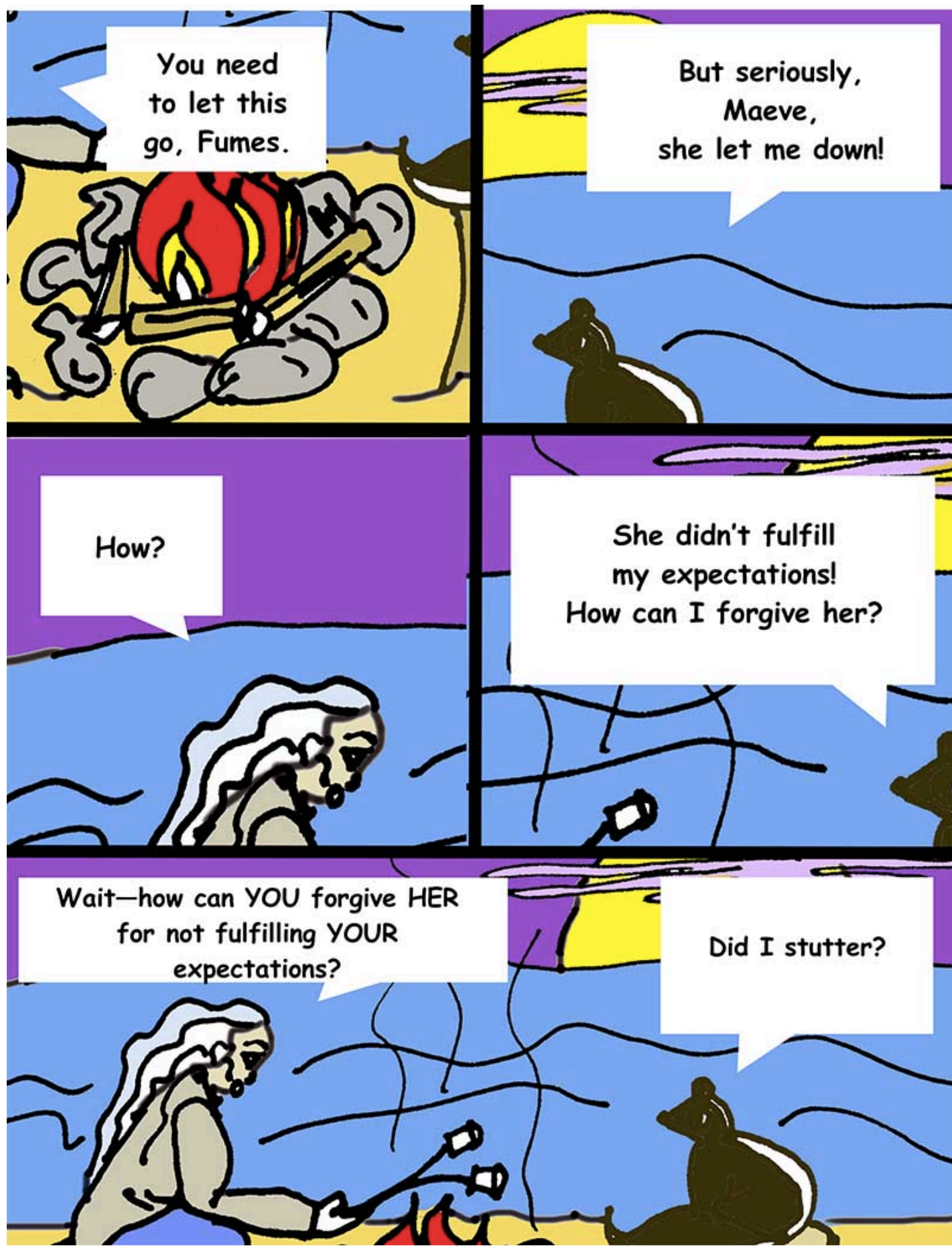
You will have to find a new way to relate. We don't know how long this isolation will last, but, as we've all been told it is necessary in order to stop this virus. My advice would be to try some of the above suggestions and see if you still feel the same. I would not suggest ending the relationship right now if you feel there may be a future. Take this time to relax and get to know each other, then see what the future brings after this virus over. Thanks, Adrianna for taking the time to write.

*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**  
**Betraying My Expectations**

**Wanda Waterman**





## Changes to AU Course Materials

In the fall of 2013 AU began the process of replacing hard-copy textbooks for all undergraduate courses with e-text versions. Implementation has been staged in

The results will be shared with members in an upcoming newsletter.

## A New Era at AU - A New AU president

After two terms in the Office of President, Dr. Frits Pannekoek is retiring. Last week, in recognition of his contributions to distance education, the University of South Africa (Unisa) granted him an honorary Doctor of Literature and Philosophy award. AUSU congratulates Dr. Pannekoek on this great honour, and the recognition it brings to AU as a world leader in distance and open learning. We wish him all the best over his final weeks in the role of president, and in all his future endeavours!



We had hoped by now to be able to announce the selection of the presidential search committee for a new, full-term president; however, as a suitable candidate has not yet been found, AU has instead appointed an interim president: Dr. Peter MacKinnon, formerly of the University of Saskatchewan. Dr. MacKinnon has also served as chair of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) and on the Science, Technology and Innovation Council of Canada. We look forward to working with him over the coming year! **Convocation travel information**

AUSU wants to make sure this year's graduating class has a fantastic convocation. To make this happen, we're providing free transportation via bus or limo service to take people from Edmonton to the Athabasca Multiplex each day of convocation 2014. This applies to those graduating from AU undergraduate programs, and their guests (some limits may apply).

We've also arranged hotel discounts in Edmonton.



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](mailto:services@ausu.org) with any questions about this article.

## IMPORTANT DATES

- **Apr 30:** [Deadline to apply for course extension for May](#)
- **May 7:** [AUSU Annual General Meeting](#)
- **May 10:** [Deadline to register in a course starting Jun 1](#)
- **May 15:** [Jun degree requirements deadline](#)
- **May 30:** [Deadline to apply for course extension for June](#)
- **Jun 10:** [Deadline to register in a course starting Jul 1](#)

## AUSU's New Council

Our new AUSU Student Council officially took office during our April 16 council changeover meeting. The new team will be the students that represent you and advocate on your behalf to the university, the provincial and federal governments, as well as guide the Students' Union in its mission to provide support and services for AU Students.

Welcome to our new student council!

Learn more about your AUSU team [here](#).



## AUSU Awards & Bursaries

Only 1 week left to apply for AUSU's Spring awards and bursaries!

We have over \$20,000 in funds available for AU undergraduate students (*in addition to our year-round bursaries!*).

You can apply no matter where you live, and there are no specific program requirements.

## [Apply online now!](#)

**Deadline to apply is May 1 at 11:59pm MT.**

**Academic Achievement Awards:** For students who have achieved academic excellence.

**AUSU Bursaries:** For students in financial need and/or with exceptional circumstances.

**Balanced Student Awards:** For students who balance multiple commitments in addition to studies.

**New Student Bursaries:** For students in financial need with between \*3 to 11 AU credits.

**Returning Student Awards:** For students who have returned to studies after a long break.

**Student Volunteer Awards:** For students who contribute to their community.

**#Igo2AU Awards:** Open to all undergraduate students to celebrate diversity at AU.

**Apply online [here](#). Deadline May 1, 2020**

## COVID-19 Support for Students

AUSU is very happy to see that the federal government announced \$9 billion for a students aid package to assist post-secondary students impacted by COVID-19, including emergency student aid, an increase in student loans and grants, and more jobs for students, and Indigenous student support.

AUSU is a proud member of the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations, which recently put forward specific asks to the Federal government to provide more supports for students, so we are happy to see our asks incorporated into this support package.

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



**Federal Government COVID-19  
Student Aid Package**



**AUSU Awards & Bursaries**  
**Deadline May 1, 2020**

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

<b>Publisher</b>	Athabasca University Students' Union
<b>Editor-In-Chief</b>	Jodi Campbell
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