



THE VOICE

Vol 28 Issue 30 2020-07-31

Convocation 2020

Interviewing the Graduands

A Life Altering Day

Dealing with Ontario Training Schools

Empty Skies

Travelling in the new Abnormal

Plus:

*Boats, Buses, & Bloodwork
Scholars Start Your Business
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

The Early By-rd Gets the Work

Karl Low



The nomination period for candidates to run in an AUSU By-Election is now open, and will be until August 7, 2020. This By-election is a bit unusual, because it's coming very early in the AUSU Council term. AUSU Council currently runs a two year term, with the next election coming in the spring of 2022. So getting on board now means you'll have lots of time to not only figure out how things work, but actually have an effect on how AUSU lobbies for student priorities.

With the current UCP government in place in Alberta, this is going to be extremely important, and may involve having to make some hard choices about just how to prioritize where AUSU makes use of its resources for the best effect. Should AUSU try a full court press against the current government downloading costs on to students and people looking to transition into new lines of work as oil in Alberta continues to struggle? Or is that a waste of time, and instead AUSU should be devoting more resources into coming up with new and better ways to help students who are already in AU deal with those increased costs.

There is also, if we're being honest, very likely to be a significant labour dispute over the coming AUSU Council term. Hard decisions will need to be made there as well. How does AUSU best serve the students in the event of work stoppages, how much public pressure (or advertising dollars) should they devote to helping one side or the other—or neither?

On top of that are all the regular considerations of AUSU as to the development of new programs, initiatives, and campaigns. If you think you might have or want a serious say into how AUSU approaches these things, how the students union leverages your student union fees, then you should consider running in this by-election.

Over the course of the by-election, the Voice Magazine will not be running any articles by any confirmed candidate. I'm saying this now because I've heard we may already have one regular writer throwing her hat into the ring, and I don't want to give unfair advantage. Also, I'll be putting together my normal list of questions for the candidates to help students decide exactly who they want to be representing them and coming up with the answers to the issues that may arise over the next almost two years.

And while you may not think that student unions can make that much difference, I've seen it happen with my own eyes in the past. A savvy student union can put forward proposals that governments latch on to and that can make a significant difference in student lives. I have a feeling that that kind of savvy is going to be necessary this Council term, so this by-election is more important than usual.

Meanwhile, this week in *The Voice Magazine*, our feature article is an interview with two graduands, what do they think about the upcoming virtual convocation, and what advice do they have to help you get to your own? Find out in our Convocation 2020: Interviews with Graduands article. Plus, Barb Godin recounts her time in the Ontario Training Schools system, and what it did to her, and Barbara Lehtiniemi takes us along with her on a trip across the country by air. What is air travel like during a pandemic? Enjoy the read!

Convocation 2020

Interviews with Graduands

Natalia Iwanek



The 2020 pandemic has affected many aspects of AU students' lives, including this year's upcoming convocation, with ceremonies cancelled in both Edmonton and Toronto.

A "reimagined virtual convocation" will take place on October 2, 2020. Invitations to eligible graduates were sent in June, with July 31, 2020 as the last date to submit applications to graduate. Students must meet all graduation requirements by the first week of August.

According to AU, the "virtual convocation will include the historic and traditional elements of our in-person convocation with the updated and modern twist of being delivered virtually and simultaneously to this year's graduands across the globe." Highlights include a virtual tour of AU's Athabasca campus, Beyond 50

anniversary celebrations, forums and exhibits, and meet and greets.

Unlike traditional brick and mortar post-secondary institutions, which offer rigid bi-yearly semesters, AU students often have the option of taking single courses, or working on their degree at their own pace. Despite these advantages, graduation may sometimes feel like an unattainable or distant goal for students working full time, raising families, or struggling with the demands of a rapidly changing world. A recent AUSU Annual Report for the 2018-2019 year revealed that the average age of AU students is 30.9, while 73% work during their studies and 68% care for dependents. In contrast, Statistics Canada reveals that the average age of post-secondary students in Canada is 24.

However, graduation is possible, as shown by recent and upcoming AU graduates, Fahid Hussain and Louise Robinson. *The Voice Magazine* reached out to both students to share some of their inspiration and find out how they achieved this major milestone.

Fahid Hussain – Bachelor of Management

Toronto's Fahid Hussain is set to graduate from AU with a Bachelor of Management this August. Fahid began his educational journey at Athabasca University approximately three years ago in February 2017. With the end in sight, he stated, "I'm looking forward to graduating from my program."

Here at AU, many students enroll for a variety of reasons, including work, life, and family commitments. On why he chose AU, Fahid stated, "Open admission gave me the opportunity to enter post-secondary studies without having to worry about whether I needed to go back to complete other classes from high school to meet prerequisites and I was confident that my life experiences would be sufficient." Fahid considers his AU experience as very rewarding and distance education provided him with a flexible schedule, which allowed for time with his family.

Fahid advises "current students who are struggling to complete their degrees to hang in there! Sometimes it can feel that you're so far away from it, but once you reach that point knowing so well that it's all going to end, you'll miss it!"

When asked if he had any advice for future AU students, Fahid replied, “My best advice to future students is to set deadlines for yourself on a calendar and budget both your time and money. Do you really need a physical textbook? Or could an iPad be more sufficient for reading in the long term? I highly recommend looking at bursaries through AU and the AUSU!”

Fahid revealed that after graduation, he is “going to miss the community, the tutors who have been so helpful and most of all the time I spent working toward a Bachelor's degree I never thought I would be pursuing!” Although he was looking forward to Toronto's October Convocation, he believes “that AU will allow graduates from 2020 to attend next year in person!” Fahid continued, “It would be more preferable to one done online since my final wish in the time I've had with AU is to have my kids see me on stage as a graduate!”

Looking toward the future, Fahid stated that he is “looking forward to a lasting career, utilizing my knowledge I've gained in the workplace.”

Louise Robinson – Bachelor of English

Similarly, AU student Louise Robinson recently completed her 3-year Bachelor of English in June. The Calgary-based graduate has taken 4 years to complete her degree, during which she experienced “a lot of hardship and turmoil,” while working full time and raising two children with her husband.

Like many students, Louise's journey was not linear, working rather than continuing onto post-secondary education immediately after high school. She stated, “When I was in high school, I was told that not all kids went to university, which I translated into meaning I was not smart enough. I gave up on school after I graduated and worked any and everywhere I could. I had always wanted to become a teacher but figured that was not in my future. Flash forward 20ish years. I work in an elementary school and was talking to my assistant principal when he asked me why I was not a teacher. I told him my story, he convinced me to go to school, so at 36 I found AU.”

Louise heard about AU from a coworker, stating, “I figured it was the only way I would be able to go school while working full time.” This rang especially true a mere four days after her application to AU when her husband was laid off from his oil and gas job.

When asked about her educational experience at AU, Louise stated, “I often tell people...I always thought I was dumb, but now I think I must be pretty intelligent. Because if I can do business math at my kitchen table with little to no help, then I must be a rock star! (I have a learning disability in math.) Nothing tested my strength and dedication than those hard, required classes.”

When asked if there is a light at the end of the tunnel for students struggling to complete their degrees, Louise believes that “There is! Remember to enjoy every moment. My goal was to go to convocation, that to me was almost as important as the degree, I wanted to celebrate all the things I had given up to get to this place, however, I graduated during the pandemic, and will not be able to attend convocation. While I was upset by this, I quickly turned it around. My suggestion to those in the same position: celebrate! Find a way to celebrate. For me, my daughters and I made a mortarboard hat, got dressed up and had a mini photo shoot the day my degree arrived in the mail.” As a side note, she stated, “I stalked my mail lady that day waiting for her to deliver the mail, I got really excited and we hugged it out on the street. Those memories are the best!”

With regard to this year's online convocation, she continued, “As I mentioned before, it was a driving force for me. I wanted my girls to see my walk across the stage, I wanted them to see that

anything is possible no matter how old you are. More importantly, I wanted to walk the stage, to have my moment. But that is a thing of the past, I try not to be upset about it, you have to make things your own and celebrate how and what you can.”

Louise advises future students to “take it easy on yourself. You will have good days and bad days. Days where you question why you even started and days when nothing seems to make sense. You will probably fail an exam or a paper, but that is ok. The journey is the destination. Not giving up is just as important as the information on the page.”

Although there are a few classes that she did not have a chance to take that she plans to eventually register in and a few well-liked tutors that she plans to keep in touch with, as a new graduate, Louise has big plans for the future. “I went to AU as step one of three steps. I want to be a teacher, so step two is to start my education degree at St. Mary's university in Calgary in the fall. The coolest part is when it is all done, I will have not one but two degrees and will be the most formally educated person in my family. Once I have my second degree, step three will be to get hired as a teacher! Bring it on!”

For more information on Fahid’s Bachelor of Management program, AU students are encouraged to check out the website. For those interested in Louise’s English degree, be sure to check out AU’s 3 and 4-year options. More information on AU Student Bursaries can be found as well as from AUSU Student Awards and Bursaries.

Congratulations to Fahid and Louise, along with all 2020 graduates, as we leave you with a statement from AU President Dr. Neil Fassina, “There are no limits to learning and growth, and congratulations are well-deserved. We hope you will be able to participate in our reimagined convocation to celebrate your success, and to mark AU’s 50 years of supporting and celebrating our learners.”

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>.

Scholarship of the Week

Digging up scholarship treasure for AU students.

Scholarship name: Tweaked SEO Scholarship

Sponsored by: Tweaked SEO

Deadline: August 31, 2020

Potential payout: \$1000

Eligibility restriction: Applicants must be aged 18 or older, be enrolled in a post-secondary institution in Canada or the U.S., and have a GPA of 3.2 or greater.

What's required: An online or emailed application, with a minimum 700-word essay on any Digital Marketing subject.

Tips: Enthusiasm for business or marketing helps your application get noticed.

Where to get info: www.tweakedseo.com/scholarship/



A Life Altering Day

Barb Godin



My sister, Mary, and I were incarcerated in Ontario Training Schools for Girls, at 12 and 13 years old. Training schools are better known as reform schools. At that time, all I knew about reform school was what I had seen in movies and on television shows. Reform schools were portrayed as a place where girls and boys are sent to be punished for bad behaviour. The truant officer had warned us that this is where we would end up if we didn't go to school, but we never believed it would actually happen. I thought people got sent to training school only if they had committed a crime. I didn't realize not going to school was one. Our parents were mostly concerned with meeting their own needs, so my sister and I were left to our own devices, and, as you can imagine, attending school wasn't part of our agenda.

Following my parent's unemotional testimony in Family Court, Mary and I hugged them both and said a tearful goodbye. We were taken away by a court official to a waiting car containing two middle-aged men. My stomach began to tighten as I tried to convince the men to stop by our house so we could grab a few things. My plan was to escape, but one of the men said that wasn't possible and we were abruptly on our way to Galt Reception Center, in the community of Cambridge, Ontario. We were scared—unaware of what was ahead for us. For the most part, the men ignored us while chit chatting with each other throughout the long drive.

My experience in Galt Training School and, later, Kawartha Lakes School in Lindsay, Ontario, was one of the worst experiences of my life. The atmosphere in the Training School was oppressive, controlling, and regimented. It seemed the intention was to steal our identity—to remake us into the type of people they felt we should be. We were treated like criminals; so I began to believe I really must be a bad person. Over time, I became withdrawn and rarely spoke to anyone, and, since my sister and I were separated, I felt extremely alone.

The school was organized on a point system, points for housekeeping, grooming, and good behaviour. At the end of the week the four girls with the most points would receive a ribbon.

Bullying was a normal part of life in training school, and punishment was harsh. If you broke a rule your punishment would be to lose one of the few privileges you had, or having to scrub the gym floor on hands and knees, or the ultimate punishment: being sent to solitary confinement, better known as The Hole. There was no privacy in training school. All our personal activities were scrutinized closely by the staff, even having a shower. It was a humiliating experience to say the least. All I wanted to do was get out of there. It made me a totally submissive person; I became the person they wanted me to be. If that was the only way to get out, that's what I would do. However, in the process of becoming who they wanted me to be, I lost my self.

After six months I was released to a foster home. The foster home was a further continuation of more years of abuse. I became a broken person, with no self esteem and little hope of finding any happiness in this life, but I continued to search. I looked for happiness in an early marriage,

the birth of my daughter, re-educating myself, but nothing brought me that systemic feeling of happiness. I believed I had to keep my shameful secret and never let anyone know I had been sent to that place where bad boys and girls go to get fixed.

One day, while I was watching Canadian news program, W5, everything changed. The commentator began talking about Ontario Training Schools and how children had been unfairly incarcerated and treated like criminals. My eyes and ears were glued to the TV. The reporter was interviewing a man who had been sent to Training School as a young boy. He talked about the shame he felt, the low self esteem, that feeling of being intrinsically bad. The same feelings I felt and had kept buried all these years. At the end of the program, a link was shared where more information could be found about an ongoing Class Action Suit for Crown Wards who had been incarcerated between certain years. I immediately went on the site and found more information. I filled out the application and, through tear filled eyes, revealed my story in detail for the first time.

Within a week I was contacted and told I was included in the Class Action Suit and I was advised to apply to The Criminal Injuries Board for compensation. I filled out the extensive application for the Criminal Injuries Board and was granted the maximum award. It was not a lot of money, but, for me, it was a validation that I had been treated unfairly. I felt as if I was finally able to breathe in a way that I hadn't since I was 12 years old, before this nightmare had taken over my life. I was not a bad person; the people who did this to me were the bad people. I felt the rebirth of the 12-year-old girl I had lost so many years ago. Everything looked different, everything felt different; I now looked through the eyes of a woman who was in the process of being healed from a terrible wrongdoing.

I hope telling my story would be beneficial to other women who have been sent to Training school, so they will be able to share their truth and realize this was not their fault and finally begin to live their life.

The class action Suit is expected to go to trial in 2021, and, with a positive outcome, thousands of girls and boys will be vindicated and finally be able to live the rest of their lives with the knowledge that they were not the bad children that the Province of Ontario had convinced them they were so many years ago.

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

2020 AUSU By-election

Call for nominations

July 24 to Aug 7, 2020

www.ausu.org/governance/elections/

Visit above link for more information

Bannock and a Movie August Edition - First Nation Stories

Aug 1 to Aug 31

Online

Hosted by AU Nukskahtowin

news.athabascau.ca/events/bannock-and-a-movie-first-nation-stories

Access through above link

Global Studio Lecture Series:

DEGROWTH: Rethink / Redesign / Reuse / Recycle

Thur, Aug 6, 9:00 to 10:30 am MDT

Online

Hosted by AU RAIC Centre for Architecture

news.athabascau.ca/events/global-studio-lecture-series-degrowth-rethink-redesign-reuse-recycle

Register through above link

RefWorks Migration Webinar

Thur, Aug 6, 6:00 to 7:00 pm MDT

Online

Hosted by AU Library

library.athabascau.ca/orientations.html

No pre-registration necessary; access through above link

The Grad Lounge

Fri, Aug 7, 1:00 to 2:00 pm MDT

Online via Microsoft Teams

Hosted by AU Faculty of Graduate Studies

news.athabascau.ca/events/the-grad-lounge-aug-7

No pre-registration necessary; access through above link

All events are free unless otherwise noted.

Empty Skies

Travelling in the new abnormal

Barbara Lehtiniemi



airport.

After much consideration, we reluctantly agreed to the new flight plan. Cue the ominous music.

Toward the end of June, we got the next shock: both WestJet and Air Canada announced that, as of July 1, they would no longer block off the middle seats. Instead of comfort knowing neither of us would have to sit next to a stranger, we were faced with the real possibility that one or both of us would be rubbing elbows with—and inhaling the moist breath of—someone of whom we knew nothing.

Ratchet up the anxiety level! We would never have booked flights if we'd known all seats could be filled. Still, we decided to take the risk, uncomfortable though it was. There was still time before our mid-July flights to order transparent face-fields, which we could wear in addition to non-medical face masks. Would that be enough to keep us safe?

We'd heard that airports were largely empty, but it still seemed surreal to enter Montreal's airport and find almost nobody there. The place had the empty feel of a shopping mall before opening time. We were screened at the door and had to don our facemasks.

Since we'd checked in online, printed our boarding passes at home, and were travelling with carry-on luggage only, we headed straight to security screening. One screening lane was open to accommodate the handful of people in line. There were more security personnel—trying desperately to look busy and important—than travellers at any moment.

Most of the airport shops were closed, but we found a Tim Hortons outlet open. A coffee was most welcome before our early departure. It also provided a legitimate reason to remove my mask while I sipped it.

Physical distance was easy to maintain, rendering the masks redundant for the most part. There were so few people sitting in the departure area, and there were many vacant areas nearby.

Travel comes with risks at the best of times. Travelling during a pandemic adds an unsettling new dimension.

It was with some trepidation that we booked flights to Canada's west coast. We researched the airlines to learn what measures they were taking to keep passengers safe. In addition to disinfecting protocols, mandatory mask wearing, and reduced in-flight service, major Canadian airlines were blocking off the middle seats to allow for physical distancing.

The clincher for us was that we could fly direct from Montreal—the nearest major airport to our home in Eastern Ontario—to Vancouver. To avoid public transportation and ferries on the BC end, we booked a regional flight to take us to within a few kilometres of our ultimate destination.

Within days of making our bookings, WestJet cancelled our outbound nonstop flight from Montreal to Vancouver. Offered in its place were two flights: Montreal to Toronto, then Toronto to Vancouver. This upped our risk factor: another airplane plus another

Our first flight was a one-hour hop to Toronto. Passengers were boarded in stages by zones. There were so few passengers there was no reason to line up until our zone was announced. In addition to checking boarding passes and ID (requiring passengers to briefly remove their masks,) airline staff checked each passenger's temperature with a non-contact device.



First leg Montreal to Toronto - incredibly empty

We were relieved to find the third seat next to us remained empty. And we were surprised to find that most of the plane's seats were empty—the aircraft was barely 25% full. As with other flights on this trip, most passengers seemed to be in the 30-to-60 age range and travelling solo. There were almost no seniors, and very few families.

The Toronto airport, where we were laid over for almost four hours, seemed even more empty than Montreal. By late morning there were still very few people around, and most of the shops and restaurants were closed. The departure board for Toronto's Terminal 3 showed only 32 departures scheduled between 9am and midnight.



Toronto's terminal 3 - just echoes.

With so few people in the airport, we easily maintained a physical distance of many metres. We removed our masks to eat our packed lunch, since there would be no food available on the flight. Another coffee meant we could keep our masks off a bit longer, a strategy we noticed many others employed.

The boarding procedure for the second flight was the same: boarding by zone to minimize people bunching up and a temperature check. Judging by the small number of people in the departure area, this flight would be mostly empty too.

We were dismayed, then, to have another passenger claim the third seat beside us. Faced with the prospect of sitting in close quarters with a stranger for five hours, I immediately put on my face shield (other passengers wore shields, too, but most did not.)

The WestJet cabin crew noticed the crowding in our row, and quickly offered us seats in another row. We had paid extra for our chosen seats, but safety outweighed the expense. The solo passenger refused to move, so move we must.

Despite this initial discomfort, the flight was nearly 80% empty. Some passengers moved to totally vacant rows so they could have three seats to themselves—handy for napping. The cabin crew offered water and cookies during the flight but, other than that, there was little movement around the cabin.

The Vancouver airport was noticeably busier than the other two we'd been in earlier, but still much less busy than we'd ever seen it. For our final flight, we had to transfer to the airport's south terminal. There is usually a free shuttle, but that service had been suspended. When we went to the taxi queue, we were given a free taxi voucher in lieu of the shuttle.

Taxi operators servicing the airport face much-reduced need for their services. Additionally, they need to sanitize their vehicles between every fare. We tipped our driver well.

The small south terminal, and our onward regional flight, seemed more relaxed about mask-wearing. Only about half the passengers on our 19-seat flight wore masks, and we didn't have to undergo temperature checks. At the end of our 30-minute flight I was glad to remove my mask. Except for eating and drinking, I had worn a facemask for over 14 hours.

British Columbia doesn't currently require travellers from other Canadian provinces to self-quarantine (but they do discourage non-essential travel.) Regardless, after four airports, three flights, a taxi, and more people than we'd been around in four months, we were glad to reach the quiet and relative solitude our destination.

Fast-forward a week to our return journey. Although we had only two flights on the way home, the timing meant overnighing at a Vancouver hotel. As before, our regional flight was almost full (full meaning 19 passengers.) In Vancouver: another taxi ride, another generous tip.

The hotel, one we've stayed at previously, seemed almost empty. Although our assigned room had been vacant for several days, we were careful to minimize what we touched. After washing my hands dozens of times, I realized it would have been easier to sanitize every surface with wipes as soon as we entered the room.

The next morning, in lieu of the hotel's usual breakfast fare, we were offered a bagged breakfast of a muffin, yogurt, juice, and a tangerine. With coffee made in our room, it was an adequate start to the next day. We'd picked up some portable food at a grocery store to tide us over the rest of the day.

The hotel's airport shuttle service was still running, and we arrived at the Vancouver airport 90 minutes before our flight. As we had noticed the previous week, that airport seemed busier than

Toronto or Montreal, but not by much. The departure boards showed 30 flights—mostly domestic—from 9 am to 6 pm.

The pre-flight temperature checks of passengers at Vancouver's airport was conducted before security screening, which made more sense than doing it during the boarding process. The security screening area was not at all busy.

Our homebound-flight was with Air Canada, and took us direct from Vancouver to Montreal. This aircraft was larger, with a 2-4-2 seat pattern, but the flight was just as empty as our outward-bound flights. The seats near us were sparsely occupied, and the back of the plane seemed all but empty.



Homeward bound Vancouver to Montreal - more seats empty than occupied

As with our earlier flights, there was no food service. Cabin crew doled out "Clean Care" kits of a facemask, gloves, sanitizing wipes, hand sanitizer, and a bottle of water. More bottled water was offered throughout the flight.

We arrived back in Montreal to a mostly-empty airport. After retrieving our car, we headed home amid Montreal's rush hour. To our relief, the highways were as empty as the airways.

Before our trip, and even during our trip, we had misgivings that it was too soon to travel by air. In retrospect, it turned out to be the best time to be an air passenger: no crowds and (mostly) lots of space between travellers. Those conditions—and the cheap fares—are unlikely to last. I don't expect to venture into airports again for a long time.

Barbara and her travelling companion voluntarily underwent COVID-19 testing one week after returning home. They are relieved to have both tested negative.

Barbara Lehtiniemi is a writer, photographer, and AU graduate (BGS 2018.) She lives on a windswept rural road in Eastern Ontario.



Fly on the Wall

Jason Sullivan

Chicken, Egg, and Chainsaw: Pedagogical Souffles and Purposeful Learning



I vividly recall possessing a dull and listless gaze as I tried to wrap my noggin around the textbook's schematics. The instructor was the local high school mechanics teacher, and he made things interesting by telling stories about unusual engines such as the Slant 6 and about the magic of two stroke versus four stroke combustion. For physical demonstrations he showed the strengths and weaknesses of metals by smashing a long thin file against a table; the file shattered in two with shocking ease amidst “oohs” and “aahs” and guffaws that enlivened the echoey metalwork shop. How amazing it was that a delicate little

tool could sharpen all the teeth on a mighty chainsaw blade!

The language of mechanics gave us the brain tools to understand lawn mowers and weedwhackers and chainsaws as we took them apart and put them back together. Learning some of the (to me) foreign language of mechanics taught me a skill that served me well in my later AU years: for each way of seeing there is a particular language of operation, and that only with time does this epistemic naturalize itself in our mind. This pedagogical process reveals the way our dominant viewpoints came to their place of hegemony; often our initial defence mechanisms resist these alternative discourses because what we already believe seems natural and inevitable.

Humpty Dumpty Was Built to Spill

At first, our beliefs or ideas may seem incommensurate with new material, and frustration can easily ensue. Our first instinct is to limit the range of our thought to our hitherto unquestioned assumptions. Who hasn't thrown up their hands (and possibly tossed a textbook) in frustration at a particularly dense passage and said “what am I going to do with this, even!?” However, challenging the authority of our naturalized beliefs is core to effective learning. We tend to see knowledge as something acquired by blank slate selves, tabula rasa, waiting to be filled up and decanted with words and formulas that explain the external world to a T. Learning's not so simple, however. Complex philosophy comes home to roost in practical rafters when we open our minds to the reality that our resistance mechanisms prevent the uptake of new methods.

For any topic or discipline there are multiple voices clamouring for precedence and this polysemy precedes even the formation of our conscious selves. When we feel closed to a, for-us, unsavoury discipline, we are resisting the very essence of our life as learning subjects; we're never standing pat, we're always rolling forward like an egg down a lawny knoll.

Take the aphorism of the chicken and the egg. Which came first, the identity chicken or the essence egg; does existence precede essence or is the opposite true? Wendell Kisner, MAIS director, notes these divergent directions in the philosophy of origin: “Whereas phenomenology concerns itself with tracing a path through successive presuppositions back to something seen to be fundamental, an approach that invites foundation quests, ontology is conceived in the Hegelian system as a matter of following the implications found with ontological determinacies, leading us from abstract determinacies to more concrete ones, and is therefore non-

foundationist." (Kisner, 244). If an end point is knowable as inseparable from a flowing process, a dialectic, then learning can never lead us astray. We're always growing forward and suppositions, like suppositories, merely stab us in the backside.

The Poverty of the Practical

What counts as practical pedagogy claims that practicality, usually associated with hows more than whys, is a master discipline. For most of us in horticulture, we knew that we needed to use the tools to do landscaping, but were less convinced that we'd have to service them ourselves.

Yet, what is practical in one context often falls with a splat when entering another realm. At AU we often have to circumvent our first instinct when facing a difficult reading or assignment and allow ourselves to enter the flow of the discourse we encounter. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak describes how a learner "surrenders himself (sic) to and masters the text" by opening up to its methods and means (xxviii). I made it out of that mechanics class unscathed by remembering that I was learning something that broadened my mind rather than considering how rarely I'd have to service my own chainsaw or retorque the blade on my own lawnmower. And hey, you never know when you'll use what you learn—and learning how to learn is something we use in every moment of life.

Labile Origins: Life as the Labour of Learning

Learning is about more than acquiring facts; it's about absorbing new discourses, new modes of inquiry with their specific epistemics. Think of our infant selves. We may not have been born selfish in an adult sense, but we were certainly born without conventional communication skills. Even the basic phonetics of language have been inscribed onto our beings prior to our conscious realizations that prescribe our view of reality. In this sense writing, as an epistemic inscription illuminating particular forms of meaning, actually precedes speech. Even numbers are not universal or self-evident; the number zero is a cultural import from an ancient Caka era!

Jacques Derrida and Judith Butler make the case that meaning itself depends upon an accepted, even metaphysical, framework of "what counts". Butler eloquently describes this process of development that seems natural but includes indoctrination: "we start to speak, and we are already in someone else's language, translating what enters the ear—or registers with us through another communicative means—into a grammatical scheme that is prior to sound" (Butler, xxiv). Perhaps we don't speak and write so much as we are spoken and written by discourse; the tools in the room are limited by the room's purpose. Likewise, the mechanics of sound and syntax bring us to life like a mannequin or marionette even as we feel we are expressing ourselves from within the core of our private meaning. To learn effectively is thus to allow new versions of ourselves to emerge.

Our misty birth into consciousness, at around the age of three, precedes our aware subjective speaking selves. We can never know our origins beyond the tools of our mental trade—that is, our culture and language. "The subject emerges in part through a repression of its origins. Cutting off, or foreclosing, that origin is thus a condition of possibility of subject-formation. A direct return to the origin of the subject would involve contravening the very conditions that make the subject possible, so to return to that origin would be to undo the very conditions of the subject, ushering in psychosis"(Butler, xxi).

We might go nuts if we try to trace our origins without language. On the other hand, many a painting career began by colouring feelings and many a brilliant poem began by tossing a word salad. Butler adds: "we cannot even say, 'there is an origin' without attributing an ontological status to that which is outside the ontological field within which such claims could be made" (Butler, xxii). History is inseparable from discourses of time and place; even a humble

lawnmower is an artifact of particular middle-class values and norms. The key to learning and creativity is openness to alternative viewpoints about discursive norms; unlike on a multiple choice exam, our first instinct is not always correct and “this sucks” is never as authentic a sentiment as it feels.

So, when the studying gets tough, don't just throw up your hands and say “enough, what am I going to do with this even!” Ask instead, “What of value can this discourse do with me!” We're playthings of meaning even as we make meaning work for us, and, if we get used to thinking of life and learning that way, obstacles can appear as tests of our openness. Our evolving pedagogical purposes can transcend any albumen and thus we become chicken and egg, if not chainsaw.

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Student Sizzle — AU's Hot Social Media Topics

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

AthaU Facebook Group

Cindy wonders if good drawing skills are necessary for COMP 232; responses suggest no, but apparently drawing with a computer mouse sucks. Donette posts about AUSU's new Peer Course Review platform, plus the gift card incentive for students completing course reviews. Alessandro wonders who to contact with questions about a course listed as temporarily closed; best guess is the course's coordinator.

Other posts include a hunt for easy courses, case study vs case program, ProctorU login download, CHEM 218 study group, and courses ACCT 253, IDRL 320, and PSYC 289.

reddit

One post asking if it's possible to do an MBA at AU immediately after completing an undergrad degree, and queries on courses ASTR 205, ACCT 454 and BIOL 341.

Twitter

@AthabascaU tweets: "We'd love to know what's cookin'. In fact, we're building an #AthabascaU50 cookbook and could use your help We're looking for recipes from our learners, alumni, and team members to help celebrate Athabasca University's 50th anniversary this year t.co/sO5AFuMoVw."

@austudentsunion tweets: "Our latest AUSU Open Mic Podcast is available! Listen in for a chat with AUSU VPEX Stacey Hutchings on what the impact of the global health pandemic has been on #AthabascaU students, and the steps AUSU is taking to advocate on students' behalf. <https://pinecast.com/listen/cfeac12>."



The Creative Spark

Will you Fall? Cliff-hangers in Fiction

Marie Well



You're a world class mountain climber scaling the world's scariest cliff without ropes. And you fall. Now what? Well, I'll go do the dishes and then let you know.

That's an example of a cliff-hanger. They end a scene at the peak of action, and you'll need to turn the page to see what happens next. Life is filled with cliff-hangers. Let's see how they apply to fiction and to you.

Reach for a tense ending.

If you came into this life and everything went rosy, then you missed the purpose of life; you come to this existence to learn lessons. Growth is the human motto.

But, to grow, you must struggle. In fiction, readers dislike when your hero has no obstacles. "Don't end a scene with everything resolved, good, and well. Instead, make the reader tense about what

happens next" (Hall, 2016, 50%). The best stories come heaped with struggles.

But why?

Deep down, all of us respect the person who achieves a goal despite unbearable hardships. If you've got the world working against you, and you still strive for your degree, you've got the makings of a hero.

Grip them with a scene goal at the start.

Your goals make you so much more exciting. And your goal doesn't have to be a PhD. A goal of finishing a first-year course when you have dyslexia or children or a full-time job is heroic. Even a goal of finishing a single course when you live with your folks is noble. Boost your goal to a graduate degree, and you've got an inspirational autobiography. And yes, I'd love to read your story!

Goals make you fascinating, whether in real life or fiction: "you choose a scene goal. By stating this goal at the beginning of the scene, you placed the reader in suspense about 'Will the [point of view character] achieve the goal?'" (Hall, 2016, 50%). But make sure it's a moral and healthy goal. If it's not a positive goal, it will drag you under.

So, will you achieve your goal? I say yes, but—

A yes ending makes it too easy.

Even our greatest victories lead to more struggles. How many students get their degree only to fret, "What now?" Or how many students land their dream job only to face self-doubt?

In fiction, you never want your character to achieve her goal and have nothing left to fight for (except maybe at the end of the book).

Instead, your character should grow further entangled in struggles. Don't just open a scene with the question, "Will the hero achieve his goal?" Rayne Hall (2016) says, "The end of the scene should answer this question – but preferably not with a straight 'yes' because that would end the tension" (51%).

Rayne Hall (2016) continues, "A much better scene ending is 'Yes, the [point-of-view character] achieves the goal, but... a new complication has arisen, and she must deal with it.' Another good one is 'She achieved only part of her goal, and to get the rest, she has to do something dangerous.' Sometimes you can even end a scene like this: 'No, she did not achieve her goal, and her situation has become worse than before.'" (51%).

If life has you facing struggle after struggle, take comfort. We all experience rollercoasters. But it's cause to celebrate. Those rollercoasters force you to bloom. In fiction, the dark moment of no return may lead your hero to greater wisdom, deeper spirituality, or healthier living. Now that's a struggle worth living.

Will you fall? Cliff-hangers keep us hanging.

According to Rayne Hall, "a scene which ends where the [point of view character] is in acute trouble with no obvious way out (such as dangling from a cliff top, about to fall as soon as her arms' strength gives out) is called a 'cliff-hanger' and it's a sure way to make the reader turn to the next page. Even if she decides to take a break and do the dishes" (51%).

When you've got more problems than a math textbook, no matter what you do, you will learn lessons. In my opinion, it's best to respond to crises with a full heart, forgiving nature, and growth mindset. If you choose a harrowing response instead, you'll have a mountain of lessons—just to get you back where you started. Don't delay your blossoms.

Rayne Hall (2016) says, "Put your [point-of-view character] in a dangerous situation – if not dangling from a cliff, then about to be carved up by the serial killer or devoured by the dragon – describe her situation using the senses. End the scene there" (51%).

If you, as a writer, end your scene with a cliff-hanger, you'll likely finish it in the next scene. You could also head hop to another point of view character to prolong the anticipation, says Rayne Hall (2016). So, what lessons might you share?

Rayne Hall (2016) says, "The next scene starts where the previous one left off, and shows how your heroine manages to pull herself up the cliff, escape the serial killer, or defeat the dragon. She may achieve this on her own, or with help from a rescuer" (51%).

So, that's a cliff-hanger. Now that I've cleaned the dishes, I can tell you what happened after you fell off the cliff. You got snagged in the branches of tree. Injured, you scaled the rest of the cliff to achieve a world record. And filmmakers today pay you thousands to produce your story.

But your greatest victory is yet to come: yes, your convocation.

So, will you achieve your goal? Time to turn the page.

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Boats, Buses, and Blood Work The Winding Journey to AU

Natalia Iwanek



At times, our lives take unexpected turns, and at times, the choices we make during these moments will change the trajectories of our futures forever. Over the years, my life has taken many of these winding paths, some leading to narrow escapes, such as my terrifying near death experiences on a congested Guatemalan highway intersection, others, full of incredible joy and hope. Enrolling in AU was one of these unexpected twists, a choice made in 2017 that has proven ideal in surprising ways, time and time again.

With a family history of deportations and resettlements, immigration and migration, it was only fitting that I spend the majority of my life moving from place to place, in search of an elusive purpose. At last count, I have lived and worked in approximately fifty cities from coast to coast, as well as worldwide. I spent my twenties and thirties in a variety of small oil and manufacturing industry towns, my years a blur of dilapidated roadside motels and mold-filled rooming houses above country

bars, with more than a lifetime's worth of 20-hour Greyhound bus rides and weekly flights as the norm. My increasing health issues made a typical lifestyle, including a 9 to 5 job, as well as a traditional path to a degree, impossible. Before AU, I had been a full scholarship student at York University, but I was forced to make the heartbreaking decision to withdraw as my health deteriorated.

Content with my unconventional life, I ignored the signs that had periodically appeared during the previous five years, signs that seemingly warned me to slow down, to consider another road. Foolishly, I plunged ahead, stubbornly refusing to deviate from my chosen path, despite omens that repeatedly made it clear I no longer had a choice.

From freak workplace accidents and regrettable encounters to multiple hospitalizations as nurses stared at me in amazement, the absurdity of these years have become a source of anecdotes for those closest in my life. "She's got nine lives," they'd laugh shaking their heads. Although in hindsight, many of these incidents resulted from an exhausted body and mind, the foreshadowing was undeniable. It was as if some type of magnetic force was repeatedly tugging me away from my journey, and, as I scratched and crawled my way back time and again, losing pieces of myself along the way, "This is no longer for you," it whispered.

Although I had unexplainable symptoms since my early teens, including severe back pain and hospitalization for heart trouble, on a 2017 road trip through the Badlands, something snapped deep within my spine.

Despite my better judgement and to the bewilderment of chiropractors whom I terrified with my bloodcurdling screams, I flew to Guatemala for a long-awaited vacation. A lifelong learner, I had planned to spend two weeks improving my Spanish. Unfortunately, my spine had other plans on the winding road to Quetzaltenango. What began as a two-week trip turned into a four-month long ordeal in a hilly Guatemalan town, as my knowledge of medical Spanish terms now rivals most medical professionals.

“How have you possibly managed to live this way for so long?” my physiotherapist cried as she examined my MRIs. “The doctors told me I was just depressed,” was the only answer I could give after years of fruitless ER visits. What began as one of the most terrifying times in my life, has also become one of the most cherished, as I gained what I now consider a second family.

Unfortunately, as I slowly improved and made plans to return to Canada, the absurd struck again. I was hit by a car. Or, more accurately, my body collided with a car and somehow won. Bruised and scraped, my mind still refuses to piece together the fragments of what truly happened on the highway that day.

The signs had become undeniable; it was time to reconsider my life. Among the many choices made in the following months, the one I am most proud of is enrolling at AU. A chance link to AU popped up on my phone screen, as I lay resting in bed, watching the volcanic ash raining down on the city, known locally as Xela, which had welcomed my broken body with incredible warmth. Although by mid-2017, I was finally given medical approval to fly home; my body still refused to heal, and I was forced to limit my work hours, my life reduced to a series of doctor’s appointments and heating pads. It was time to enroll at AU.

A few months later, I flew to Panama City, armed stubbornly with a small backpack consisting of essentials: countless bottles of medication, a back roller, heating pad, and a back brace. As a continued down the coast on a four-day ocean journey to Colombia, I planned out essays and assignments for ENGL255: Introductory Composition, developing critical thinking skills amidst ochre shades of crumbling *casas* in Cartagena, the stunning greenery of Medellin, and down to the sweltering streets of Cali, the salsa capital of Colombia. However, the signs were ever present, as a giant storm hit on the first night of our journey, and fierce winds plagued the small sailboat. My back brace was futile as the waves tossed me from wall to wall. As the swells felled even the most seasoned crew, dripping with sweat and battling agonizing nausea I re-evaluated my life choices from the fitting vantage point of a toilet bowl.

Returning to Canada, I continued to travel for work, completing assignments for classes in a variety of northern oil, mining, and fishing towns, including Yellowknife, Fort St. John, Smithers, and Price Rupert. I studied for exams in Williams Lake surrounded by blackflies and deer, wrote essays in Cranbrook marveling at Bighorn sheep, and stressed over assignments in the frigid winters of High Level. I also cried from the pain every single day.

In increasingly failing health but in my typical stubborn fashion, I booked a two-month trip to Central America. Predictably, the series of unfortunate events continued, as my life spiraled out of control. Beginning in one of my favourite places, El Salvador, I had planned to spend a few days at the beach before heading north into the mountains of Morazán department and onto western Honduras. Instead, three days into my journey, I developed a high fever and severe vomiting. I was finally hospitalized when my balance and vision became severely affected. Through those hazy days in San Salvador, I struggled to complete my readings for SOCI339: Sociology of War and Armed Conflict, while hooked up to an IV.

Upon my discharge days later, with no concrete answers, and against my better judgement, I continued my journey, feeling that somehow it could be my very last. From sprawling San Salvador, I decided to alter my trip into something less physically intense and headed to Southern Mexico, Belize, and, my final destination, Guatemala. I wrote essays and submitted assignments on flights and old creaking school buses in the jungles, the vast highlands, and sweltering coasts, often participating in local language exchanges, called *intercambios* in parks and cafes, in addition to my homework for SPAN300: Intermediate Spanish. I continued to deteriorate, until it became increasingly clear that it was no longer safe for me to continue as a solo traveller. I found myself

standing in the middle of a dusty border town separating Belize from Guatemala, desperately struggling to decipher the meaning behind Entry and Exit, my cognitive function impaired, my words disjointed and reversed.

“I have malaria,” my clouded mind informed me as the pressure in my skull increased. Three weeks later, on a layover in Dallas on my way home to Vancouver, I found myself standing in the middle of the airport, as the crowds ebbed and flowed around me, desperately trying to understand the numerical progression of Gate 45 to Gate 47. An intense feeling of emptiness settled over me. Through sounds of crashing waves, I struggled to maintain my balance and hide my increasingly dilated pupils from the flight attendants. Tears streaming down my face, I shut my eyes tightly, but nothing could stop the kaleidoscope of colours streaming across my field of vision, as my senses felt intolerably heightened. For the first time, the world appeared too bright, too loud, and too overwhelming.

Upon my arrival home, doctors scrambled to diagnose my illness. My travel history did not make this simple, as neurologists, rheumatologists, and infectious disease specialists argued amongst themselves. Unable to take care of myself and forced to give up the life I had built in BC, I flew back to my family in Toronto, where I deteriorated further, slowly losing my ability to walk, as well as think, coherently.

After countless vials of blood, vector-based diseases such as malaria, chikungunya, and chagas are now familiar names. With dilated pupils, extreme vertigo and balance problems, inability to regulate temperature, sensitivity to light, chest pain, difficulty breathing, hallucinations, vivid nightmares, increasing allergic reactions, and most worrying of all, dementia-like symptoms, I left an ever present trail of clumps of hair behind me, as my baffled specialists revealed that my blood tests had returned within range.

Over the years, I had been to so many disease-endemic areas, the source was almost impossible to pinpoint, coupled with often unreliable and outdated testing methods. “Maybe you’re just depressed,” came the ever-familiar refrain, as if my mind were powerful enough to manifest the terrifying physical symptoms, with which they had been extremely concerned with one week prior. As I have since learned, despite what Western medicine tells us, our complex bodies cannot simply be divided into separate parts without considering a holistic, interconnected approach. Often, our multi-systemic symptoms do not fit neatly into medicine’s compartmentalized specialties. “We don’t know what else to do,” they shrugged, “Come back when you get worse.” The word, “when,” not “if,” remains in my mind.

In search of answers, I left Canada in 2019 for medical care, taking my AU textbooks along with me. Through Ukraine and Georgia to Turkey, Romania, Poland, Slovakia, and The Netherlands, my AU courses were my constant companion in a world that no longer made sense. Although the trip was extremely risky in my condition, on a subconscious level I needed to return home to family, to where I was born. Interestingly, some of my favourite memories from those months are tied directly to my courses: from speaking with a Uruguayan backpacker on a remote mountain top in southern Ukraine (Thanks SPAN330: Textual Analysis and Composition!), to finding myself standing in awe of The Hague, The Netherlands’ International Criminal Court, which I had just read about it POLI450: Globalization and Human Rights. Although the Canadian medical system had failed me, a simple blood test in Ukraine unraveled part of the mystery that had been plaguing me for many years. In October 2019, one month before I returned home, I finally had some answers. I have been called an enigma, a Pandora’s Box, and I have lost count at the amount of doctors who shamelessly Google my diagnosis in front of me, congratulating me on being their “first.”

At times throughout our lives, it may seem that we are being guided by an unseen hand. After a steady stream of accidents and misfortunes nearly ended my life, culminating in my body finally shutting down, I find myself in a safe place, increasingly at peace even amidst uncertainty and fear. I try not to question the purpose, or even the deservedness, of my survival and second chances, when so many have lost their lives, realizing that these types of questions are beyond human understanding, falling into the realm of existentialism and beliefs in higher powers. However, I remain incredibly cognizant of the privileges that have aided my continued existence on this earth thus far. What truly became clear during my three months in bed was regardless why I remained here; it was time to slow down.

In hindsight, although it is now painfully clear that I should not have been travelling during these five years, it is, ironically, travel that led me to answers about my future and my health. Additionally, my unconventional educational journey at AU, which has taken place on boats, on trains, in mountain villages, and countless hospitals, has taught me more than would have been possible in a traditional school setting.

Although I try to leave as little impact as possible while travelling, perhaps these events were also a signal to further contemplate the ethics of travel itself to countries negatively impacted by the Global North, as well as the ideas of movement, bodies, and borders. The COVID-19 pandemic has stalled my plans for an exchange with a partner institution this coming winter, but I look forward to wherever I may find myself in the future, even if it means being still for a little while and even if my journey is a little different. I think I have finally learned to heed the signs; it only took being hit by a car to do so.

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>.

Scholars, Start Your Business

Live a Six-Figure Lifestyle: Own a Franchise

Marie Well



Are you one of those smart folks who saves every penny? Or do you own assets like a house? Or do you flaunt fine credit? Well then, splurge and buy a franchise. Why not? Or you might today work as a loyal McDonald's staff, perhaps as a supervisor. If that's you, you'd make a star McDonald's franchise owner. Yes, you!

The bad news? A franchise start-up cost can run around \$500,000. (I would've said "half a million" but that might've scared you. Anything over \$50 scares me.) For example, a Tim Horton's costs just under \$500,000. As another example, a McDonald's costs around one to two million.

The good news? A Tim's franchise owner can earn a quarter million a year. A McDonald's franchise owner

can make roughly \$150,000 a year. But one anonymous franchise owner, during COVID-19, said he's hoping just to break even. Another franchise owner told me that she hasn't paid herself in months.

Soon that cash flow will turn positive, I believe. COVID-19 can't last forever, right?

Your name will attract customers in tough times.

Despite these dire pandemic times, just the name of a franchise can gain you a steady flow of customers. Franchises tend to hold their value in rough times. Why? Well, if you were driving through a town, where would you stop for burgers: McDonald's or Ed's Burgers? Sure, you might find an amazing discovery at an unfamiliar restaurant, but that discovery could be roaches running around on the floor. I'll settle for the Happy Meal.

So, here are a few tips on how to buy a franchise:

You pay for name—and the systems.

“The franchisee pays an up-front franchise fee and then also makes continuing payments (royalties) based on the franchise's earnings” (Dagys, Kerr, Kurtz, Eric et al, 2020, 10%).

You pay mostly for the name and the systems.

James Clear, author of *Atomic Habits*, says we don't rise to the level of our goals; we fall to the level of our systems (i.e., our habits). If you flip a burger every time a timer chimes, you've got a system. And franchises are full of them. Those systems are goldmines.

You might also pay for training.

Some franchises might offer you “assistance, training, and support in management and production” (Dagys, Kerr, Kurtz, Eric, et al, 11%).

The best training you can get is from being a regular customer, I bet. One franchisor had its prospective franchisees anonymously order from the menus and record what they observed.

Better still, if you're debating on whether to buy a franchise, make it your daily haunt. If you want to buy a McDonald's, eat from its menu every day at lunch. At least, buy a coffee. And bring your laptop. If you love the franchise enough to stay awhile, you'll likely love it as the owner.

Flip through a directory to spot your store.

“Check a franchise directory: The Franchise Canada Directory, published by the Canadian Franchise Association, lists available franchises” (Dagys, Kerr, Kurtz, Eric, et al, 10%). I flipped through a directory I found at a bookstore. It lists general info, but you'll want to do more research before buying.

Ask franchise owners if they love or regret franchising.

“Talk to several current and former franchisees either by phone or in person. How much did they have to invest? What were the hidden costs? How long have they been in business? How long did it take for the business to make a profit? Did they receive adequate training and ongoing support? Has the franchisor lived up to its side of the agreement? Would they advise you to purchase a franchise? Ask them if they would want to gain the rights to this franchise again if given the opportunity” (Dagys, Kerr, Kurtz, Eric, et al, 11%).

Some franchise owners feel distanced from head office. That distancing can happen when head office gives poor customer service, shoddy training, or skimpy marketing support. Quiz the franchise owner, perhaps over lunch—your treat. You'll get the skinny on which franchises to buy and which to avoid.

One business owner I know works 24-7, with breaks throughout the day and night. He takes two weeks off a year to go to a tropical resort. He drives a sports car. He owns a big house. He dines out several days a week. Do you think you could live like that? If so, buy yourself a franchise!

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Homemade is Better Roasted Cauliflower

Chef Corey



We A few years ago, we were visiting my wife's aunt, Louise, in the Shuswap. She has a cottage on the lake and had invited us to stay. One night for dinner she made us some roasted cauliflower as a side dish, and I will never forget how great it tasted. Ever since then we've been working on our own version of her dish. Guessing at some of the ingredients, mixing, tasting, perfecting. This recipe is an homage to Aunt Louise and our great trip. Every time we make this recipe it takes us back to that visit.

With this recipe I've included a recipe for seasoning salt which can be used in multiple ways, French fries, meats, vegetables, you name it! It's a basic recipe and is scalable to increase its amount. Just double or triple it for extra.

I hope you enjoy this recipe as much as we did the first time we tried it.



Auntie Louise's Roasted Cauliflower

Ingredients:

- 1 head of cauliflower
- 1 tbsp canola oil
- 1 tbsp seasoning salt

Seasoning salt recipe

- 1 tbsp table salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp garlic powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp onion powder
- 1 tsp paprika

Directions:

- 1) Preheat oven to 400F.
- 2) Cut the cauliflower into bite-sized pieces.
- 3) Put the cauliflower into a mixing bowl.
- 4) Cover with canola oil, sprinkle with seasoning salt and mix.
- 5) Dump out the contents onto a sheet pan.
- 6) Roast in the oven for 15 minutes, mix up halfway to get even cooking.
- 7) Remove from the oven and allow to cool for 2 minutes, the serve.



Chef Corey is a student in business management who first graduated from NAIT's Culinary Arts Program in 2007



Dear
Barb

Barbara Godin

Masking the Danger

Dear Barb:

My 80-year-old grandmother is in the hospital with COVID-19, she was on a ventilator for almost two weeks and is now recovering. No one in the family has been able to visit her. We are all heartbroken that she would have to suffer like this. She has always been a loving caring grandmother and mother. We don't know how or where she contracted the virus. She always wore a mask, but at that time when she would have contracted the virus not a lot of people were wearing masks. I wonder if my grandmother could have been spared this experience if wearing a mask was mandatory at that time.

I am writing because I have been reading a lot on social media about people who do not want to wear a mask. They feel wearing a mask is infringing on their freedoms and rights, plus they are questioning the benefits and risks of wearing a mask. I feel that since we are not experts, and this is not something we have experienced before, that we should listen to the experts. I know they are not 100% sure of all the facts, but I'm willing to bet they know a lot more than I do. I just don't understand why people are so angry about wearing a mask. Are they so selfish that they don't care about the possibility of spreading this deadly virus to others? Thanks, Jane.

Hi Jane:

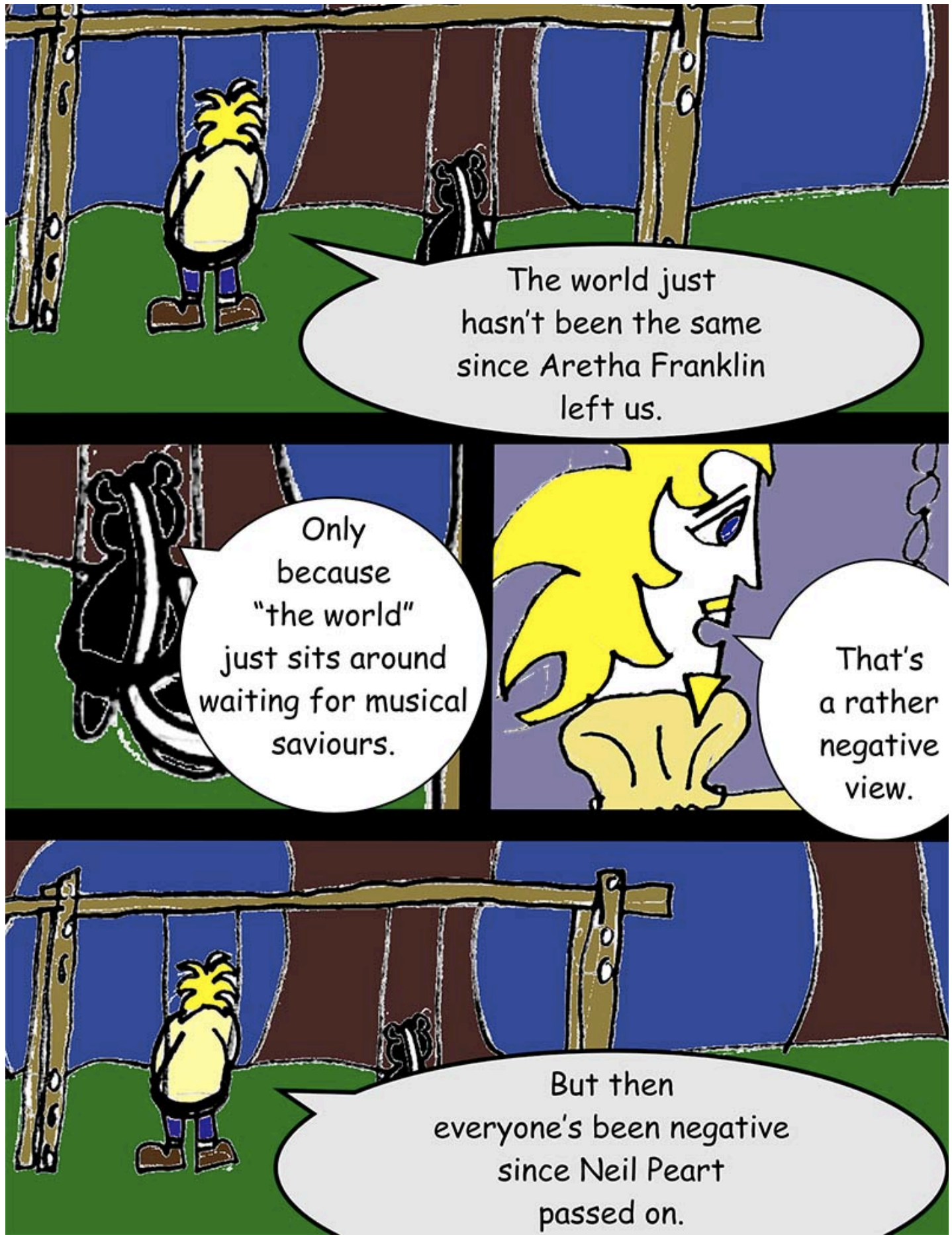
I don't think people are selfish, they are just confused. The advice seems to change from week to week and medical experts do not always agree on what is the right thing to do, especially about masks. Earlier in the pandemic Canada's Chief Medical Officer said that wearing non medical masks was not necessary, but by early April this advice had changed. It was then discovered that wearing face masks may prevent the spread of the virus to others. Therefore the main purpose in wearing as mask was to protect others, rather than just preventing you from contracting the virus. Many people were of the belief that if they kept a distance from others it was not necessary for them to wear a mask. This protocol has evolved and presently wearing or not wearing of masks is different from province to province and city to city. Some cities are making wearing of masks mandatory, while others are leaving the choice to the individual or the business. Wearing a mask will most likely not provide 100% protection from contracting covid, but they do offer some protection, along with washing your hands regularly and maintaining physical distance. Personally I am with you, some protection is definitely better than no protection. Whether mandatory or not, it's a good idea to wear a mask when out in public places.

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.



Chazz Bravado
Never the Same Twice

Wanda Waterman



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IMPORTANT DATES

- **Aug 7:** [Deadline for Nominations for AUSU By-Election](#)
- **Aug 10:** [Deadline to register in a course starting Sep 1](#)
- **Aug 12:** [Election Candidates Announced](#)
- **Aug 15:** [Sept degree requirements deadline](#)
- **Aug 19:** [AUSU Public Council Meeting](#)
- **Aug 25:** [AUSU By-election](#)

One Week left to Run for Council!

AUSU currently has 4 vacant seats on council, so we will be holding a by-election on August 24, 2020. If you are interested in advocating for students, being a part of an amazing team of AUSU staff and councillors, and creating an AU student community, [then run for AUSU council!](#)

Any AUSU member can run for council, no matter where they live or what they study. Since AU students are all distance learners, councillors can work remotely from all over the world, and most council work is done through email and teleconference.

What do AUSU councillors do?

AUSU councillors represent AU undergraduates students and advocate on their behalf. They also guide and direct the students' union organization through its mission, vision, and values. Councillors attend council and committee meetings by teleconference, develop strategic plans, policies, bylaws, an annual budget, and more. Councillors serve for a 2-year term. Since this is a by-election, the newly elected councillors would serve until April 2022.

To run for AUSU council, submit [Nomination Package](#) to cro@ausuorg by Aug 7, 2020.

Visit our website [here](#) for more info.

NEW AUSU Strategic Plan

AUSU council is in the process of developing a new 3-year strategic plan! The strategic plan is the master plan for the AU Students' Union, addressing our overall organizational objectives as a whole (in accordance with AUSU bylaws).

Your Students' Council will provide an overview of the Strategic Plan at our August council meeting, along with the first reading of the proposed motion to approve it. The motion will read as follows:

"Be it resolved that AUSU council adopt the 2020-2023 strategic plan as presented."

Want to hear more? Come to AUSU's August council meeting!

Date: Wednesday, August 19, 2020

Time: 6:30 pm MDT (8:30pm EDT / 5:30 pm PDT)

All members are welcome to attend AUSU's monthly council meetings, which are held online through Zoom.

There is also an opportunity to ask questions or provide feedback to the Student Council. The meeting information will be posted on our website here at least 3 business days prior to the meeting.

We will post the new strategic plan soon – stay tuned!



CLASSIFIEDS

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

THE VOICE

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