



THE VOICE

Vol 28 Issue 38 2020-09-25

Minds We Meet

Interviewing Students Like You!

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Katherine Hepburn

Plus:

*The Last Days of Summer
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

Barb Godin, Natalia Iwanek,
Barbara Lehtiniemi, Angela
Pappas, Jason Sullivan,
Wanda Waterman, Xin Xu,
and others

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presented here are those
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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**Karl Low****Thunderbolts & Lightning, Very Very Frightning**

While I try to avoid thinking too much about what's going on in the United States, especially as they get closer to the election, I've caught myself sympathizing with Trump supporters lately. It's very strange, but I've started to realize that when I hear yet another tale of something outrageous that Mr. Trump has done, my immediate thought is to start questioning if it could be true, if the media is not engaged in some sort of egregious spin on the matter. And why do I think this? Because what I hear from the media is so unwaveringly, unabashedly bad—ranging from the simply puzzling to the outrageous—that I find myself thinking “he couldn't possibly have said that, that just sounds wrong.”

And, in truth, when I have bothered to investigate, some of the time I find that the story does play things up to some degree, using Mr. Trump's inability to present a complete and coherent thought when he speaks to extract the worst possible meaning from the ramblings he uttered.

But, unfortunately, much more often I find the story is essentially correct. In this case, I'm referring to the various stories indicating Mr. Trump has refused to guarantee a peaceful transfer of power should he lose the election. Going so far as to say that the way to guarantee a peaceful transfer of power is to “get rid of the ballots” to ensure “there won't be a transfer, frankly; there'll be a continuation.”

When is a terrorist a freedom fighter? When is a freedom fighter a terrorist? I'm starting to worry that we may all have to start considering those questions more seriously in the next year or so. Top republicans have, of course, given their assurances that any transfer of power will be peaceful, but top republicans are not the ones who are able to issue executive orders to homeland security and ICE. And in the meantime, Mr. Trump continues to stoke the flames of demonization of his opponents. A strategy common to nations and people at war. It's easier to convince followers to take up arms and put themselves at risk if they believe their opponents are truly evil, and that has been the bulk of his campaign message over the past several months. That his opponents seek to destroy America and the American people. Why they'd want to do that is never explained, never questioned.

It'd be easy to say, “But we're in Canada, we'll be fine,” but we're talking about the largest economic and military superpower in the world. If fully destabilized, there will be a lot of real global power on the table for the taking. It's not hard to see how other nations could easily be drawn into that sort of conflict. So I'm worried. But the only thing I can do is post my little bit of opinion, and always, always encourage people to vote honestly, live honestly, and abide by the results. That's the point of democracy, after all, to make it so that we don't have to take up arms to see which group of us is larger and should be leading.

In the meantime, we have a great issue, with student interviews, scholarships, thoughtful articles and more!

Enjoy the read!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karl', with a stylized, flowing script.

MINDS WE MEET



Who are your fellow students? It can feel like you're all alone in your studies, but across the nation, around the globe, students like you are also pursuing their AU education, and *The Voice Magazine* wants to bring their stories to you and vice versa. If you would like to be featured next, do not hesitate to get in touch!

Sammy Mwakio is from Nairobi, Kenya and is currently only 48 credits away from his Bachelor of Arts in French. When asked about his road to AU, Sammy revealed, "I have always wished to specialize in languages and right after completing my high school education, I sat for a French language diploma at the Alliance Française here in Nairobi, Kenya, and, later on, I began learning Lingala, a language spoken mostly in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the Republic of Congo." He continued, "I came across the University of London distance learning program and, just when I was about to register for the Bachelor of Arts in French, the program was discontinued. I kept on searching; fast forward a few years later, and I came across AU and decided to register for the program I am currently pursuing. What brought me to AU was the fact that it is a reputable university whose qualifications

are recognized worldwide."

To date, Sammy's favourite AU course has been FREN 375: Vocabulary Expansion. He stated, "not only was I familiar with the entire course content, I enjoyed the course a lot and I completed the course in less than two weeks which is a personal record, given the fact that it is a six credit course!"

Although Sammy was born in Nairobi, he spent most of his childhood in Kenya's second largest city, Mombasa, after the family moved there due to his parents' work commitments. He has "two sisters and a large extended family," but no pets. However, Sammy mentioned a childhood pet, stating, "I had a dog while growing up but after he died, I have never had one since."

Before AU, Sammy attended other post-secondary institutions, stating, "I have two diplomas from the Alliance Française as well as a diploma in information studies from the Technical University of Kenya (formerly the Kenya Polytechnic)." He currently works at a foreign mission in Nairobi "as a migration program assistant."

In his spare time, Sammy loves to exercise, stating, "I jog thrice weekly, every evening, and I also practice Aikido, which is a Japanese martial art. Furthermore, I enjoy listening to music and travelling."

Sammy also loves to read martial arts magazines, including *Black Belt*, since he is “a huge fan of martial arts and combat sports.” As for television, he states, “Apart from current affairs, there is not much I watch nowadays. You will most likely find me watching music videos on YouTube.”

Translation is high on Sammy’s bucket list, as he describes, “On top of my bucket list items is being a freelance translator. I have always dreamt of being a translator since my childhood and I hope I will one day realize that dream.”



Sammy Mwakio (kneeling on the extreme left of the picture) taken after a successful Aikido seminar in Nairobi, Kenya

Visiting in the Seychelles is also high on the list of dreams. When asked where he could choose to live if he had the chance to live absolutely anywhere, Sammy stated, “It would definitely be in the Seychelles Islands. I am fascinated by the sheer beauty of the Seychelles Islands, as well as its people, culture, and cuisine.”

As to who he would choose given the chance to meet any current, historical, or fictional person, he revealed, “He-Man and the Masters of the Universe. A fictional superhero whose cartoon series I grew up watching. I used to admire his superhuman strength and ability to overcome evil powers.”

When asked about his life’s proudest moments, Sammy stated, “Being a student at Athabasca University (AU) and being on course to obtain a bachelor’s degree.”

In the post-AU future, Sammy has hopes of translation, stating, “I see myself pursuing a Master of Arts (M.A.) degree in Translation and becoming a freelance translator.” Best of luck Sammy!

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>.

Re-Imagining Childhood Favourites

Queer Representation in Literature and the Big-Screen

Natalia Iwanek



Every Hurrying down Toronto's Church Street, I suddenly stopped midstride. Looking down, I smiled, as I saw my feet placed firmly on the rainbow crosswalk. After years away, I was finally home.

Life in Toronto is often hectic, expensive, and at times, extremely lonely. Many Torontonians, including myself, leave for various reasons, but a large number always make our way back home. As any resident of "the 6ix" will (loudly) let you know: there is nothing like life in the city. Toronto may not be as friendly as Calgary, as beautiful as Yellowknife, or as energetic as

Halifax, but we have one thing that sets us apart from other major cities; Toronto is home to Canada's largest queer community, and boasts the world's oldest LGBTQ+ bookstore, Glad Day Bookshop.

Toronto's Oldest LGBTQ+ Bookstore

For many young queers coming of age in the big city, Glad Day Bookshop will always be a part of our own personal histories as well. This Toronto institution has shaped who we are and how we live as a community. For many, this is where we found our families, where we found answers, and where we came to escape. Glad Day Bookshop, along with our "Village," played a central role in shaping our identities, allowing us to find a sense of safety in an unforgiving world.

Located at 499 Church Street, Glad Day Bookshop is also the city's oldest surviving bookstore. First opened in the in 1970s by Jerald Moldenhauer, who realized that queer literature was simply unavailable in Canada, Glad Day Bookstore has since raised generations of Torontonians. Over the years, the bookstore became one of Toronto's premier queer hubs, fighting Canadian censorship laws of queer material along the way. After April, 1985, when parliament increased censorship laws, Glad Day continued to appeal to customs seizures of censored and seized books and magazines.

Moldenhauer received over 400 of these seizure notices, but persisted and launched several lawsuits against the Canadian government in his fight against censorship. A full gallery of historic photos of the bookstore, as well as Toronto's queer community can be seen on Moldenhauer's website.

In 2015, Glad Day launched Naked Heart, the largest LGBTQ+ literary festival in the world. Each year, the Festival presents workshops, panels, discussions, and performances. Today, the independent bookstore continues to create a welcoming environment for the queer community, believing in “story, representation and freedom of speech.” Various queer books can be found, including poetry, theory, drama, zines, magazines, new releases from local voices, and—pre-pandemic—events, such as book launches, drag bingo, queer trivia night, and dance parties held every Friday and Saturday nights.

In other parts of Canada, Little Sister's Book & Art Emporium located on Davie Street in Vancouver's queer Village has been in operation since 1983.

Queer Representation on Screen

Seeing oneself represented on the shelves of a bookstore and in literature when the default is not to be is an indescribable feeling. Similarly, the now defunct Queen Video carried a variety of queer cinema in its collection of over 40,000 titles, allowing a generation of Toronto's queers to find representation in the days before Netflix. For today's younger queer community without access to bookstores and video rental sites, especially those living outside of major cities, streaming sites often remain their only source of representation.

Unfortunately, often queer representation in literature and on-screen is presented as dehumanizing stereotypical depictions or as foils to the protagonist. For many queer characters, there is no positive outcome, with many long-suffering characters encountering violent ends in longstanding tropes. This was particularly evident in a 2016 list compiled by Autostraddle, which featured 212 lesbian and bisexual characters—and how they died. Prominent examples included far too many suicides, gunshot wounds, stabbings, beatings, and explosions. Often these types of depictions as disposable characters translate into real life, with large numbers of the queer community facing violence.

This was also seen in GLAAD's most recent 2019's Studio Responsibility Index, which “maps the quantity, quality and diversity of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) characters in films released by eight major motion picture studios” to increase “fair, accurate and inclusive” queer representation.

The report revealed that although queer-inclusive representation is at its highest, at 18.6%, representation of non-white queer characters dropped significantly from the previous year, as well as the total lack of transgender characters. In addition, queer-inclusive roles were also significantly smaller than previous years. More than half of queer characters only had less than three minutes of screen time, with a majority of less than one minute. For example, of nineteen Walt Disney Studios films, only four were considered LGBTQ-inclusive, while Warner Brothers fared even worse with three out of twenty-one films.

Attempts at Inclusivity Met with Outrage

Despite these worrying statistics, in recent months, there have been increased attempts toward inclusivity. However, outrage has accompanied this representation, especially when it comes to childhood favourites. For example, recently, the creators of *SpongeBob*

Square Pants have revealed the possibility of the beloved Sponge's queerness—to the rage of critics.

As social media's meme generators have begun circulating outrage over the sexualization of cartoon characters for children, I am left wondering why queerness is inextricably linked with sex, when heterosexual characters do not elicit the same response. I question why queer representation and visibility is increasingly deemed a political agenda, while heterosexual imagery is the simply the default. Sex was the furthest thing from my mind while watching cartoons as a child, but I was fully aware of whom I wanted to marry one day. And it was never the prince. Perhaps my earlier years would have been a bit easier if I had seen someone like myself represented in a positive light, even if in the form of a Sponge, reassuring me that there were others like me.

This debate is strikingly similar to a past controversy when critics exploded over the casting of Halle Bailey, a Black actress and singer, as *The Little Mermaid*, insisting that the fictional mermaid must be white, disregarding generations of little Black girls who have not historically seen themselves represented on screen. A similar type of backlash took place in 2016 when a Noma Dumezweni was cast as Hermoine Granger for the London play *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*. I am elated to see a queer Sponge, as I am certain millions loved to see themselves in Ariel and Hermione.

Future Outlook

I am thankful to have spent my youth up in the relative safety and anonymity of a large city where I had access to a larger queer community, until I left. During my years in the far north of Ontario, in Alberta, and in British Columbia, I realized that, in a way, Toronto had sheltered me despite homophobic attitudes from my immediate diasporic community. For many queer Canadians, especially those in small towns, homophobia, transphobia, often coupled with and inseparable from racism and ableism, remain an everyday reality. Often, books, movies, and television shows remain the only escape from everyday reality. And although positive representation in media has slowly increased and today's technological advances make community building and activism increasingly possible, much of the queer community remains outside of the narrative, including much of the overlapping BIPOC, trans, and disabled queer communities.

Nevertheless, for many, places like Glad Day Bookshop remain a home bringing queer characters to life, while cartoons like *SpongeBob* create a sense of belonging. The newest generation may feel validated to finally see additional, and at times, positive representation, but it is important to remember that it has been here all along in our fairytales and in our myths. It was simply hidden. We remain thankful to historians, academics, and even bookstores that continuously strive to uncover erased queer history, and those who struggle for future, equitable representation, and a safer world for the entire queer community.

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>.



Fly on the Wall

Autumn Loneliness Nipping At Your Heels?

Jason Sullivan



Maybe You Should Help Yourself to a Hound; Or Maybe Not!

You'll have to forgive me, the neighbour's dogs are yipping up a jealous storm as they react to our local coyote pack. The latter are waltzing gleefully past windows and singing songs of merriment as they indulge in fallen fruit that has fermented on the orchard's floor. Like animals prior to domestication, our AU minds flow wherever they go so long as we return to our key course material. Yet, sometimes, studying is for the dogs and we just need some

loving chill time.

Being a loving dog owner for much of my life, I feel it within my rights to point out a few inconvenient truths about the dialectical relation betwixt *Canis domesticus* and *Homo civilitas* (known more properly as *sapiens*, meaning the one who thinks. But, do we?). First off, we all could use a study break with affection and pets, and a furry pet can fit the bill. But puppy love, regardless of species, is not of the thinking sort so much as of the feeling type. And as soon as power relations enter the fray mutually assured affection is called into question. Nowhere, sociologically speaking, is this dyadic quandary better illustrated than in the way masters and their dogs assert dominance and submission.

A dog unveils as just the untaxing companion needed for our recess time. Dog desire; that is, desire for a dog to call one's own, not unlike it's thematic parallel in baby fever, may be rooted deep within our psyches. Buried like an old bone, it would thus precede dogs or pets in general; this desire may manifest a deeper longing to become the object of a relative simpleton's slavish devotion. Dogs, after all, are paragons of obedience, loyalty and companionship. And all this without any of the nasty viscidities that accompany engagement with another thinking, feeling being, operating on one's own level. After all, when looking down on another being, we rarely have to gaze them in the eye as equals. Nevertheless, it's generally accepted that dogs do think and do feel, although we bipeds pair this knowledge with pat assertions that dogs naturally feel like being obedient, loyal, slavish, and all the rest. But maybe it's our twisted human language, that symbolic nomenclature purporting to translate sublime feelings into certain phonetics, that deserves a long, stern, stare. Are we so sure that we know why we like being adored and do we really know what bowser is saying with those grunts and yips?

Justice for the Dogs and a Walk With Mary

Now a dog, as is well known, always loses a staring contest. Goldfish not so much. And yet only humans close their eyes to injustice whilst being whittled away from within by all manners of guilt, regret, and anxiety. Heck, if an organism took *us* for a pet it would surely be a being who wants to be reminded how placid *their* life is: a sloth, perhaps, or a ponderous bracket fungi. We humans can hold our intellectual and heartfelt own with a stamina far surpassing our corporeal

nature as skin bags filled mostly with water. No water balloon ambush can stymie our search for truth nor our heartbreaks along the way.

Gender Norms Parallel our Struggles.

The feminist writer Mary Wollstonecraft brought Enlightenment ethos through the doors of the philosophy salons of her time. With force and elegance, she landed her 1792 *Vindication of the Rights of Women* with a plunk on the coffee (or laudanum) table: her script demanded attention! In its pages she drew a parallel between the grooming of her sex to be docile, calm, well-mannered, and tame, and the parallel species whose name is a virtual synonym for loyal virtues. Wollstonecraft wrote: “for though moralists have agreed that the tenor of life seems to prove that man is prepared by various circumstances for a future state, they constantly concur in advising woman only to provide for the present. Gentleness, docility, and a spaniel-like affection are, on this ground, consistently recommended as the cardinal virtues of the sex; and, disregarding the arbitrary economy of nature, one writer has declared that it is masculine for a woman to be melancholy.” (Wollstonecraft, 118)

Two hundred years later this behavioural double standard remains even as it becomes a trope in itself. Consider Miss Scrimmage’s “Finishing School for Young Ladies” or Anne of Green Gables mythic desire for ascension to wifehood!

Companionship as an Idea, With Fur

Wishes for the unconditional love of a furry, almond-brained companion perhaps represents a desire to revert away from the ethereal majesty of our intellectual pursuits at AU. We might recall Wollstonecraft’s contemporary, Voltaire, who, upon reading Rousseau’s anarchic longings for a life without hierarchy (think here of study schedules, deadline dates and examination bookings), proclaimed that Rousseau’s words made him want to “walk on all fours”. If we at AU are to stand, perchance to walk, and then to run our little minds forth, we must recall that playtime and work time equally require our desire for interaction. We don’t have to always be in a brainy headspace, but it doesn’t hurt to consider why we play with who we do. I say this with an eye to *my* fur baby, a noble *Felis domesticus* named Bella. She’s accompanied me through countless AU courses and never once insisted on an unplanned jaunt at the end of a tether. And yet, like any good pet, she knows when her minion requires a break. After all, a cat for a master provides balance to a heady realm!

References

Wollstonecraft, M. (1792). *Vindication of the Rights of Woman*. Markham, Ontario: Penguin Classics.

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.

AU-thentic Events Upcoming AU Related Events

MBA Application Webinar

Thurs, Oct 1, 10:00 to 11:00 am MDT
Online

Hosted by AU Faculty of Business
news.athabasca.ca/events/online-mba-application-webinar-20201001
RSVP through above link

AU 2020 Convocation

Fri, Oct 2, 8:00 am to 6:00 pm MDT
Online

Hosted by who
news.athabasca.ca/events/athabasca-university-convocation-2020
Visit above link for more info

All events are free unless otherwise noted



The Creative Spark

How Not to Fail at School

Marie Well



If you're struggling at university, rest assured that many students with amazing potential also struggle. And I know you have amazing potential. We all do. But we also all have setbacks that could lead to failure. A high potential student might have a learning disability, a track record of underperformance, life challenges, or any other setback. But there are ways around every setback.

I want to dig deeper into one wound in particular students might face: failing at school. Angela Ackerman and Becca Puglisi talk about the wound of failing at school in their book *The Emotional Wound Thesaurus: A Writer's Guide to Psychological Trauma*.

They first list three things you absolutely must avoid if you do not want to fail.

"Underachieving; setting low goals to avoid failing at bigger ones" (Ackerman & Puglisi, 2017, 37%).

Underachievers can come in the form of former PhDs. Life can throw curveballs. One minute you're on top. The next, you're barely staying afloat.

But the reverse also holds true. One minute you're barely staying afloat. The next, you're scoring top grades, on your way to grad school. But a switch from failure to success takes changes. Time commitment is one change. Lifestyle is another.

Perhaps your roommates trap you into a party lifestyle. You could always move to your own place, one equipped with space for your study office, or you could reduce to part time studies at university or part time hours at work. And once you get in the swing, increase your courses.

"Not applying oneself so failure can be blamed on a lack of preparation" (Ackerman & Puglisi, 2017, 37%).

A guy on the bus said he was smart. He just didn't apply himself. He'd be smarter to apply himself. I believe we are all smarter than we know, each with amazing potential, given the right conditions.

A lack of preparation almost always meets up with failure. And the more preparation we do, the better our chances of success.

Sometimes we luck out with the right circumstances for academic success. Other times, we have to work hard to build those circumstances. Either way, our potential is unlimited.

"Dropping out of school" (Ackerman & Puglisi, 2017, 37%).

Please, never do this. Make changes first. In the undergrad, I almost quit school because of social pressure. If I had, I would've lost my chance at not just a graduate degree, but any degree. And

going back would've been so much harder the second time around. Many graduate students consider quitting, too. Hang in there. Make changes. Ask for concessions. Double your efforts. But never quit.

In addition, they suggest you try to avoid changing your focus to an easier field of academics, even if it's less rewarding" (Ackerman & Puglisi, 2017, 37%).

Due to academic pressure, you might switch fields. But be careful: your heart can take you far. If you've got passion for a field, you might gain more success if you tread the harder, more rewarding path. After all, have you seen the license plate on the Porsche that reads 2.64 GPA? And often A students work for B students for companies owned by C students.

In addition to avoiding certain behaviors, Ackerman and Puglisi provide a number of things you should do:

"Redouble your efforts in hopes of turning things around" (Ackerman & Puglisi, 2017, 37%).

If you find yourself falling behind or getting lower grades, don't fret. Spend more time in studies, reduce your course load, get better study habits, whatever puts that fire back in your belly. Even just reading grammar books and books on writing can earn you higher grades. But if you drink or do drugs, consider dropping these habits. They only hurt your grade, not help.

"Seek out tutors or study groups" (37%).

Post an ad at your nearest university requesting a tutor. Ask for a graduate level tutor. Or pay for tutoring from a local tutoring business. You can also contact an online agency as tutoring can be done through Skype or other software.

"Ask for more time on assignments or offering to do additional work for extra credit" (Ackerman & Puglisi, 2017, 37%).

If you've got a disability, such as ADHD, anxiety, or dyslexia, definitely see if you can swap an exam with a project or term paper. AU's Accessibility Services may help advocate on your behalf.

Even without a disability, you could get an extension if you explain your circumstances—to a merciful professor.

"Ask a trusted adult for help if home circumstances are beyond your ability to manage" (Ackerman & Puglisi, 2017, 37%).

Do you spend hours caring for family? Cooking endless meals? Scrubbing dishes and floors? And, oh, the laundry—the endless laundry.

It's a challenge to shift priorities from a loved one to a textbook, but the payoff will be huge. If you can delegate or trade-off responsibilities, maybe even carpool, you've got an edge.

So, the above sums up how not to fail at school. And if you've got a desire to get straight A's, just think of the PhD who spent k-12 almost entirely in the special class.

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Women of Interest

Katharine Hepburn

Barb Godin



"Life is hard, after all it kills you." Katharine Hepburn, 1933

Katharine Houghton Hepburn was an American actress for more than 60 years. She holds the record for receiving the most Academy Awards for a leading actor, as well as an astounding 12 nominations. Beyond her successful acting career Katharine Hepburn was a strong, independent woman who was a role model for many young women to step out of their societal roles, spread their wings and become their own people. Hepburn was outspoken, unconventional, and assertive. She was athletic and chose to wear trousers at a time when wearing trousers was not considered acceptable attire for women.

Katharine Hepburn was born on May 12, 1907, in Hartford, Connecticut, and died June 29, 2003, in Old Saybrook, Connecticut. Her father was a well-known Connecticut surgeon while her mother was a strong participant in the women's suffrage movement. Katharine was encouraged to pursue an education and to openly express her views on any subject. The Hepburn parents were criticized in their community for their progressive views on many issues, however, they

stood strong and encouraged their children to stand up against limitations and barriers and pursue their personal truth. Katharine credits her parents for her strength and ability to face adversity straight on.

Hepburn graduated from Bryn Mawr College with a degree in history and philosophy. She was attracted to acting, but acceptance in most plays was conditional upon good grades. Katharine improved her grades and became a regular, landing a leading role in her senior year. Her love of acting continued, although she was not a typical Hollywood star with her distinct manner of speech and unusual traits. She was met with praise and criticism, but nothing deterred her. Katharine followed her own path, refusing to grant interviews and choosing to dress in her own casual style rather than display the typical Hollywood glamour of her coworkers.

Hepburn was married briefly, but the marriage was dissolved in 1934. She never married again, but in 1942 she began a relationship with fellow actor Spencer Tracy. They never married, as Tracy was Roman Catholic and would not divorce his wife. Their relationship endured until Tracy's death in 1967, shortly after the two completed filming "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner" with Sidney Poitier. Katharine had been taking care of Tracy for five years until his death.

In 1999 the American Film Institute named Hepburn the top female American screen Legend of all time.

Katharine Hepburn's 1991 book "Me: Stories of My Life" was commented on by Anna Quindlen of The New York Times: "In her book about her life, Miss Hepburn insists that that woman in the movies was not her at all. 'I'm not going to hide behind you anymore,' she says. 'Who are you anyway? You're not me.' Sure she is. The woman in the book is cocky, fearless, smart, capable, and human, on screen and off."

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



Beats from the Basement

Marvin Gaye

Milica Markovic



Artist: Marvin Gaye

Album: *Marvin Gaye's Greatest Hits*

If I had to credit any one performer with setting the precedent for soul, R&B, and what we now know as quiet storm, it would have to be the late Marvin Gaye. There's undoubtedly something to be said about his ability to freshen up the sounds of gospel and funk while retaining that nostalgic charm reminiscent of old cinema.

Gaye's *Greatest Hits* compilation does just that and so much more. Recorded in the 60s and 70s, these mesmerizing tunes grace our eardrums with warm vocal layers one moment and chilling, silky high notes the next. The combination of percussion—most notably the flighty and fluid piano—passionate brass, and fluttering strings reflect this dynamic. The most remarkable part is that the transitions are

never melodramatic.

The lyrics are even more varied, ranging from love songs that aren't just about romance to snippets of his life experiences. I always appreciate when artists are attuned to both their personal growth and surroundings as the world continues to change, revealing plenty about their values and lessons for the listener to think about.

That being said, "Let's Get It On" wasn't the way to start the album as far as I'm concerned. I know it's a popular one, being about seducing lovers and all, but if weren't for Gaye's enticing voice it would honestly be a bore to sit through the entire song. For a track so sensually charged, you'd think it'd keep up the momentum after those initial funky notes on the electric guitar.

Luckily, that's my only gripe with the compilation. Gaye challenged outdated gender stereotypes in "I Heard It Through the Grapevine" by sharing vulnerable thoughts about losing his partner to someone else. He had every right—in-song, at least—to be upset; discovering you've been betrayed through gossip has got to be more humiliating than being left via text message. There's nothing more crucial for a successful relationship than wanting proper communication, and even

though Gaye didn't write this particular song himself, you still believe his support of the idea through his performance.

For me, Gaye's socially conscious music was the pinnacle of his career. "Mercy, Mercy Me (The Ecology)" is metaphorical in how it feels we treat the earth. The poignant instrumentation in the second half of the song—complete with a piano gliss, saxophone, and triangle—tries to stay determined, yet is painfully unsure of our future. Vocally, we might say that Gaye is a romantic at heart, but none of that earlier excitement is heard here. Instead, he weeps for the planet, and perhaps rightfully so.

I consider "What's Going On" a companion piece to the aforementioned song, if only because they're musically similar. Thematically, however, Gaye addresses another prevalent issue: the effects of police brutality on social division. Although it was inspired by attacks on anti-war activists, the lyrics speak to the importance of kinship and understanding rather than protest. When I hear it, I can't help but think of the current Black Lives Matter movement, which proves its staying power after so many decades.

Sharing—and advocating for—whatever it is you care about will never go out of style. Just because something has been made into a hashtag doesn't always mean it's a commodity that'll eventually run its course. Keeping it alive is up to us, and that's why I enjoy running this series: because even a little inspiration we find through music can empower us no matter how long it takes, and Gaye certainly did that in his time.

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

Four Financially Savvy tips for During the Pandemic (And Beyond!)

Xin Xu



Personal finances can be a tricky subject. For AU students taking on student loans, juggling multiple jobs, and supporting dependents, money can be a topic that induces anxiety and stress. Moreover, with the global financial downturn and pandemic predicament, many have struggled to make ends meet in the past few months. As a student, I have found that there are various challenges that have arisen during COVID that have made financial literacy more important than ever in helping shed light on discretionary spending. I still remember the day that my employer informed me that there would be no summer student role available as promised prior to February 2020. I was appalled by this sudden change in my income, one that could make it ever more challenging to pay off my student loans.

Over the summer, I've consulted various professionals to better understand my financial

How Not to Commit Suicide

Marie Well



I don't believe suicide is the end. I've watched many near-death experience accounts and believe there exists an afterlife. I've seen near death experience tales where the temporarily deceased claim they go into an afterlife, even if the person was atheistic. These tales say that unconditional love, overwhelmingly beautiful light, and limitless knowledge comprise much of this so-called afterlife. This has convinced me that existence continues beyond this earthly one.

But you might believe the near-death experience is a process of the dying brain, not a real afterlife. However, that doesn't explain shared death experiences. A shared death experience is where the deceased pops out of the body, but so does an attending physician or loved one. Both go upward to a portal of light. But, surprisingly, the living loved one—or even the doctor—watches the deceased rise into the light and disappear. The living loved one or doctor then returns to his or her body.

There have been people, including doctors, who report having had a shared death experience. Some living bystanders have reported experiencing the deceased's life review--a panorama of everything the deceased did along with the ripple effects the deceased had on others.

In the Raymond Moody documentary called *Life After Life*, one near death experience tale involved suicide. The woman spoke of how, in the afterlife, she was told she'd have to live out her life anyway, despite the suicide, but with the more painful parts emphasized. And she'd have to relive her life from the start, including every painful detail. She did not want that fate. Perhaps suicide committers are destined to live out their lives—even in the afterlife—so that they can learn the lessons the pain intended to offer.

I believe we all come to earth to learn lessons, likely one or more major lessons. Coping with suffering helps us to learn our life lessons. When our hearts soften and love abounds, we've come closer to learning that lesson. We also come closer to our ultimate destiny: enlightenment.

We may be wanting to escape horrific times. Even considering suicide ourselves. But we have a blind spot. No matter how bad today seems, tomorrow could be filled with true love, dreams fulfilled, and hope. Around every brick wall may await brilliant rays of sunshine.

Everyone suffers, and there are many people who consider suicide each year. So we're not alone in our suffering. We role model behaviors, modeled to our family, friends, and onlookers. By hanging in there another day, not giving up, we may be giving someone else the courage to live. I don't think we ever want to give up on our schooling, our families, our marriages. No, we're not meant to quit. We certainly are not meant to give up on life either. Instead, we should keep busy on tasks that we find enjoyable. If we no longer find them enjoyable, we should try new tasks or try to revive our enjoyment of our former tasks.

We could enjoy a healthy, delicious meal. Exercise. Meditate. Dance our hearts out. Sing in an ice cold shower. Pray to our higher power if we have one. Read an uplifting book. Memorize scripture. Phone a friend to say, "I love you." And if we have not one friend, think of the people we once knew and send them love. It'll fill us with love in return.

Positive self talk is vital. Think of it this way: the bad bacteria in our stomachs can cause us to grow so sick we can no longer work. A key solution is to crowd out the bad bacteria with good

bacteria—bacteria from kefir milk, yogurt, sour cabbage, kimchee, kombucha, miso paste. Yes, crowd out the bad bacteria.

The same goes with our minds: crowd out the bad thoughts with positive thoughts. Find anything positive to focus on. This is how we train our minds. And it's our obligation to train our minds if we want to be happy.

As soon as the negative thoughts enter, they act like fruit flies and multiply fast. But the same happens with positive thoughts. Filter in compassionate, empathic, forgiving, and understanding thoughts, and your mind will bear fruit.

I also think we should avoid negative music. If things are very serious, we should consider medication, but settle for the one that feels pleasant right away. I found a medicine that makes me feel calm and relaxed instantly, and that isn't addictive.

Or flip the negative into its positive opposite, or cling to a glimmer of positive in the negative. For instance, if a beloved relative passes away, cling to the notion that they're in heaven, now a guardian angel for us. But if you don't believe in the afterlife, cling to the notion that they at least will never again feel pain.

There are many reasons why not to commit suicide. For one, to try and fail could mean being committed into a psychiatric ward. Or with permanent disfigurement or brain damage.

But the biggest reason, I think, is that you are here to learn a life lesson. Your suffering offers you your opportunity to learn. Use that life lesson wisely, and grow. And watch others grow as well because you modeled how to survive unbearable pain. If you're in unbearable pain, then selflessly give unconditional love. It might be your ultimate solution.

[This column is for interest and entertainment purposes only. The author is not medically trained or certified and you should always seek professional advice from a qualified practitioner before embarking on significant lifestyle changes for your well-being. If you are feeling depressed or are having thoughts of suicide, please call someone to discuss your options. Crisis Canada can be reached by phone 24 hours/day at 1-833-456-4566.]

Scholarship of the Week

Digging up scholarship treasure for AU students.

Scholarship name: Parking Solutions Scholarship

Sponsored by: Parking BOXX

Deadline: October 15, 2020

Potential payout: \$1000

Eligibility restriction: Applicants must be enrolled, or due to be enrolled, in a program at an accredited university, college, graduate school, vocational school, or technical school, for the fall semester.

What's required: An online application form along with an approximately 500-word essay on innovation in parking solutions to make parking more user-friendly, efficient, or otherwise enhanced.

Tips: Review Parking BOXX's Definitive Guide to Parking Solutions to spark some ideas for your essay.

Where to get info: parkingboxx.com/parking-solutions-definitive-guide



Homemade is Better Cream Cheese Stuffed Chicken

Chef Corey



This past week I decided to get a little *chefy*. I'm sure many people think that's what restaurant cooks do-- and it is, but it isn't. You have to have a real passion for the art; I've worked with people who do, but I've worked with more people who don't. For them, it was just a job to get paid. But the longer I've been out of restaurants and cooking professionally, the more my passion for great food grows.

I recently purchased a sous vide machine and wanted to use it, so I made up this recipe. You don't have to spend money on a sous vide machine if you don't have one, though. I'm going to give you this recipe with the intent that you'll use a frying pan and the oven. Use a frying pan that can go into the oven OR transfer the seared chicken to a baking dish to finish it. The accompanying pictures are from when I used my sous vide to cook this dish.

Now to answer your question, "What is a sous vide?" Sous vide is a method of cooking using water and heating it to the exact temperature you want your food to finish at. Because it's a long cooking process, you do not get the carryover cooking you do with

the other cooking methods. It is so precise that you can often set the machine to a half degree, and then the food can stay in the heated water until you're ready to cook with it. There is a catch, though, you cannot put the food directly in the water; it must be sealed in a bag. A zipper locking bag works, but many people use vacuum-sealed bags instead. You can use these bags to marinate the meat and just cook with it.

Let's say you want to sous vide this recipe. You would fill the chicken as you will do when you read the instructions, then you can use either vacuum seal it or put it in a large zipper-lock bag. You would partially close the zipper and then place the food into the water to force the air out—and you *need* to get the air out. Once done, you can let it rest while you set up your container to cook in. Attach your sous vide machine, put your food in the container, then fill it up to the highest line on your device. Remove the food, turn on the machine to 145F and let it come up to temperature. Now, anyone who has cooked chicken before is having a fit, "145? The chicken won't be done; you have to go to 160!" No, not with sous vide. 145 is perfect; the chicken will be cooked.

Now that you have your sous vide set to 145 let the water warm up to that temperature. It could be a large pot of water and take the better part of 30 – 40 minutes to warm up, so give yourself enough time. Once it is warmed up, put your closed bag of chicken in and cook for about an hour. Again, one of the beauties of Sous Vide is that the water temperature will stay constant so your food will not overcook. It will hit equilibrium at 145F. Now you can sear the chicken in the pan, and it will hit it up, and you can finish at 160F. Remember to rest for 5 minutes, so the juices of your chicken don't rush out.

Let's Cook!

Cream cheese stuffed chicken

Ingredients:

12oz softened cream cheese
1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese
1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
1 TBSP milk
1 TBSP Chives
1 tsp garlic salt
½ tsp onion powder
Pinch white pepper
8-10 chicken breasts
Kosher salt
Black pepper
One large zipper-lock bag
1 TBSP vegetable oil



Directions:

- 1) Combine the cream cheese and shredded cheeses in a bowl or stand mixer and mix until well incorporated.
- 2) Add the chives and milk and mix some more
- 3) Add the garlic salt, onion powder, and white pepper. Not too much white pepper, it's powerful, and if you don't have white pepper back is ok, and you can add more.
- 4) Mix until everything is well mixed, then transfer it to the large zipper-lock bag. Push everything to the bottom of the bag and as close to one corner as possible.
- 5) Place in the refrigerator for 20 minutes; it lets the flavours blend. The mixture could also be done the day before.
- 6) Preheat your oven to 350F.
- 7) Get a clean frying pan, one that ovenproof is preferred. It will need to be large enough to cook all the chicken; otherwise, you can use a sheet pan or an ovenproof dish.
- 8) Get your chicken and a small sharp knife; you do not want a standard chef's knife for this.
- 9) Pierce the largest part of the breast towards the pointed end. Then slowly cut a pocket into the breast. It doesn't have to go all the way to the end; you just need a bit of a pocket in it.
- 10) Once all of the chicken breasts have been cut, grab your cheese mix and cut off the tip of the bag. You're going to pipe the mix into the chicken. Fill them up until they just start to puff up. When you're done, if there is any mixture left over, keep filling up chicken until its gone.
- 11) Wash your hands, which I hope you were doing anyway.
- 12) Put a tablespoon of oil in the pan and put the temperature on high. If you're using cast iron for this and you don't have a good hood fan, I recommend you open all the windows now.



13) Once the pan heats up, sear each piece of chicken on each side. Remember now, and DON'T move the chicken unless it lets you. It should be easy to lift it, and it shouldn't fight. It is not going to burn; the Maillard (my-ard) reaction is taking over! And when the chicken is browned, it will let go.

14) Once all the chicken is seared, put it in the oven for 30 minutes. Check the temperature. If the thermometer read 145 – 150F, take out the chicken and cover it with foil to rest. The phenomena called carryover cooking will happen. It will continue to cook until all the juices have settled down.

15) Serve that dish and enjoy a nice beverage!



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

Student Sizzle — AU's Hot Social Media Topics

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



AthaU Facebook Group

Mitch launches a discussion about the online-only 2020 convocation; initial responses indicate some of this year's grads are feeling disappointed they won't be able to attend a live event. Jennifer wonders where to find updates on courses that are temporarily closed; moments later, the link to the course availability list is posted. Kara is confused by a reference to Lotus Notes for an exam; responses clarify it's one of the exam platforms AU uses (the other being Much Learning) and is not related to invigilation.

Other posts include selling textbooks, post-exam blues, student interviews, MAIS program, and transferring credits to other universities.

reddit

Among a flood of other posts, several involve ENGL courses 155, 211, 212, 255, and 305.

Twitter

@AthabascaU tweets: "We're excited to announce our new podcast, Go The Distance! We partnered with @cbctandem to tell stories of how #AthabascaU learners and transforming lives & transforming communities. When education is accessible, the world changes for the better. t.co/MJatNEq2bg."

@austudentsunion tweets: "The AU Students' Union is offering a new service for @AthabascaU undergrads! We partnered with VMock Inc. to give our members free access to a web-based SMART resume review platform! SIGN UP TODAY and get a standout resume! <https://vmock.com/ausu> #OneAU #careerdevelopment."



Dear
Barb

Barbara Godin

The Growth of the Addict

Dear Barb:

Hi, I am wondering what is going on with all these young people dying of drug overdoses. It used to be just the rock stars, you know, like Janis Joplin, Kurt Cobain, Elvis Presley, Prince, and them. But recently I have heard of so many deaths, even some relatives, who are in their twenties and thirties passing away from drug overdoses. It is heartbreaking for everyone to watch these young people wasting their lives. I wonder if doctors are over prescribing these medications, or if addicts are getting them illegally.

When my doctor prescribes medication, I look it up to make sure it's not addicting and as a result I have chosen not to take some medications because of the warnings I've read. There has got to be a better way to treat pain than with these terribly addicting substances. This definitely appears to be a societal problem. Maybe it's just particular people who are prone to addiction and I am overreacting. What do you think? Thanks, Justine.

Hi Justine,

I agree with you, this is a sad situation for society. I read some interesting information on a site called [Medical Xpress](https://www.medicalxpress.com/). Research has confirmed that certain individuals are more susceptible to addiction and therefore we need to be more understanding of the addict. Simply stated, their craving is stronger than the pain they are causing those around them.

The addict needs support and compassion rather than judgement and alienation.

Drug use physically changes the frontal cortex, which is the decision-making part of the brain and these changes be seen on imaging scans. Dr. Nora Volkow, director of NIH's National Institute on Drug Abuse has said "When the frontal cortex isn't working properly, people can't make the decision to stop taking the drug—even if they realize the price of taking that drug may be extremely high and they might lose custody of their children or end up in jail. Nonetheless, they take it."

Unfortunately, addiction does run in families, as does heart disease, but not everyone in a family will become addicts or develop heart disease. Addiction is not a black and white issue. Surveys from the 1970's to the present have indicated that society, as a whole, has become less happy, which may be contributing to the widespread addiction problem. Worse, there doesn't seem to be an easy fix, however studies are ongoing, and it does appear that this problem has to be prevented early in life, possibly during the teenage years. Recently the medical community has changed their criteria and are reluctant to give opioids to teens following medical procedures. Most are given Tylenol or other pain relievers instead, which seem to be successful. I don't believe you are overreacting as this a very real problem.

Email your questions to voice@voicemagazine.org. Some submissions may be edited for length or to protect confidentiality; your real name and location will never be printed. This column is for entertainment only. The author is not a professional counsellor and this column is not intended to take the place of professional advice.



Poet Maeve
Alarm Reaction

Wanda Waterman



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

IMPORTANT DATES

- **Sep 30:** [Deadline to apply for course extension for Oct](#)
- **Oct 1:** [AUSU Awards & Bursaries open for applications](#)
- **Oct 2:** [Athabasca University Convocation](#)
- **Oct 10:** [Deadline to register in a course starting Oct 1](#)
- **Oct 15:** [Nov degree requirements deadline](#)
- **Oct 21:** [AUSU Public Council Meeting \(Zoom\)](#)

Student Energy – Be Part of the Movement

Are YOU interested in a Student Energy Chapter for AU?

From climate change to shifting our reliance on fossil fuels, there is a lot of conversation happening around the environment and energy, and that conversation is happening at university campuses around the world.

AUSU is considering partnering with [Student Energy](#), a Canadian charity dedicated to encouraging discussion about the role energy will play in our future. Student Energy has over 40 student-led Chapters around the world that enable students who are passionate about energy to establish a local branch of the organization in their campus community. It would be an opportunity to leverage the Student Energy global brand and organizational knowledge to take action on energy. Plus, the Global Chapter Network is an incredible opportunity for students to connect with like-minded peers from around the world to help make a sustainable energy future a reality.

Visit the [Student Energy website](#) for more info.

Creating a Student Energy Chapter at Athabasca University is an initiative we could start, but it will need grassroots support from our students - and that could be you.

If you are interested in an AUSU Student Energy Chapter, contact AUSU VP External & Student Affairs, Stacey Hutchings, at vpex@ausu.org.

AUSU Open Mic Podcast– New Episode

[AU Students Talk Study Tips](#)

Although AU students can start any month, from anywhere, September it is a good time to reflect on tips for studying at Athabasca University. In our latest podcast episode, the AUSU executives share their advice and experiences at AU and offer tips to keep yourself on track to succeed.

[Click to Listen to this Episode](#)

Starring: AUSU President Natasha Donahue, VP External & Student Affairs Stacey Hutchings, VP Finance & Administration Monique Durette, and Executive Director Jodi Campbell.

Check out all Open Mic episodes [here](#).

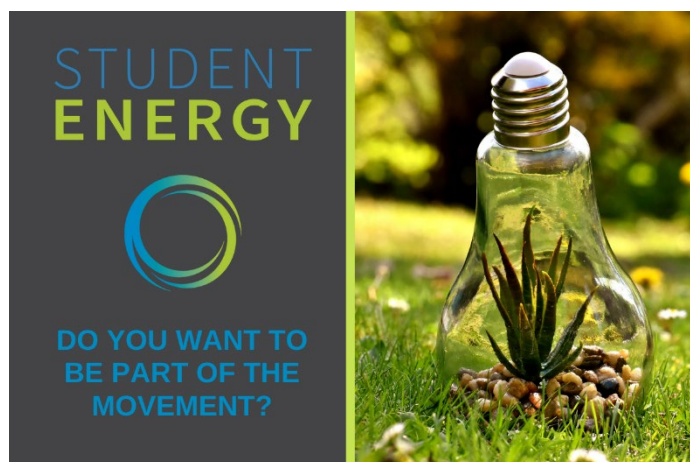


Enter to Win \$250!

Have you filled out any AUSU [Peer Course Reviews](#) yet? Complete a review by December 31, 2020 to enter a prize draw for a \$250 Amazon Gift Card.

AUSU's Peer Course Reviews provide students with a confidential way to rate their course experience at AU, and to provide feedback for fellow students!

Fill out a course review [here](#).



CLASSIFIEDS

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

THE VOICE

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

Publisher	Athabasca University Students' Union
Editor-In-Chief	Jodi Campbell
Managing Editor	Karl Low

Regular Columnists Barb Godin, Natalia Iwanek, Barbara Lehtiniemi,
Jason Sullivan, Wanda Waterman, Xin Xu and others!

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