



# THE VOICE

Vol 29 Issue 06 2021-02-12

## Minds We Meet

Interviewing Students Like You!

## Virtual Valentine's Day Date Ideas

Distance Dating?

## Don't Worry About the Apocalypse

The Silver Lining to the Cloud

*Plus:*

*Nothing to do with Math*

*Valentine's as a Mark of Progress  
and much more!*



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Views and articles  
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AUSU Student Council.

*The Voice* is published  
almost every Friday in  
HTML and PDF format.

For weekly email reminders  
as each issue is posted, fill  
out the subscription form  
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Volume 29, Issue 05

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Magazine

ISSN 2561-3634

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



**We love to hear from you!**  
**Send your questions and comments to [voicemagazine.org](http://voicemagazine.org),**  
**and please indicate if we may publish your letter!**

***Hey! Did you know the Voice Magazine has a [Facebook page](#)?***

No kidding! We also do the [twitter](#) thing once in a while if you're into that.

## Editorial

### Alternative Assessments

Karl Low



One of the things that AU is looking at these days is the question of alternative assessments. It's always been somewhat of a niche topic, but it's one that's seen increasing interest, especially as the pandemic forces educators to reconsider, well, almost everything about how courses are designed.

One of the principals of the AU committee looking at this topic is Dr. Jon Dron of the computer science department. If you've ever had an opportunity to take one of his higher level courses, you already have some idea of at least one mode of alternative assessment and learning.

One of Dr. Dron's courses that I'm familiar with based your assessment in large part on a "learning journal" that you compiled throughout the course and was submitted at the end. But to me it felt like much of the course could easily devolve into a case of the blind leading the blind. Especially in the case of distance education where contact between the educator and the student is often infrequent and sporadic. How many students have unfortunately taken an entirely wrong path and not realized it until well into the course?

At the same time, our current modes of assessment do tend to reward those who have learned what kind of things they need to repeat back on the tests, whether or not they understand what those things mean. You can teach a horse to count, after all, but does that mean it understands numbers, or that it just understands how to read the body language of the person with the reward?

And some courses, of course, are resistant to any kind of alternative assessment. How do you test whether a person has mastered financial accounting concepts, for instance, aside from presenting them with a number of financial accounting situations and seeing what they do?

At any rate I'm curious to see what the group can come up with, because, as those of us having to take ProctorU exams are well aware, it would be very nice if there was some better alternative.

Meanwhile, this week, our student interview is with our own Milica Markovic, recently of Beats from the Basement, now working on her new column, Women in Fiction. Milica's also working at her graduate studies with AU, and finding out how AU has been a boon to her getting an education in the middle of a busy lifestyle.

Also, we can't forget Valentine's day. So, in case you don't have plans already, Xine Xu has presented us with some possible activities you can do with your valentine, even if you have to keep it virtual, and Jason Sullivan has given us a Fly on the Wall that looks to Valentine's Day as a metaphor for our experience with AU Courses. It's a bit of a reach, I'll admit, but it's interesting to see how he gets there.

We also have a couple of rants, one on how fear of math may affect your financial future, and another on how the current pandemic might be a blessing in disguise by preparing us for one of the many even more apocalyptic events that seem to be on the horizon. On top of that, we have scholarships, events, advice, recipes, and a report on the last AUSU Council meeting where we found that we lost one VPFA and brought in a new one, plus said goodbye to a long-standing Councillor. And the two aren't even related. 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 are 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. If you would like to be featured next, do not hesitate to get in touch!

*The Voice Magazine* recently had the chance to chat with AU student and the Beats from the Basement column writer Milica-Mila Marković from Toronto, Ontario, located on the traditional lands of the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnaabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee, and the Wendat peoples.

Milica is currently enrolled in the Master of Arts – Interdisciplinary Studies (MA-IS) hoping “to gain admission into the focus area, Writing and New Media.” She stated, “I want to expand my practice by adapting the skills I’ve acquired, not just to my services, but to fictional works as well. I’d like to be able to dedicate time to creative projects and become a published novelist, [and] video essayist ... though I

think it would also be interesting to experiment with scriptwriting for other forms of media like video games or drama.”

Milica works “as a communications consultant – writing, editing, and advising clients on their outreach strategies.” She stated, “I’m also a represented talent for print, commercial, and voiceover work. I am of Montenegrin descent (although I was born when Yugoslavia still existed), but live in Toronto, Ontario.”

When she is not studying, she enjoys “exploring new places and spending time outdoors when possible – especially with family and/or friends.” She continued, “I like to go for a jog or swim, do some Pilates-infused yoga, and try out different food recipes.”

Milica found it difficult to choose the one individual who has had the greatest influence on her desire to learn. She stated, “Truthfully, it’s hard for me to pin-point just one individual because in meeting so many people through school, work, and other activities over the years I’ve come to realize that learning doesn’t ever stop, whether you’re trying to improve as a professional, as a person, or even ignite the passion you once had for something. For example, I’d love to re-learn my musical instruments – violin and clarinet (my friend also gave me an ocarina for my birthday, Zelda fans out there will know what I’m talking about, and my mother would like me to learn the gusle grandma gave her on her wedding day – so there’s also that LOL) – and take French and Spanish lessons again. Being bilingual my whole life has made me appreciate the different ways

of thinking and expression languages offer you and I'm determined to become a polyglot someday. But of course, everything in its own time."

Online learning has appealed to Milica thus far, as she explained, "There really isn't a whole lot I dislike about it. Having the flexibility to log in for those participation points and work on assignments when I can isn't something I can complain about. If I had to say one thing though, it's that there can – and this is ironic coming from me – be a little too much writing. I feel some components should either be reduced or cut completely to allow for more audio and visual opportunities."

Despite the positives, she admitted that she momentarily wavered about continuing her studies this past summer. "I'll be honest, it was mostly because I wanted to spend more time outside and enjoy what I could considering the pandemic. Even taking my work outdoors made me anxious at times. But I remembered that I'll be done before I know it and that I'll get through it if I budget my time well."

Her most memorable course so far has been MAIS 620: Digital Storytelling, stating, "[I]t allowed me to try my hand at other techniques I normally don't use, such as podcasting and storyboarding. It's the only course I've taken so far in which I got to use mixed media and wasn't just about writing."

As for communication with her tutors, Milica stated, "Almost all of them have not only been incredibly responsive, but also detailed in their explanations anytime I was having trouble or was unclear about something. I don't blame professors though for maybe not always having the chance to process my emails; they're busy people, too, and they do allow for more leeway in how you present your work so you get to focus on being more creative and resourceful."

Milica loves to read, "so much so that when I take a day's break I feel that urge to just pick up another book!" She explained, "I'm finally going through Margaret Atwood's *A Handmaid's Tale* as a casual reader; I never got it assigned to me in all my years of schooling, even though plenty of my peers have." And TV shows? "I'm not much for TV shows, but I will say I'm excited to see the Japanese anime adaptation of *Shenmue* whenever it gets released. I got hooked on those games in the last few months and it'll be interesting to see how they'll get translated into a teleplay due to their interactive, open-world nature."

When asked what her first project would be as the new president of AU, Milica laughed that she was "not trying to take anyone's job!" However, she continued, "[I]n all seriousness, I'm of the belief that you should be the change you want to see, so there's a strength in communicating with others, president or otherwise, to try and launch an initiative that means a lot to you and perhaps others in your community. I could talk about things I'd want to accomplish all day long, but I'd rather just do it and rally up anyone who supports the cause, you know?"

Despite her positive attitude, Milica does have some pet peeves. She stated, "If I were to list them all I'd most likely take up next week's issue in addition to this one, so I'll stick to one that's been bugging me recently: when people loudly slurp their soup. More power to anyone who doesn't mind it – and apparently, it's actually supposed to improve the flavour...? – but it just ain't my cup of tea, so to speak."

The one thing that distinguishes Milica from other people is that she has never used Adobe Photoshop. "And I don't know if I ever will, I've just never been in a situation where it was necessary, nor did it ever cross my mind even as a fun pastime like it seems to be for a lot of people (memes, anyone?). It's nevertheless not a topic I bring up much – though it's maybe an interesting one in an age where many of us have encountered Photoshop at some point!"

When asked which famous person, past or present, she would like to have lunch with, and why, Milica stated, "For me, it's about picking the brains of people who inspire me or are simply interesting to me. I don't get star struck – at least, not easily – but of course, I'd be delighted to dine with a writer or creative person in general. Xenia Tchoumi is a digital entrepreneur who recently penned a book about self-empowerment...so I'll pick her. On the one hand, we are social beings that should be able to rely on others, but at the same time we should learn to trust ourselves more when looking to fulfill personal goals, so I'd want to get her thoughts on that." That lunch would be entirely up to Xenia, who is "quite the foodie." Milica stated, "I'm willing to try anything new!"

The most valuable lesson that she has learned in life has been, "That you can't please everyone and allow yourself to be too passive, to the point that it leaves you resentful and with less solid relationships. Not everyone is going to agree with you or really even 'get' you. This doesn't automatically make you a bad person, nor is it necessarily anything personal. It's how you handle yourself that matters most."

And her proudest moment? "When I decided that I was going to do what I think is right for me and not because it would make others proud. Obviously, we all want to be respected and cared for, but when it comes to your passion, if you don't believe in it, can you honestly expect others to?"

Best of luck Milica!

*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>.*



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

Lost in the carnival of red hearts and chocolates, the much-overlooked—but still romantic—Ferris Wheel Day is also celebrated each February 14.

**Present company excluded, of course.** Writer Janice Behrens examines parallels in our behaviour to that of the ruthless Harry Lime character in the 1949 film *The Third Man*. "Except for the very best and committed amongst us, we more or less share his sociopathic ability to turn a blind eye to the consequences of our lifestyle choices." Harry Lime Walks Again, November 3, 2004.

**Probably not number 6, though.** Bill Pollett offers a dozen activities to break out of your rut (also good for breaking your pandemic blues.) "Drive out into the country to pick mushrooms or wild strawberries; take mid-week tango lessons; have a naked picnic in the living room with your significant other." Lost and Found—Subversify Yerself, July 28, 2004.

## Virtual Valentine's Day Date Ideas

Xine Xu



Valentine's Day for many this year may be entirely different from years prior. With many countries and local areas still following public health restrictions for the COVID-19 pandemic, getting together for a romantic restaurant date may not be possible. So what are some other activities that couples can enjoy this year instead of the traditional candlelight dinner in an Italian restaurant followed by a moonlit walk along the river? There are still various options that can help you spend some quality time with your significant other.

### Play Virtual Board Games

I recently stumbled upon Tabletop Simulator; a steam game that allows you to play just about any board game virtually. Featured here, I am playing a popular city-building board game called Machi Koro. The only catch is that your significant other also needs this application downloaded from Steam to play. However, if this doesn't sound appealing to you, there are various board games to play online including poker card games, Uno with friends,

Words with Friends (Facebook) that you can play with your Valentine's day date.



### Create Art Together

In the event you're quarantined with your lover, you can certainly plan a paint night together complete with some fancy (take-out) dinner and drinks to celebrate your love. For example, one of my friends recently completed an enormous panel painting with her partner. Not only did this fill an entire evening but it also deepened their connection with another while exercising their artistic creativity together.



### Netflix Party

For many this has been a common go-to activity during the pandemic. Netflix party is a Chrome extension that allows you to watch Netflix with friends and family virtually. The application will play the Netflix movie or series for two separate computers at the same time so no matter where you're located, as long as internet connection is available, you can watch together with your date. Both parties must have a Netflix account to be able to watch together. For better results, try video-conferencing your date to see their reactions throughout the movie.

### Try a Cardio Routine Together

For the health nuts out there, breaking a sweat with your loved one on Valentine's Day can be motivating and refreshing. For myself, I recently tried a yoga routine with my significant other and it has been a rewarding experience learning something new and also having fun laughing at each other's silly faces post-workout.

### **Cook Together**

For dates living in the same household, cooking a new recipe together can be an excellent way to bond with another. Instead of take-out, you can custom your dinners to your liking and can be cost-effective as well.



### **Virtually Explore a New Place such as an Art Gallery or Museum**

Various art galleries and museums have created virtual platforms for guests to visit during the pandemic. I found many from all across the world on [the travel and leisure website](#). While travelling may be barred, I found touring these museums and galleries felt like a rewarding travel experience while learning about artwork.



## A Rant: The Apocalypse is Nothing to Worry About

Jeff Shermack



The global health pandemic threatening everybody has certainly brought new challenges to life everywhere, but the threat of this plague is only the most recent factor in the pressure building toward a major cataclysm. At least, that's the way it feels for many of us right now. When you combine the pandemic with the threats of political instability, climate change, economic depression, and natural disasters around the world, the guy holding the cardboard sign and preaching "doom" on the street corner suddenly seems a little less crazy.

Many of my friends and acquaintances have expressed their own personal growing anxiety and depression over the possibility of a doomed world, or at least a doomed generation. Many of them feel powerless to control their own futures. While I might be able to recognize that sense of social and political impotence, it hasn't seemed to build its way into my particular cocktail of mental illnesses. My mom always said, "you control the colour of the sky in your world," so while all of us continue to struggle to affect the course of history for the better, this article might at least be able to relieve the dread hanging

over some of us like an elephant from a ceiling fan. The premise is simple. An apocalyptic event isn't something to be afraid of, it's something to take advantage of. Many of us have already started to do so without even knowing it.

I'm not about to recommend that you start raiding and looting as soon as California sinks below the waves. Apocalyptic human barbarism is the last thing I want to advocate for and if that's what you're looking for then there's a plethora of post-apocalyptic literature to satisfy any misanthropic and pessimistic reader. For many of us, the current quarantine has led to the learning of new skills and hobbies, many that will be particularly useful for those of us living in the end-times. That's the opportunity that doom presents for us.

The most obvious of these new hobbies is physical activity. How many of us dedicated ourselves to individual physical fitness this year? With the gyms closed, and ample time to spend at home or outside, many of us were forced to find our own methods for staying in shape, whether that was bodyweight training, running, or even winter cycling (some of us are already crazy). If the end does come in revolutions and rockslides, then it's unlikely anyone will still be organizing community sports leagues or running a gym. In that environment of disaster, those of us that have already begun training will be at an advantage.

Many of my friends have also taken up gardening this year, which is a hobby that provides its own obvious benefits, even in the present days of mounting cataclysm. The difference in taste between a store-bought tomato and a home-grown tomato is undeniable. Gardening has also proven to be a great outlet for anxiety (according to some of the grimmer fatalists among my friends), and I believe that in the days that follow Ragnarök these budding cultivators will grow and thrive. Some of us already experienced the minor effects of a brief disruption in the global supply chain this year. I like to believe that somewhere out there somebody is sleeping soundly each night on a thick mattress of bathroom tissue, but toilet paper shortages would only be the

beginning of trouble in a true catastrophe. A significant enough global debacle could permanently disrupt the global supply chains. When we can no longer get peppers and tomatoes from California, or fruits from B.C., it will be the gardeners that rise to feed their communities. The greatest badge of honour in the post-apocalyptic world will be a green thumb, assuming that the soil is still fertile.

Those are just two examples of the many skills people are building now that will aid them in their attempts to survive underneath the grey skies of the post-apocalypse. If you're feeling helpless about the apocalypse today, try a hobby that can help you in a distant tomorrow. If you're worried about rising sea levels, maybe take up diving, unless, like myself, you have asthma and are thus barred from obtaining a diving license. In which case, maybe move further inland.

*Jeff Shermack was studying English, writing SF and interested in experiments with storytelling structure. This February he'll be graduating from AU, getting ready to take on the real world.*

## The Struggling Student Rants Money Has Nothing to Do with Math

**Angela Pappas**



If math, algebra, calculus, and anything number-related is something you have avoided like the plague, it's time to stop. I do understand the aversion and still stumble with the simplest of calculations when someone is watching or waiting for the answer. At 17 and right out of high school, I could not have given a lesser shit about Pythagoras and his theorem. I also don't remember any of my teachers' names, but I do remember my algebra teacher still—almost 25 years later. He made me feel like a pudding head and dread math for life, in any shape or form. I barely passed his class and annoyed the hell out of him, constantly asking "but why?" and never getting a valid answer out of him. His response, most days, was

"because I said so." Now, at AU, asking "why" is not only encouraged, but also a requirement for success. You need to try to understand the *why* behind the math; simple memorization won't cut it. The same applies in life. You can't possibly know everything there is to know out there, but you should at least try to understand what it is you're looking at or dealing with. Life usually won't work very well in your favour if you blindly do as you're told, because they said so. Additionally, being numerate won't guarantee you're going to make the right decisions, but it is preferable to play an active role in your financial future, rather than ignore any roadblocks for lack of confidence, don't you think?

Us 80s kids were raised to believe that good math skills would reward us with higher wages, in almost every industry. We were told those who did well in math—in high school or college—would end up with a higher income, a brighter future, and less likely to be unemployed. "If you want to be rich, you better be good with numbers, math, algebra, calculus..." and the list went on, depending, of course, on the degree of your parents' involvement in your curriculum. However, correlation is not causation. Lifelong students, those who embrace learning, may or may not earn more money. Nevertheless, acknowledging that we do not know everything and not shying away from the difficult allows us to live our daily lives feeling more secure and confident in our

abilities. How you feel about something can determine the outcome. Your fear, hopes, anticipation, or nonchalance will usually predict how you act—or react—to a situation and, likely, amplify any effects (Polyportis, Kokkinaki, Horváth and Christopoulos, 2020). There are countless of studies out there both theorizing and proving this, so whether you think you're good with numbers—or not—you know that you're absolutely right, but it may just have nothing to do with your financial success.

This isn't to say that knowing whether you're losing money on your credit card interest versus any investment ROI you may have coming in is irrelevant. You also need to be able to talk numbers with colleagues, potential business partners, and the bank if that is the industry or career path you've chosen. If you're in management, you should know what your company's income statement is telling you to make the right decisions and not go over budget. At the end of the day, math skills are to finance as milk is to peanut butter—corny joke, I know... However, most of the concepts have their basis from the math we learn in grade school; they are simply then taken a few steps beyond that. This is nothing a good textbook and some trial and error can't help you master. I've also been told that many students who were never inclined toward math in grade school or high school tend to excel in the financial sector. It's not that they were stupid at the time; they simply couldn't give a rats ass about how many chocolate bars little Tommy could fit into his backpack while riding his bike at 20 mph downwind. They do, on the other hand, care about their sales level and commission.

If you, too, would like to give it another shot, Athabasca's MATH 100, Developmental Mathematics is exactly what can help you face undergrad math courses head on. I can personally vouch for this and I believe it was the best course selection I've made to date. The content has applied to so many other courses down my path I've lost count; it's also applied in real-life. My only stupid decision was not keeping the physical textbook. I can't tell you how many times I've needed it since—both for my own courses and to show a few know-it-all managers a thing or two about basic multiplication and percentages. You see, I no longer accept “because I said so” as a satisfactory argument. Knowing your numbers also makes others second guess themselves before trying to pull a fast one on you, both on a personal level and as a consumer. “Cognitive limitations create incentives for financial firms to pursue increased profits by systematically attempting to manipulate consumer behavior,” (Williams, 2007, p. 245). Therefore, if they can take advantage of you, they absolutely will. You must be willing to question things and dig deeper when you don't understand what someone is trying to sell you, rather than walk away in fear of appearing ignorant.

The basis of any ignorance can be justified. However, many take secondary education for granted while most people on this planet will not even make it into high school—never mind out of it. The school system, until recently, also didn't have a finance component either, neither at the primary school level nor at the secondary level. Some schools are rethinking this and implementing finance education into their curriculum now. However, we are still a long way from making any real progress.

There's no need to feel bad, because we all need to make life decisions around money, in some shape or form, we were simply ill-equipped to do so from grade school. The key question is, what are you doing about it now? Using your upbringing as your crutch will not prevent others from taking advantage of you. There is absolutely no excuse now with the infinite resources available to us, all with the click of a button—whether you are a math major or studying the Philosopher's Stone. Throwing those crutches away will feel amazing and tour financial habits, as a result of your confidence in balancing your budget, are what will determine your financial success. There's also a strong link between basic numerical skills and financial prosperity (Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, 2012). Innumeracy, on the other hand, plagues far

too many people (Paulos, 2001, pp. 3-4) and numeracy, on the other hand was determined to be “by far the most ... numeracy and financial literacy were both found to be predictors of wealth” by Smith, McArdle, and Willis (2010, p. 18). So, if you want to be rich... pick up a book and learn how!

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

## Women of Interest

### Mairuth Hodge Sarsfield

**Barb Godin**



*Image courtesy the National Order of Quebec*

Mairuth Hodge Sarsfield (1925-2013) was born in Little Burgundy, in the southwest borough of Montreal, Canada. This area was populated mainly by English-speaking African Americans of predominately working-class stature. Sarsfield was a journalist, researcher, broadcaster and best-selling author, as well as an on-air host for the CBC, CTV, and TV Ontario over the course of her life.

Sarsfield travelled extensively as a diplomat and was positioned overseas for the Department of External Affairs. She played an important role at Expo 67 in Montreal and again Expo 70 in Japan, where she was an organizer for the Canadian pavilions. While at the ribbon cutting ceremony in Japan, Sarsfield was overlooked when a Japanese official asked for the Canadian delegate to step forward. Although Sarsfield was standing directly in front of him, she was ignored while the Japanese official searched for the Canadian diplomat. At that point Sarsfield spoke up "I'm here" and took the scissors. Sarsfield was no stranger to this type of bias and was able to move past it, and as said by her close friend, Rita Deverell, she continued to open doors for those coming up behind her.

Sarsfield received her degree from both Sir George Williams College and McGill University and studied Journalism at Columbia. She began her career as a broadcaster at *The Hourglass* then moved on to CBC as a researcher and on air-host. She later joined the civil service and worked as information officer to the United Nations. Above her desk was a sign stating "Don't let the bastards grind you down." She was active in the charity "For Every Child a Tree."

Mairuth Sarsfield's married for a second time in 1975. She had two children who both predeceased her. Her son passed from an accident and her daughter from breast cancer. She has one granddaughter.

At the age of 66, Sarsfield published her first book. *No Crystal Stair*, a novel which delves into the Canadian reality of functioning as White while surviving as Black. The book was criticized for not characterizing a darker picture of the black lifestyle in Montreal in the forties. Sarsfield responded to the interviewer "Being black is a lot of fun - or can be. You don't have to bellyache to write a good book." *No Crystal Stair* was also criticized for not being well written, and pretty well disappeared for many years. In 2005 the Women's Press republished her book, ultimately reviving it and although the quality of the writing was still met with criticism, it was included in *Canada Reads 2005*.

Sarsfield received many awards for her Canadian-theme-based Pavilions at the World's Fair. She also won the National Congress of Black Women's Foundation's First Literary Award. She was honored with "Mairuth Sarsfield Day" by the City of Cleveland for her work with the United Nations in Nairobi, and in 1985 received the award of Chevalière from the National Order of Quebec.

Mairuth Sarsfield passed away on May 7 at the age of 83, following complications from a stroke.

*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*

## Council Connection

### January 20, 2021 AUSU Council Meeting

**Karl Low**



The January 20<sup>th</sup> meeting started with the expected participants having a notable absence of a Vice-President of Finance and Administration. However, Councillor Monique Durette, the VPFA at the previous meeting, was still present. Supporting documents in the meeting noted two resignations. One of VPFA Monique Durette from the position, though she would be remaining on Council, and the second being that of Councillor Joshua Ryan from Council for work in his field. Monique's resignation letter from the position of VPFA notes that she decided to do so to accelerate her graduation by just under a year and move on to pursuing her career that much earlier.

President Stacey Hutchings provided the acknowledgements of the traditional lands AUSU operates from, and the agenda was accepted

without adjustment, although Councillor Darcie Fleming noted that there was a motion from a January 12<sup>th</sup> meeting that should be ratified. Governance and Advocacy Coordinator Duncan Wojtaszek noted that the minutes from that meeting had not been completed yet, but it was in them and they would be released soon. While it wasn't announced exactly what meeting that was, I was able to guess from the context that what was being spoken about was an executive election meeting to replace the VPFA.

It quickly became clear that Councillor Almgidada Eldoma was now properly addressed as Vice President of Finance and Administration, Almgidada Eldoma. So congratulations go to him. And just to make sure he got to jump in the deep end right away, this meeting would be dealing with the annual audit of AUSU's finances by the firm Kingston Ross Pasnak, normally known as simply KRP.

As is usual with the review of the audit, representatives from KRP were in attendance to present the result and answer any questions that might arise. AUSU Executive Director Jodi Campbell started off with a summary noting that it had been a thorough audit by KRP, and passed the floor to KRP representative Chad Knippel. He presented the audited financial statements, noting that AUSU currently has a balance sheet of approximately 1.6 million, with net assets that increased by \$228,192 over the course of the 2019/2020 financial year. That increase stemmed from revenues exceeding expectations by almost \$100,000 as more people turned to online education during the pandemic, by AUSU realizing savings of another near \$100,000 from the expected budget with the Professional Development category seeing the largest savings, as only \$16,667 was spent out of a budgeted 41,000. AUSU also realized gains on investments and savings of about \$50,000.

Mr. Knippel noted that while there were some adjustments that needed to be made to AUSU's books during the audit, most of these were dealing with end of year accruals, and it was a clean audit. However, Mr. Knippel also noted discrepancies in documentation suggesting different totals for reserves and contingency funds, with a difference of about \$60,000. This sent up some alarm bells among Councillors, as VPFA Eldoma asked for more information on these discrepancies, as it seems like a huge amount to be missing.

Mr. Knippel clarified that the discrepancy was not in the amount of money in the accounts but rather in how AUSU had classified the money, and exactly under which reserve or contingency account the funds should be reported as being under. This was further clarified by the other KRP

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

### **Bannock and a Movie February Edition:** **nîpawistamâsowin: We Will Stand Up**

Feb 1 to Feb 28

Online

Hosted by AU Nukskahtowin

[indigenous.athabascau.ca/bannock/index.php](http://indigenous.athabascau.ca/bannock/index.php)

Access through above link

### **Talk to a Librarian Drop-in Session**

Tues, Feb 16, 9:00 to 9:30 am MST

Online via Microsoft Teams

Hosted by AU Library

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

No pre-registration necessary; access through above link

### **Create a Winning 3MT**

Wed, Feb 17, 1:00 to 2:00 pm MST

Online

Hosted by AU Faculty of Graduate Studies

[news.athabascau.ca/events/three-minute-thesis-brittany/](http://news.athabascau.ca/events/three-minute-thesis-brittany/)

Register through above link

### **MBA Application Webinar**

Wed, Feb 17, 2:00 to 3:00 pm MST

Online

Hosted by AU Faculty of Business

[news.athabascau.ca/events/online-mba-application-webinar-20210217/](http://news.athabascau.ca/events/online-mba-application-webinar-20210217/)

RSVP through above link

*All events are free unless otherwise noted.*

representative present, Natalia Thoth, who noted as an example that while the AUSU contingency reserve was stated in some AUSU documentation as being a total of \$350,000, there were also motions within AUSU's governance history noting a contingency reserve of only \$275,000. The auditors pointed out that for better accounting practices and transparency, AUSU needs to ensure that all of its documentation as to how much money is to be considered in the various reserves is consistent.

Councillor Monique Durette noted that the KRP fee for the service was higher than initially budgeted for, and was wondering if this would require a motion. Executive Director Jodi Campbell noted that the overage was within the limits for budgetary overages that could be dealt with by finance committee and so a full motion wasn't required. He also noted that the overage came from the thoroughness of the audit, which found out the previously mentioned concerns about the reserve fund allocations.

With the concerns addressed, Council voted unanimously to approve the financial statements, and then to re-appoint KRP as the financial auditors for the upcoming year.

There was then come significant discussion on the action items. In particular, the action item to investigate appropriate organizational consultants for AUSU, including one to examine AUSU's indigenization. There remained confusion among Councillors as to whether the intended goal of these consultants was to look purely at AUSU policy for areas where AUSU might have gaps or places to increase efficiency or to take a broader, holistic look at the organization, also as to whether the indigenization was something worthwhile at this point to have an outside consultant examine. A short straw poll was held and it was determined to limit the scope of the organizational consultant to AUSU's policies and bylaws currently, and to wait for the Student Indigenous Committee to present their ideas for indigenization first.

An email motion was brought forward approving an expense of just over \$4,000 for software packages Asana and Harvest. These packages are to help Councillors, Staff, and Executive with project management, day-to-day task management, and time tracking.

Council then addressed the terms of reference of the student advisory committee to consider the suggestions of the previous advisory committee as to how it might be able to operate better and provide more value to AUSU. In future, AUSU will strive to arrange more synchronous meetings to the student advisory committee.

## More AU-thentic Events

### AUSU February Council Meeting

Wed, Feb 17, 6:30 to 8:00 pm MST

Online via Zoom

Hosted by AUSU

[www.ausu.org/event/feb-2021-council-meeting/](http://www.ausu.org/event/feb-2021-council-meeting/)

No pre-registration required; email [governance@ausu.org](mailto:governance@ausu.org) for meeting package

### Talk to a Librarian Drop-in Session

Thur, Feb 18, 3:00 to 3:30 pm MST

Online via Microsoft Teams

Hosted by AU Library

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

No pre-registration necessary; access through above link

### Doctorate in Business Administration (DBA) Info Session

Thur, Feb 18, 3:00 to 4:00 pm MST

Online, Hosted by AU Faculty of Business

[news.athabascau.ca/events/doctorate-in-business-administration-dba-information-session-20210218/](http://news.athabascau.ca/events/doctorate-in-business-administration-dba-information-session-20210218/)

RSVP through above link

### The Grad Lounge

Fri, Feb 19, 5:00 to 6:00 pm MST

Online via Microsoft Teams

Hosted by AU Faculty of Graduate Studies

[fgs.athabascau.ca/news/events/index.php](http://fgs.athabascau.ca/news/events/index.php)

No pre-registration necessary; access through above link

*All events are free unless otherwise noted.*

Councillors Karen Fletcher and Amber McDuffe were then appointed to the Member Engagement and Communications Committee due to the new vacancies brought on by the changes in Council membership.

Finally, we came to the reports. Unusually, there were no additional comments made to the reports, with all executives just leaving them as presented. Considering that this was for both the month of November and December, I found it surprising that the executives did not want to highlight some of the things done during that time. However, as we were dealing with multiple changes to the executive roles, and had already had a reasonably long meeting with the discussion of the audit and finances, it was also a bit of a blessing in disguise.

With that, we came to the end of the meeting, and before adjourning completely, thanks were officially noted for Josh and Monique's service on AUSU Council, with Joshua noting that it had been an "awesome three years" working with Council and seeing how AUSU really tries to help students.

## Scholarship of the Week

### Digging up scholarship treasure for AU students.

**Scholarship name:** Ellie Bianca Woman Scholarship

**Sponsored by:** The Ellie Bianca Foundation

**Deadline:** March 3, 2021

**Potential payout:** funding amount varies

**Eligibility restriction:** Applicants must be single mothers of one or more minor children, at least 18 years old, demonstrate financial need, and currently pursuing a technical, vocational, or first degree full- or part-time.

**What's required:** A completed application form, proof of enrolment, current transcripts, and a one-page letter describing your leadership abilities and why you are deserving of this scholarship.

**Tips:** Be sure your letter also addresses the requirement of financial need.

**Where to get info:** [store.elliebianca.com/pages/ellie-bianca-scholarship](https://store.elliebianca.com/pages/ellie-bianca-scholarship)



## Fly on the Wall

### The Best of Times, the Worst of Times

Jason Sullivan



### A Study of V-Day as a Marker of Progress

A spectre haunts Valentine's Day or V-Day: the spectre of fate. Cupid, with much cupidity, seems to decide whether our love is destined for joy or misery, ascendancy or decline. No day of the year encompasses the potential for ecstatic heights or dour doldrums more than February 14th. Relationships are made or broken by what transpires on this day, or so it can seem. It's as though our life appears as invisible parallel lines that meet on the horizon and "represent infinity" in the vanishing point of a painting. Our selves feel like lines that either bend into a unison of mutual embrace or diverge sharply like two magnets each showing their repulsive sides ([Ancell, online](#)). V-Day brings out the heights and

depths in any of us, especially if we are seeking to outdo our past efforts for our beloveds. The day can also teach us about progress toward success and descent toward failure in our studies.

### History and Meaning: It's Personal

Valentines Day can mean the best of times or it can yield the worst of times. Meaning in terms of love means more than words and yet, even though meaning surpasses linguistic bounds, if we *can* say it like Hallmark we probably make outstanding V-Day cards.

Jacques Derrida, in his survey of Jean-Jacques Rousseau's 18<sup>th</sup> Century conception of the origin of human language, wrote that "he would like to say that progress, however ambivalent, occurs either toward the worse, or toward the better, either for better or for worse" (Derrida, 249). And yet, faced with the messy reality of reality, Rousseau is compelled to admit that while "conventional language belongs only to man (sic) that is why man makes progress, whether for good of ill, and why the animals do not at all" (Derrida, 249). The trick for us, then, is to find a language of love that we excel at in the same manner that we choose an academic discipline that piques our interest. Derrida makes short work of this distinction where progress travels in at least two essential directions at once: "Rousseau describes what he does not wish to say: that 'progress takes place both for the worse and for the better. At the same time. Which annuls eschatology and teleology..." (Derrida, 249). Wherever we come from and wherever we go depends on our own interpretations and the maps we project as we embody our destinies. V-Day depends above all on *us* in the same way as do our studies at AU.

### Truth and Destination: How Love of Studying Can Make Us a Better Lover

*Eschatology* is the science of the apocalypse, or end of worlds and viewpoints, and is familiar in feeling to that dreaded slippery slope as a relationship begins to fall apart or as we fear disappointing a love one on the 14<sup>th</sup>. Eschatology, like any 'ology, is a discourse *about* something using a set of core beliefs. Like all discourse it takes the form of a Logos or logic compiling meaningful words based on the subject. In this case the words are about love, and they need not be frightful—they probably best not be. After all, love doesn't have to incorporate fear or dread, it only will if we're getting too eschatological.

We might grasp for the right words to write on a card, or reach for the perfect flowers to create a beautiful bouquet and yet still not overcome a sense that we are losing our footing on love. But

fear not! Pensiveness over the perfect V-Day rarely makes or breaks a romance. It's like taking a few days away from our textbooks; we don't fail when our ambitions ebb and flows, we fail when our whole goal drifts listlessly into a sea of procrastination. Remember, from an eschatological point of view, decline, dissipation, and disaster lurk inexorably as the pull of gravity. We don't have to look at life or love or our studies in such a negative light.

The second word Derrida uses, *teleology*, is more provisional in its outcome. Teleology is the science of time-based outcomes or destiny immanent (not imminent, but immanent as in always-already built into the universe). However, teleology, like eschatology, implies a destiny built into a design, be it causal or even divine. The concept of destiny here simply means that things work out as they should, or at least in a straight line that implies progress to a good outcome.

Progress can seem more like an abstract law than the magical mystery of love. Aristotle, for instance, believed that because a rock falls over a cliff and onto the ground (and who hasn't felt like dead weight when their Valentine's plans fall flat on their face) it must belong at the lowest point it can find. This process, called *entelechy*, illustrates an induced teleological outcome. Give the slightest nudge and a determined course of events will follow. Yet, we make our lives out of our actions based on beliefs, and not only in a stodgy, inanimate matter. In the land of teleology there is always hope for a brighter future; if we are optimistic about our Valentine's Day endeavours based on belief that certain results will arise from particular actions, then we're holding hope for a positive teleological outcome.

### Loving the Journey

We arrive here at a truth mutual to both love and AU; we control our destiny in how we interpret our destinations. Perhaps the discovery of personal meaning is inseparable from becoming a good lover; probably, if we can apply ourselves to a goal then that makes us more attentive people. Any fool in love can give their partner what s/he seems to desire for a day but it takes a deeper knowledge of context, what Max Weber termed *verstehen*, to achieve meaningful relations. *Verstehen* comprises methods we use "to understand, perceive, know, and comprehend the nature and significance of a phenomenon." V-Day is a chance to demonstrate our knowledge of what truly matters to our beloved, and how our lives are joined by common contextual evaluations.

Yet, there are some realities that we just can't transcend. If we're not poetic then we best write our love poems in jest. And if we're not avid shoppers then finding *that perfect something* for a loved one is assuredly unlikely. And sometimes, hey, you just have to be lucky to be good and good to get lucky. Like adult education, a good relationship typically is a year-round vocation. So even if your act of kindness or love is simply tying someone's shoe, remember that it's pulling our best selves up by our bootstraps that brings us courage and success at AU. It's the small successes that add up to monumental achievements.

Which way does Cupid's arrow point? It's a mystery! As we look back at our AU journey, we can certainly imagine our future self impressed with the trials and tribulations we've had in our love affair with lifelong learning. Maybe a box of chocolates sent to our future self would be in order! Truth is, Valentine's Day often includes harsh and happy memories in equal part. School will be over for us one day, and so will our cosmically brief time on earth. Relationships too have their end, so let's make the most of every instant with loved ones and let's treat every study hour as a gift giving us an opportunity to shine.

### References

- Ancell, M. (2016). 'Leonardo's 'Anunciation'. *In Perspective*. Faculty: Brigham Young University. Retrieved from: <https://faculty.virginia.edu/Fiorani/NEH-Institute/essays/themes-and-essays/optics-and-art/ancell>
- Derrida, J. (1967/2016). *Of Grammatology*. (Trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak). Baltimore: Johns Hopkins.

*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.*

## What an Education can Do for People with Disabilities

**Marie Well**



An education does wonders for everyone, helping people overcome even the most severe of limitations, so much so that they reach unbelievable goals.

Here are a number of true situations about people with disabilities, mostly about me, whose lives were turned around by an education. And if you happen to have a disability, such as anxiety, rest assured there are ways to master any setback. Education is key.

First, an education led me, a person with extreme workplace anxiety, to a job I loved more than dining out, going to the cinema, traveling to Hawaii, getting a massage, a job that paid her more money than I ever imagined. And I felt passionate about my work, so much so, my severe anxiety rarely surfaced.

Second, an education did more miracles for me. Consider a disabled woman who worked in an employment shelter, earning five dollars total per forty-hour work week, doing menial tasks such as cutting strings or stuffing envelopes. An education helped her earn a salary above and beyond the wages made by many professionals. And her career felt like playtime. That was me.

Third, an education helped a mentally ill programmer, my friend's boyfriend, gain the confidence to apply for an unlikely job and become a Chief Technology Officer of a bank, earning six figures. He now doesn't shy away from applying for top roles when looking for a career.

Fourth, an education rescued a disabled person from a stagnant rehabilitation system, one that forced her to attend a hospital daily, participating in classes she never seemed to pass, such as training in basic communications skills. An education helped her bypass the system, proving that she can not only pass a communications course, but also claim a graduate degree. That, too, was me.

Sixth, an educated female with disability (me again) helped a friend's child deemed a vegetable regain her life, go to school, and prove there are no such things as human vegetables.

Seventh, an education transformed me from my dying state with chronic disease. The principle of lifelong learning led me to read books on diet, ultimately transforming my disease. Once recovered, my education helped me earn a high enough income to fund a diet necessary to sustain my health.

Eighth, an education took a disabled woman referred to by many as "the stupidest person" and transformed her into the top performer in university science. That, too, was me.

Disabilities held me back. But it's education that's enabled me to move beyond it and find success.

Indeed, an education can perform miracles in all of our lives, regardless of our perceived limitations. No barrier can hold back a soul with a desire to achieve a so-called impossible dream. And nothing is impossible when we claim our right to an education.



**Karen Lam**

**Course Exam**

*AU courses, up close*

**Course Exam**

**Karen Lam**

**COMP 268 (Introduction to Computer Programming Java)**

*If you have a course that you would like to see a Course Exam article written for, please feel free to email us at [voice@voicemagazine.org](mailto:voice@voicemagazine.org) with the course name and number, and any questions you may have about it, and we will do our best to answer the questions for you!*

COMP 268 (Introduction to Computer Programming in Java) is a three-credit computer science course that focuses heavily on learning how to program, specifically with the Java computer programming language. It requires concepts from and an understanding of COMP 200 (Introduction to Computing and Information Systems). COMP 200 is a pre-requisite for COMP 268, or, alternatively, if you have previous programming experience you may discuss with the Course Coordinator to obtain approval to take the course if you do not have the pre-requisite. COMP 268 is designed to teach students how to program, design, write and become familiar with Java programming.

### **Why You Should Take This Course**

Programming is becoming more and more common these days. If you are interested in entering the computer science or tech field, this is a must take for you! If you are interested in learning beginner level programming, this is also the course for you. Programming is so important in today's world; you can find it in almost every field. I highly recommend this course to everyone, regardless of whether this is an academic requirement or not, this is an incredibly useful course as coding and programming are becoming more popular and common in today's world. To stay on top of all the tech advance or the fast-changing world, programming is an essential skill.

### **Course, Assignment, Midterm and Final Exam Details**

Introduction to Computer Programming in Java has been recently updated and includes a total of eight mandatory units, with five optional units. The mandatory units include Unit 1: Overview of the Mental Landscape, Unit 2: Programming the Small I: Names and Things, Unit 3: Programming the Small II: Control, Unit 4: Programming in the Large I: Subroutines, Unit 5: Programming in the Large II: Objects and Classes, Unit 7: Arrays and ArrayLists, Unit 8: Correctness, Robustness, Efficiency, Unit 11: Input/Output Streams, Files and Networking.

The redesigned course now includes four assignments in total, with Assignment 1 – 3 each worth 15% and Assignment 4 worth 25%. Participation totals 15%. There is no midterm, but there is a final exam that is worth 15% that must be taken online with ProctorU or any other AU-Approved Exam Invigilator.

From personal experience, this course can be a demanding and challenging course if you have little to no programming experience. With that said, the course provides all the essential material you need to excel, however, be prepared to practice lots! I personally read through the textbook several times before I was able to fully grasp the material. I strongly recommend preparing for the course by allocating a lot of time to understand the course material as assignments do take time especially if you do not have experience with Java. I found it extremely helpful to complete the practice questions in the textbook at the end of each Unit, as they include detailed answers and help you with the assignments.

## Tips from the Course Coordinator

### Introducing Mr. Richard Huntrods P.Eng – Course Coordinator

Mr. Richard Huntrods graduated from university with a B.Sc. in analytical chemistry (1977), then a B.Sc. in chemical engineering (1980) followed by a master's degree in chemical engineering in 1988. His project was the computer simulation of a cooling reactor for ethylene production.

After graduation in 1980, Mr. Huntrods began working in the IT sector for various oil and gas companies. He wrote reservoir simulators in FORTRAN for four years, supported various engineering applications on a variety of hardware platforms, and generally worked as an IT software engineer during the 80's. In the '90s, he went independent - becoming a consultant software engineer. In addition to some typical energy sector programming, he spent time developing microprocessor applications, including a MIDI engine for a sound card. During the '90s he began teaching programming in the evenings at a local college. In the late '90s, Mr. Huntrods joined SAIT as a full-time instructor. From 1998-2000 he was the Computer Technology Program Coordinator. During that time, he began tutoring for Athabasca University. In 2001 Mr. Huntrods left SAIT to join Athabasca University full time. He still consults for several companies, working on various enterprise applications (server-side Java).

Mr. Huntrods is a registered professional engineer (retired). He is also a glassblower and an avid SCUBA diver. In 2007 he switched to a rebreather so he could spend more time photographing underwater wildlife around Vancouver Island.

Mr. Huntrods' general website is located here: <http://huntrods.com/> and his scuba website is here: <http://scuba.huntrods.com/>

### Mr. Richard Huntrods' Advice for the Course

"This current revision (V12) has been developed based on my years of programming experience.

Athabasca University has moved to e-books and SCIS to OER (Open Education Resource) books as much as possible, and so the text was chosen as the best of the OER books. There are sections that are no longer used by professional Java programmers such as GUI, so those sections are not required in the course. I did however create commentary for the entire book.

I have been teaching since 1990, and have found that the more exercises one completes, the easier one becomes a programmer. The best way to learn is simply to start typing in the examples in the text. I have found this applies to any programming language that one wishes to learn. There is no substitute for writing code. There is no shortcut for actual typing, compiling, testing, and debugging.

The assignments were created specifically for this revision, based again on my years of programming. I sought out some classic programming problems, as well as some novel ones. I also wanted the assignments to be interesting as well as useful. Assignment 4 is a culmination of that approach; I ask the students to write a text-based adventure game, such as those that were very popular in the early days of personal computing. I chose the text game because it is a challenging programming problem, because it fits the accumulated learning materials appropriately, and because, at the end, one has created something that not only could be fun but can be shown to any prospective employer as a solid created program."

### Questions?

If you have any further questions regarding the course, please do not hesitate to contact the Course Coordinator at [fst\\_success@athabascau.ca](mailto:fst_success@athabascau.ca). Happy Java programming!

*Karen's taking her Computing Science degree at AU, learning French and Korean, and is into K-pop, SF, and politics*

## Homemade is Better

### Seared Salmon on Naan Sandwiches

Chef Corey



This year for Valentine's day, why not try something different? I recreated this recipe from an old Moxie's dish that I enjoyed when I worked there. It was before starting culinary school, and it was a great job. The kitchen manager made the environment fun even during stressful times. When you work in restaurants, you learn which squad you're on; the best cooks are the ones that work the busiest times. The assistant kitchen manager teased me about getting my journeyman certificate and red seal; he told us that he'd never do it. Fast forward many years after I finished my diploma and worked in the industry for a while. I was working in food sales and met him again--his mother was the manager at the previous company I worked at. She told me that he had finally gotten his red seal after all. I had to laugh! So, when I met him again, I made sure to bring it up to see him eat his words a little bit. He was working for a competitor company, so it was fun to tease him the same way he teased me. It was all in fun, though.

One of my favourite dishes was a fillet of salmon in naan bread served as a sandwich. I liked it so much that I made my own version of it. This recipe is a homage to that dish and the people I worked with. If I remember the dish correctly, it used a garlic aioli and grill onions, which I changed out and used curry mayo instead. The other thing I did differently was using my sous vide to cook the salmon. I undercooked it, and then I seared it when I was ready to serve it.

Usually, I'd like to make my own naan, but this time I opted to buy store-bought, and I warmed it up on my griddle. I buttered it and grilled it, and covered it in a towel in the microwave to keep it warm and soft. Next, I heated a teaspoon of oil and added an equal amount of curry powder. I heated the oil to bring out the curry powder's flavour before adding it to the mayonnaise.

I hope you enjoy this recipe!

### Seared Salmon on Naan

#### Ingredients

- 4-6 salmon fillets
- 4-6 naan
- 2 Roma tomatoes
- 4-8 ribs of Romaine lettuce
- ¼ cup mayo
- 1 tsp curry powder
- 2 tsp canola oil
- Kosher Salt
- Pepper





### Directions

- 1) Heat a small non-stick frying pan over medium-high heat.
- 2) Add the canola oil and let it heat up for about 2-3 minutes.
- 3) Add the curry powder and mix them off the heat.
- 4) Once the curry powder has cooled slightly, add it to the mayo and mix it.
- 5) Heat another larger frying pan or griddle over high heat.
- 6) Add another tsp of oil and let it warm up.
- 7) Season the salmon fillets with salt and pepper.
- 8) Sear them in the pan cook until they are cooked to 140F.
- 9) Cover the salmon with tin foil and let it rest.
- 10) Next, butter one side of your Naan and cook each side until it browns slightly, then butter the uncooked side and flip.
- 11) Please remove them and wrap them in a dishtowel. Flip the stack after every addition.
- 12) Slice the tomatoes, and separate the lettuce.
- 13) Clean the lettuce and remove the bottom  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{3}$ <sup>rd</sup> of the leaf.
- 14) Take a piece of naan, spread some curry mayo on it, add the fillet of salmon, and top with two slices of tomato and some lettuce. Fold the sandwich and Bon appetite!

*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

So glad you asked: A student's question about a potential exam re-mark highlights some important points—AU's website is the best source of info on AU policies, there's a student manual link on every course page in myAU, and yes you can contact a tutor about an exam mark after the course end date.

### Discord

Quote me on this: A how-to question on a specific in-text APA quotation receives a specific answer and APA guide reference in four minutes flat. Go team!

### reddit

Reach out and touch someone: Responses to a query about what it's like to ask for reference letters from AU tutors highlight the importance of contacting course tutors even if you don't need immediate assistance.

### Twitter

@AthabascaU tweets: "Do you know an outstanding #AthabascaU alum? Someone who's changing the world through amazing contributions? Nominate them: [t.co/TDiolUQhbY](https://t.co/TDiolUQhbY)."



Dear  
Barb

Barbara Godin

## The Other Teen

*Dear Barb:*

*I am a single mom of two teenage girls. It's been difficult being a single mom, especially since their dad didn't want to be part of their lives. For the most part, things have gone well. The girls have done well in school and have not gotten into trouble with drugs or alcohol or anything like that. The youngest is 14 and in her first year of high school, but unfortunately she has been schooling primarily from home, so hasn't had the high school experience yet. I have always been close to my 16-year-old, until recently. I noticed her pulling away from me and becoming secretive about where she goes and what she does.*

*I have been questioning her a lot and she finally told me what's been going on. She has recently become involved with a 28-year-old man, who is married and has a child. When she told me I was devastated! She is convinced he will leave this wife and they will be together, I doubt that will happen. We ended up in a screaming battle and she left the house and moved in with a friend. I feel so awful, I don't want our relationship to be destroyed over this, but yet I don't want her to continue with this man. I am at a loss as to what I can do without ruining my relationship with my daughter. Looking forward to your reply, Paula.*

Hi Paula:

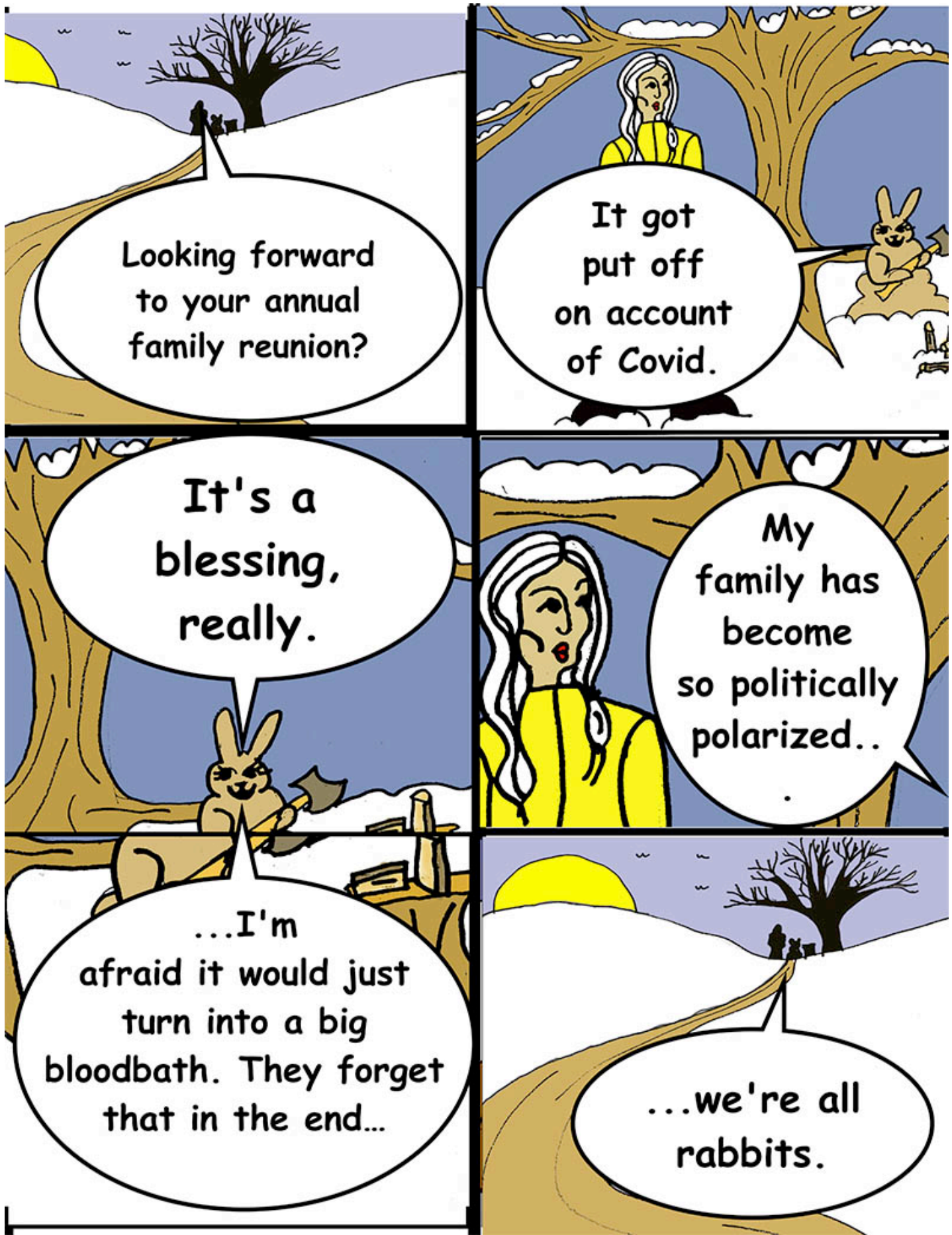
It's very difficult when our children get into bad situations where they will likely end up hurt. The idealism of youth prevents them from seeing the inevitable outcome. The age of consent in Canada is 16; therefore there is nothing you can do from that aspect. As difficult as it may be, you need to try to deal with this in a calm manner. As you can see, a screaming match will only alienate your daughter. My suggestion is to take this time apart to calm down and perhaps arrange a meeting with your daughter. Discuss the reality of this situation, as she is probably flattered by the attention she is receiving from an older man. Talk about this man's wife and child and find out how your daughter feels about them and the situation this man has put them in. I'm positive, at 16 years old the reality of this wife and daughter has not occupied a large part of her thoughts. She will not like to hear what you have to say, but if she is going to choose to remain in this relationship, she has to face the pain it will ultimately cause to this man's family. Beyond this, the only thing you can do is hope that your daughter will come to her senses on her own. We would all like to protect our children from the pain of life, but we can't, they have to experience this on their own. Hope this was helpful, best of luck Paula.

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



Poet Maeve  
Polarization

Wanda Waterman



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# CLASSIFIEDS

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## THE VOICE

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<b>Editor-In-Chief</b>	Jodi Campbell
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*The Voice* is published almost every Friday in HTML and PDF format.

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ISSN 2561-3634