



THE VOICE

Vol 29 Issue 47 2021-11-26

Minds We Meet

Interviewing Students Like You

Between Perpetrator and Victim

It's Thinner Than You Think

The Reading List

November 2021 List

Plus:

Editorial: Waiting Game

*How to Make the Perfect Cheese Board
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, Barbara
Lehtiniemi, Angela Pappas,
Jason Sullivan, Wanda
Waterman, Corey Wren,
Jessica Young, and others

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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 Waiting Game

Karl Low



I'm currently sitting in the parking lot of the veterinarian waiting for a report on what's going on with Frida, our chihuahua who we've had for ten years. Such is the state of technology today that typing this editorial on a tiny phone keyboard in a parking lot in what is essentially an industrial district is not only possible, but a welcome distraction from what's going on in the building behind me.

Many students of Athabasca have children. We have pets. But the feelings are, I imagine, very similar, as other pet owning students will surely attest. Our chihuahua has a congenital heart condition, and there is a surgery for it, but it is only currently done in Japan. But our Frida is important enough that we've been getting ready to travel half-way around the world (and drain a good chunk of our savings) to do exactly that.

So now you have context for why this issue isn't going to be fully up for a while yet, as the vet told us to bring her right in when we mentioned some symptoms we noticed earlier today.

But what is up right now definitely deserves a read. Our primary feature is an interview with a student who started off in a hurry to get into the trades and start making a living, but found himself

inevitably drawn to post-secondary education as he gained experience.

But also this week, our first article from student Tristina Godoy-Choise is a must read. She opens up about her experience dealing with a significant trauma that derailed her life and what she found that finally allowed her to begin to heal.

Beyond that, if you've been looking for some book suggestions, especially as we enter the holiday season, the November reading list is up with some student recommended books for your perusal.

Normally I'd point out that we also have events, scholarships, reviews, and more, but those are going to be a bit later, as the vet is coming out to give us some news. So, fingers crossed and enjoy the read. There'll be even more to read in a bit, and I'll be sure to give an update—in case you want to know how the story ends.

Update: After a long night of waiting and repeated confirmations to the vet as to whether we want the next set of tests run, the ultimate conclusion was "Yes, something's wrong, we're not sure what though. We ruled out the obvious and dangerous candidates, and she's responded well to pain meds, so at this point we're thinking she tweaked her back or something along those lines, but nothing serious enough to show up in any of the many, many tests you've now paid for." So we were given some dog-appropriate drugs in syringes to squirt into her mouth and told to keep an eye on her and call back if things worsen.

We are on the road to having one of the world's most expensive, and apparently sensitive, chihuahuas. And you know what, that's okay, as she's also one of the most loving dogs I've ever known (Yes, a chihuahua. While I know they have a notorious reputation for being biting or snappy, the worst you need to fear from Frida is having an ear licked off.) But as a side note, if you're a pet owner, I strongly urge you to consider pet insurance of some type. Take a careful look at the terms of the provider, however, as I know some have maximum amounts that they're willing to lay out in covering a single condition.

In the meantime, the Voice Magazine is now essentially complete for this week, with the addition of our scholarships, events, and a look at the power and difficulty of silence, among other things. It's really a good read, and if you haven't read "The Lines Separating Victims from Perpetrators" yet, I strongly urge you to do so.

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

MINDS

WE

MEET



Who are your fellow students? At times, in an online learning environment, it can feel like you are all alone, but across the nation and around the globe, students just like you are also pursuing their Athabasca University (AU) studies! Each week, *The Voice Magazine* will be bringing you some of these stories. If you would like to be featured next, do not hesitate to get in touch!

The Voice Magazine recently had a chance to chat with Kieran Porter (he/him), currently residing in St. Alberta, Alberta, the traditional Treaty 6 territory of the Nehiyaw (Cree), Denesuliné (Dene), Nakota Sioux, Anishinabae (Saulteaux), Niitsitapi (Blackfoot), and Métis Peoples.

Twenty-four year old Kieran is currently enrolled in the Four-Year Bachelor of Commerce degree, with a major in Human Resource Management, with hopes of graduating in April 2022. Kieran stated, “I decided to pursue this degree after operating and running a gas station for a while. I knew I wanted to be in business and deal with financial/administrative/managerial work because that is

what I was most comfortable with. I plan on getting a career in the human resources or financial field hopefully with an established company where I can grow and learn long-term.”

Kieran opened up a bit about his lived experiences and road to AU, mentioning, “At age 17, I lost my brother to suicide. He was 18 years old, and I was 17. He was my best friend. I fell into a deep hole and did not know where to go or what to do. I was not motivated for a future. I was working full-time at a gas station with no plans for my future. Working there helped me gain the skills and proper work ethics I needed for secondary schooling. In 2018, four years after the death of my brother, I decided to enroll in AU. They gave me an equal chance to show that I can pursue anything I put my mind to. Being in a classroom was too much for me and my brain while I was grieving, which is why I chose AU. I am now in the fourth and last year of my Bachelor of Commerce degree majoring in Human Resource Management.”

When he is not studying, Kieran told *The Voice* that he loves sports. “Right now, it is sports heaven in the world with NFL, NHL, MLB playoffs, and NBA. I am either watching the Edmonton Oilers, Philadelphia Eagles, Toronto Raptors, Toronto Blue Jays, or hanging out with my two pet goldfish, Timmeh and Shawn. I also am a foodie and will try new restaurants often.” He also finds time to relax and has just finished watching *Squid Games* on Netflix, and is currently watching the latest season of *Survivor*.

When asked who has had the greatest influence on his desire to learn, Kieran chose his mother and father. He explained, “Growing up, my parents had always told me to do good in school and finish school. Once I reached high school, my head was only focused on the trades and going into the trades right



away and making money right away. After high school, I quickly learned that the trades were not for me. I tried out being an electrician, but I hated it and honestly did not understand it; then I went into building elevators, which I ended up hating because of the physical damage it had on your body. Eventually, I ended up going back to school and it was the best decision I have ever made in my life.”

As for his experience with online learning so far, Kieran loves it. He reflected, “At first, it can be very stressful and difficult. But once you figure out the tricks and make a proper schedule and organize everything properly, it becomes a commodity. It allows your mind to focus in a more peaceful setting. I find the focus is much better being alone at home then around many people as the brain gets distracted easily.”



Despite this praise for online learning, like many students, Kieran admitted that there was a point in his life during which he wavered in continuing his education. He explained, “About four years after my brother had passed away, I was still in a bad place and not willing to grow or heal. I did not want to accept the fact that my best friend was gone forever. One day in 2018, I had a sudden motivation to wake up and change my life for the better because I know my brother would have wanted that for me and would not want me to sit and be sad forever. My brother was the main motivation for me to change my life for the better and to start the healing process of losing him. Enrolling in AU allowed me to start the healing process in my life and has been a healthy guideline for me in my life.”

Kieran chose ACCT 253: Introductory Financial Accounting as his most memorable course, despite feeling “so scared and nervous to enroll in this class because it intimidated

[him] with how hard it seemed.” However, he “ended up getting an A and it showed [him] that if you put your mind to anything, you can accomplish it.”

When asked which famous person, past or present, that he would like to have lunch with and why, he chose celebrity chef and TV personality, Gordon Ramsey, since it “would probably be the best food [he has] ever eaten.” And the lunch? “It’s definitely got to be his scrambled eggs. They are so unique and creamy.”

The most valuable lesson that Kieran has learned in life is “to treat everyone with respect and be humble about everything in life.” He continued, “The passing of my brother made me such a better person and made me change for the better in every area. It’s important to treat everyone as family because you never know what they are going through or have gone through in their life.”

And his proudest moment? “One of the proudest moments in my life was winning a senior football championship in Grade 11 and Grade 12. Being a part of such a hard-working team taught me many valuable life lessons that I keep today. Also, paying off my brand-new Dodge RAM while working at the gas station is something I’m proud of as well.”

As a final note, Kieran let students know: “I just want to say that AU is amazing and gives equal opportunity for people to succeed in life no matter what you have gone through.” Best of luck Kieran!

Natalia Iwanek (she/they) is currently completing her Bachelor of Arts in English with a minor in Political Science at Athabasca University.

The Lines Separating Victims from Perpetrators

The Story of The Smallest Violin

Trishtina Godoy-Contois



Hurt people hurt people. You've probably heard this simple and tired statement used in a sloppy attempt to explain the nature of trauma to a victim. I'm not saying that I've never used it myself, but when I heard it for the first time after my mother abandoned me, I got even angrier.

What kind of excuse was that? I've suffered; therefore, I have the right to make you suffer. To me, the words translated to a loss of accountability and let my mother off the hook way too easily. As you can predict, the anger I felt in that first year was unparalleled to anything I've ever experienced before. Not only did I lose my mother, but I had to push my emotions deep down and keep her family together: I let go of a scholarship to play soccer in the US at a Tier 1 university, I let go of the opportunity to intern for a sports agent in England, I had to work 3 gruelling, physical, minimum wage

jobs just to keep my two younger siblings fed and sheltered, I had to get my father working and prevent him from taking his pain out on us.

She even transferred the child tax credit to a new bank account and drained the family account leaving a tidy thirty-two cents for our troubles. However, to my surprise, the worst part was that she became a ghost for 2 years. I had to hunt her down by Facebooking every family relation of hers that I hated just to beg her to sign a paper giving permission for my siblings to travel with their soccer teams.

By the time the second year rolled around, my anger gave way to concern for my brother and sister. I couldn't keep my baby brother from wanting to run away from the house. Running away from my fathers' temper and what my father called "constructive criticism". My brother was by this time starting to hang out with gang members, skipping school, and I was chasing him around town trying to keep him from deep diving past the point of no return. I swallowed my pride and sent word through the Facebook grapevine.

This time when we spoke on the phone, I didn't yell at my mother, I simply told her "I need you to come home. My brother needs you. My sister needs you. We can't handle my father anymore." A few weeks later my mother showed up in Calgary.

She was a harder person than I remembered. Her face gaunter, skin tighter, less youthful. She was couch-surfing and had managed to get a job at a neighbourhood bar in a dodgy part of the city and was dating a bald dude named Francis, of all names. She now smoked weed, swore like a pirate, and was full of stories about she managed to become a mother to cousins I'd never met before.

In the 2 years that followed her return, I neither received an apology, nor an explanation. Every push for the truth was met with either a stone-wall or a reminder of how it was I, after all, who tried taking her kids from her. My anger, pain, and sadness only descended deeper. I went from passing university-level courses while holding down multiple jobs, coaching youth athletics, and playing competitive sports to being unemployed, unproductive, and a failing student.

To say I blamed my mother is an understatement. In fact, there was not a whole lot she could do that wouldn't result in me swiftly and harshly criticizing her failings as a mother and a person.

Afterall, who could blame me? It got to a point where I had given up trying to run her out of my life while accepting that she was simply incapable of giving me what I needed to move on. In other words, I felt deprived of progress.

The Defining Moment

My mother, on the other hand, developed a habit of taking off on road trips by herself or with her sisters, which vexed me to no end. I would torture myself with questions such as, “why would she never take me on road trips?” and “Why did she care more about her family than making things right with her own children?”

Yet, just like clockwork, each weekend would come and with it a phone call informing me of another visit to yet another relative and, as was my ritual, I would eat my anger in silence and tell her to have a great time as my bitterness hugged me tight. Another weekend approached, another phone call, this time she was going to Edmonton for the weekend to visit her sister Lisa and planned to stay with Lisa’s daughter, my cousin. I sat in silence and ran through my usual playbook of judgements. This trip in particular hit me hard because my aunt Lisa was a co-conspirator to my mom’s crime of abandonment. “Can I come?” I blurted out and, without hesitation, as though all this time she had just been waiting for me to accept her unspoken invitation, she responded, “I’ll pick you up at 6”.

The Journey

I tossed my overnight bag into the back of her rundown Buick Regal and jumped into the passenger seat which always smelled of cedar, tobacco, and marijuana. She pushed in the cassette tape that converted audio from the old, cracked iPod touch I had given her the Christmas before, and a Tina Turner song started playing in the background. “Now we are ready to cruise” she said as she lit a joint and handed it to me. Rather than make my typical snarky response about how drugs kill, I simply accepted the joint, inhaled, and cleansed my soul of judgement with each subsequent dry cough as my mother mischievously winked at me and put her foot to the pedal.

That first night we stayed with my cousin in her cozy trailer on the wrong side of town. I was pleasantly surprised to learn she was a new mother and a fledgling artist. It was a humbling experience to be so warmly accepted by a blood relative I hadn’t seen or spoken to since childhood. To some degree it made me feel less anxious about my impending meeting with the aunt whom I hadn’t seen since the day my mother walked out on me.

On the second night, we pulled up at the 7-11 where my aunt worked, just before her shift ended, to load up on chips, taquitos, and beef jerky before our big night out. My aunt looked unchanged with the same short black hair, robust midsection with skinny legs and magnifier style glasses. At my mothers request I reluctantly purchased a pack of cigarettes for my aunt, which tested my patience as I realized I would be funding our whole night out. “Perhaps she only wanted you to come because she was broke” I thought, “so what?” I responded to myself, “you came to get to know your mother” I added. My aunt took us to a local blues bar with live music and, although I felt awkward around her, I was optimistic I would end the night without blowing up on her. However, as we were dropping off my aunt, she turned to my mother and asked, “want to come in for bit?” My heart sunk as my mother agreed.

Where It Came Full-Circle

My aunt’s place was nothing short of the picture of misery. It was a dimly lit room that reeked of cat urine emanating from the small, open closet that housed not one cat litter box, but two. Her clothes were stuffed in large, black garbage bags, and the only seating available was a choice between an uncomfortable looking wooden chair and a ripped black leather sofa that doubled as her bed. I chose the wooden chair to get comfortable in as I did my best to hide my horror and disgust at her living conditions.

This time I enthusiastically accepted the joint my mother lit, as they both started reminiscing about their childhood. My mother rarely shared stories of her childhood, but my aunt was much more forthcoming and generous with her words. My aunt shared detailed accounts of growing up with sexual abuse, neglect, familial revenge, and suicide as though they were simply casual facts of life. My mother told me proudly about how her father would bring home his friends from the bar, where they would through the wildest parties, call all the kids outside and bet on which kid would win a chicken-coop fight. In her stories she was always the winner.

I realized that when she shared stories that were too painful to recount, she changed from first person to third. I sat there for what felt like hours in complete silence, absorbing the unfathomable way in which they told their painful stories with humour and tolerance. Once they had finished discussing the details of their stories, my mother glanced over at me, studied my face momentarily and turned to my aunt, "alright Lisa, it's time I get my girl to bed".

Internal Power

It was on this trip with my mother that I realized that I knew nothing about her beyond my expectations of her. But she had become a complex person to me, with stories that put my favourite books to shame. She lived a life that sometimes forced her to make decisions that she didn't even understand fully. I began to look at her with compassion and see that she had given me the greatest gift any mother could ever give their child. She gave me a better childhood than the one that she had experienced. She taught me how to face your mistakes, take responsibility, and never lose sight that you are walking your own journey.

During his keynote address at the National Stolen Generations Conference in Gold Coast, Australia, Gregory Phillips stated that "if we do not deal with our trauma, we inadvertently hand it down to the next generation" (6). My mother's story gave me perspective on her unceremonious departure, dissipated my pain, and replaced it with gratitude for all the trauma she had not handed down to me. The other significant lesson I learnt was the importance of "respectful individualism", which, as discussed by Michael Hart, assumes "when provided significant space for development, individuals will act...towards the well-being of the community" and "no personal journey is taken in isolation" (75-76).

At the end of the day, I could only begin my journey of personal healing when I was ready to listen deeply to my mother's story and hear it in the way she wanted to share it, not in the way that I demanded it. In my burning all-consuming need to address my pain, I lost my internal power. Void of my internal power, I punished all those around me for turning me into a victim. I became a perpetrator by forcing others to live up to my pain's expectations.

So, if you are feeling the same way I felt and you can relate to my story, I want you to know that you can reclaim your internal power by listening deeply to the stories of the people who have hurt you. I hope you will drop the judgement coming from your pain's internal voice and be grateful for the pain you didn't have to experience. Remember, hurt people hurt people. And when you leave your hurt unattended, you will absolutely hurt others.

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Tristina is a proud Métis student at Athabasca University currently completing her Bachelor of Arts in Political Economics with a minor in Global Studies.



The Reading List November 2021

Karen Lam



In a blink of an eye, we're nearing the end of 2021. Many of us are either busy wrapping up the semester of classes, planning our Christmas plans, wrapping up projects at work before the holidays, or whatever it may be! Whatever we may be doing, don't forget to make sure to take some me time when you need it, whether it's a nice nap or reading a good book! Here's the recommended reads for November!

***Christmas Cookbook* by Betty Crocker**

Since we're only a month away from Christmas, many of us may already be planning small family plans. We all know

food is an essential part of holiday celebrations! For me, I'm hoping to cook a meal for my family even though it's only four of us, I realized I didn't know how to cook many Christmas-like meals. I recently bought this book and started testing out some recipes in preparation for Christmas. I recommend this book to anyone looking for Christmas recipes as they have more than 200 recipes and lots of visuals. The recipes go from simple cookies to main dishes along with appetizers.

***Freedom: How We Lose It and How We Fight Back* by Nathan Law**

November is Remembrance Day where we remember all those who sacrificed their lives for us so we can live in a free country. Lest we forget. I recently came across a book that I was inspired to read because it not only reminded me of the things, I should be thankful of living in Canada, but also because it also reminds us of all those who continue to fight for their freedom. Nathan Law is a lawmaker from Hong Kong and was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize for his advocacy for pro-democracy. This book examines his journey as a lawmaker in Hong Kong, his experience with fleeing to London from Hong Kong, and more importantly, what freedom means and how delicate it can really be. I recommend this book to everyone interested in politics, democracy, and current issues!

***The Stranger in the Lifeboat* by Mitch Albom**

If you're following my monthly columns for the Reading List, you'll know I'm a huge Mitch Albom fan. I always love reading his books because they help grow, learn, and become a better person. Albom's books are so thoughtful and always bring the most positive things from stressful, unfortunate, and unprecedented events. This book is one of his new releases and the moment I found out about it I knew I had to read it! The book is a story about hope and faith, and how a group of passengers are on a ship stranded, they save a man they run across in the sea who declares that he's the Lord and that he can save them if only they believe in him. Have you ever thought about what would happen if we asked for help and God appeared?

***The Wish* by Nicholas Spark**

For anyone who hasn't read any books by Nicholas Spark, you absolutely have to give it a try! His recent release looks at the coming of age with strong emotions written into each story. In 1996, Maggie was sent to live with a relative in a small town and she came across a young boy who

changed her life by introduced her to a hobby that would later change her life. Fast forward to 2019, Maggie pursued her passion as a successful photographer, but she is unexpectedly diagnosed with a medical condition. A recommended read for everyone!

***This Close to Okay* by Leesa Cross-Smith**

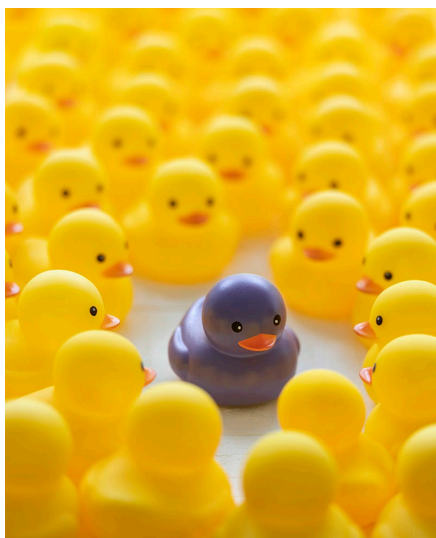
A story about a therapist and a man who tries to end his life and how their lives cross. Tallie the therapist saves the man who she later knows as Emmett. The story focuses on healing of their past and it turns out it's not only Emmett that has his own secrets but also Tallie. The two work together to heal one another as they both face hard truths about their own lives. An inspiring and beautifully written story!

Happy reading!

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

Academic Methodologies and Their Strengths and Limitations

Marie Well



Graduate studies often, but not always, require you write a dissertation a.k.a. thesis. Writing a dissertation is fun, and I'd highly recommend it over doing straight course work. I know one guy who wrote a dissertation that cited some of the biggest names in finance globally. That's a thesis to get super stoked over while writing.

But if you write a thesis, you'll likely want to enroll in a graduate course on methodology. What is methodology? Well, it's the underpinnings behind the "how do you find out" of your research. GradCoach says methodology is "how a researcher systematically designs a study to ensure valid and reliable results that address the research aims and objectives."

Most theses require a methodology.

In my department, methodology consisted of options such as feminist theory, content analysis, critical discourse analysis, ethnography, and many others.

Each methodology may have its own set of data collection methods. These data collection methods could include surveys, interviews, focus groups, experiments, observations, case studies, and more.

One of these methodologies, called conversation analysis, required I read multiple books marking the evolution and underpinnings of this methodology. This depth of reading involvement is common for most all methodologies. If I could advise you early, I'd say, prior to graduate studies, look up all the methodologies in your department, and read four pages every night before bed of key books on the methodologies. I wish I had done this beginning in my second year of Communications.

Some methodologies rely on courses external to your department. As an example, a communications methodology called "discourse analysis" is best served if you take a graduate linguistics course. My first supervisor told me to drop my multiple linear regression course (which is quantitative) and take, instead, linguistics (which is qualitative).

That was partly because my communications department was anti-quantitative. Anything with numbers, the faculty seemed to deplore. At that time, which was fifteen years ago, some university communications departments across North America embraced the quantitative; others rejected it. I hope that's changed by now whereby both the quantitative and qualitative are accepted.

One of the downfalls of my department's "critical" methodologies was that some sort of victimization needed to be asserted. I was hoping to find a more collaborative rather than "critical" methodology, but I couldn't find any non-critical methodology that fit my research focus. So I went with Classical Grounded Theory.

The Classical Grounded Theory methodology had me researching a topic until I saturated the literature, or, in other words, exhausted the literature. That means, I uncovered every idea on the topic until I faced nothing new but repeated ideas. The key is to take that research and create a "theory" out of it. To me, it struck me as my only option for not pointing fingers. Unfortunately, my thesis did just that: point fingers.

I did dream often, though, of creating a new, collaborative methodology. I submitted a request for academic funding for my idea to uncover the "mechanics" of how methodologies were created across various departments. I received a response from the administrator that said my idea was "too ambitious."

But if you want to learn about how to create a methodology, you might want to study "epistemology." Epistemology is the science behind "how we know" or the "theory of knowledge." To study this exciting topic, you'd need to be a philosophy major or enroll in the philosophy department's epistemology courses.

If I had to do it all over again, based on passion and not monetary outcome, I would have taken graduate level epistemology courses while writing a communications thesis proposing a new, collaborative communications methodology. But it felt like "rebels" were quashed, especially at the master's level.

My first supervisor said, "You need to be an expert to propose a new methodology."

So, it seems to me that the safest move in grad studies at the time was to toe the line. If you want to pass or get accepted into a PhD program, then when the department says, "Jump," oblige.

Student Sizzle — AU's Hot Social Media Topics

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



AthaU Facebook Group

When ten years is old. A CRJS 360 student observes the course textbook quotes outdated stats, and other students chime in with other course textbooks that are not as current as they'd like.

reddit

We need a tie-breaker here. A student asks whether the NUTR 331 exam focuses more on the textbook or the study guide; one responder says the former, while the other says the latter.

Twitter

@aulibarchives tweets: "Interested in what borrowing privileges you have at AU Library? Have a look at our loan rules: <http://library.athabascau.ca/UsingLibCollection>."

How to Make the Perfect Cheese Board

Xine Xu

The Christmas festivities will be soon upon us. How ready are you to tackle some dinner hosting and the art of food presentation? I've recently explored charcuterie boards on many separate occasions and have enjoyed the happy faces of my guests as they sample different meats and cheese pairings. There are infinite combinations and pairing it with some wine or hot chocolate makes the evening extra special.

Here's a few things I've learned in the process of creating these masterpieces:

Variety is Good but Doesn't Need to be Overwhelming

Every time I've hosted an event and have taken my charcuterie game to the next level, I've never purchased an overwhelming amount of cheese and meat. I stick to 4-5 different cheeses and meats with a diverse selection of nuts and carbs so that I never felt stressed preparing for the special occasion. Usually a few different items are enough to entertain guests and also doesn't break the bank. If you're hoping to host a very special evening, a larger charcuterie board with perhaps 7-8 types of meats and cheeses may be an option.

Mix Different Flavors

Don't be afraid to add sweets to your charcuterie board. Despite the name "meat and cheese boards" there can be a range of flavors including sweet, sour, and savory. For myself, fruits such as apples, grapes, and strawberries pair great with many cheeses and also serve to clear your palate from time to time. I've even seen caramel popcorn and chocolates on many charcuterie boards that I have yet to try.



Don't forget to add sweets to complement your board. Here I used a fruit tray, chocolate to change the palate

Don't Forget Carbs

Another unforgettable addition to my cheese boards include bruschetta bites. I remember so fondly that after laying down the meats and cheese, I had so much space left on the board that I scoured the kitchen for options until I came across a loaf of wholewheat bread and tomatoes in my fridge. Although textured bread such as baguettes are preferred for bruschetta bites, wholewheat toast in this case worked wonders and my guests were thoroughly impressed with the presentation. Other carbs you can add to your board include water crackers, vegetable thins, and even just plain soda crackers.

Dips, Spreads, and Sauces in the middle

One of the earlier struggles I had when learning about presenting charcuterie boards was where to place the items for optimal aesthetics. I found that placing your largest items (typically these are sauce dishes, spreads, and dips) in the centre helped the cheese and meats to naturally go around the edges. If a dip goes well with a certain carb or fruit, place the two near one another. The smallest items should be on the perimeter.

Don't forget the final touches

Lastly, though I have yet to perfect the final touches, there are a variety of additions one can make to the board. For myself, this means adding some oregano to the bruschetta or adding the cutlery and utensils. For others, it means lighting a scented candle or adding some fresh flowers to decorate the board further. Some boards even have labelled cheeses and meats which can help guests locate their favorites among the fray.



Don't forget to add different carbs to your board. Here I used water crackers and wheat thins that add a crunchy texture to the board



The last-minute tomato bruschetta bites I made were perfect for filling up the empty space on my board.

Fly on the Wall

Space and Sounds

Jason Sullivan

Where Our Mind's Eye Abounds



Space can be on a page, between our thoughts, when no one's around, or in between planets. Ideas connect our minds between moments just as words connect our selves with others. Space makes things what they are. In outer space there's the planet Mars, that blank canvas of potential and mystery for human history long before human technology arrived.

NASA has managed to record the sounds of that distant red landscape and, like a howling metamorphic wind that can ravage our smooth stream of thought, the results are predictable. Mars sounds about how we might expect: ethereal, vaguely creepy, and marred (or augmented, depending on your point of view) by the sound of

the machine *Perseverance* being there to record things. Like hearing our blood pressure in our eardrums we're always there with the medium that is the message being transmitted to us by education and that we desperately try to receive as wisdom.

We can never get ourselves out of our learning and just plug in or download raw material. And why would we want to? Presciently, in our times of louder social media noise and plague-like population growth with attendant traffic and general cultural clutter, it's worth asking what the sound of silence would even sound like? In the end silence is an idea and, like all ideas, we must define and comprehend it's meaning and purpose for ourselves. To make silence our own is to make ourselves a part of its myth and meaning.

Studying Ourselves Silently, And Expressively!

Silence as a space between sounds is only part of the picture (no pun intended). Just as successful studying depends on a certain meditative *mis en place* free of the clatter and hum of distractions, so too do we train our minds to be ready to receive education when the conditions are rightly silent. Yet, no matter how attendant our minds are on our learning at hand, we always have other, perhaps even unconscious, ideas and fragments floating around our minds like so much flotsam and jetsam. The key is to focus on our topics in succession so that we can recapitulate them in our assignments while adding our own unique ingredient, our interpretation. In any context our brains fill in blanks with at times shockingly-clairvoyant precision.

Take sound, for instance. When we can't literally hear anything our magical minds fill in the blanks. A *Guardian* article notes that even when our surroundings are truly quiet we inhabit something like a vacuum in outer space; a place waiting to be placed by context and understanding. It turned out that "watching the silent movies made the auditory cortex spring into action. So visual stimuli triggered activity in the parts of the brain that process sounds. The next interesting result was that the more people said they could "hear" the sound in their mind, the more obvious was the activity in the auditory cortex" (Sample, online). Faced with silent film footage, research participants could hear what was suggested by images in much the same way that ideology rushes into our interpretations of even the simplest facts on the ground reported by the TV news or evidence-based truths laid out in a course textbook. A typical response

involves thinking that we knew something already or, conversely, that something crucial must be missing from the representation on offer by a purported authority.

Everybody understands in ways that, in part, match their preconceptions. As with beliefs, so with the brain's more rudimentary senses of our senses. With a moo sound comes a cow or a woof sound comes a dog, facts that mislead us if we don't forget that most public policy issues are far more nuanced than attaching a sound to its emitter.

After all, we thinking beings are complex to ourselves even if we may at times seem simple-minded to others. It's like how we might attribute success to ourselves and failure to our circumstances; double standards seep into truths like water creeps up a pant leg. One's real-world peers and/or imaginary internet friends uphold our biases in ways that mimic, or at least parallel, the way the brain directly creates a sense of belonging to the auditory scene by way of producing a sense of hearing even when no sound is present. Cognition follows perceptive paths that have rutted their way deep into our neural net.

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



Scholarship of the Week

Digging up scholarship treasure for AU students.

Scholarship name: The Heer Law Entrepreneurship Scholarship

Sponsored by: Heer Law

Deadline: December 31, 2021

Potential payout: \$2000

Eligibility restriction: Applicants must be currently attending university or college or set to attend during the 2021-2022 academic year, and must be in good standing with their current or prospective institution.

What's required: An email with contact and academic info, along with a business plan for your current or prospective business.

Tips: Make sure you include a section outlining an intellectual property strategy in your business plan.

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



Homemade is Better

Turkey Fried Rice

Chef Corey



When I've started watching the occasional Facebook video about cooking. One show I got into is called *Uncle Roger*. The host, Uncle Roger, talks about how so many people make chicken fried rice incorrectly. Some of the videos are amusing, some of them make almost no sense. But regardless, you pick up a few interesting tips on how to make a decent chicken fried rice. I, however, decided to use turkey, because I have a bit of it left over.

A couple of tips when making fried rice dishes. You need to use day old, cold rice. Do not believe the YouTube quacks that use freshly cooked rice. I can hear some of you asking what difference does it make? And I'm glad you asked. Rice, when cooked fresh still has moisture in it. And unless you're a moisture farmer on a planet in a galaxy far away from a long, long time ago, you do not want moisture in your rice for this dish. You want slightly dried, but still fully cooked rice so the grains will separate. Moisture in fried rice means that your rice will clump together, and you are not trying for clumpy rice.

When it comes to what to add to a fried rice, I say add whatever you want, but within reason. You want to add ingredients that are going to match in size. Peas, corn kernels, and medium diced protein. As I said, I used turkey because I had just cooked one and I wanted to use the remaining turkey I had. Fried rice also contains egg, which is kind of a binder. I say kind of, but really most of the fried rice dishes I have made they add scrambled egg into the fried rice. Thus, you can also copy this method. You would cook almost all the ingredients separately, then combine them. If you follow my recipe below, you should have much success.

Turkey Fried Rice

Ingredients:

2 cups cold cooked rice
2-3 whole eggs – pre scrambled or not
1-2 cups diced turkey
1 cup sliced carrots
1 cup green peas
1 cup corn kernels
2 tbsp vegetable oil
¼ cup soy sauce
Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

- 1) If you do not have left over rice, make it the day before and refrigerate it overnight.
- 2) If you are going to scramble your eggs ahead of time, choose a large non-stick pan or wok. Season your scrambled eggs with a ½ tsp of kosher salt.
- 3) Boil the carrots until they are soft, add the peas and corn to warm them up.
- 4) Drain the carrots, peas, and corn and set everything to the side.



- 5) Heat up your wok or large non-stick frying pan over high heat.
- 6) Add the canola oil and let it warm up.
- 7) Add the turkey and warm it up, stirring it often.
- 8) Next, add the vegetables and stir them to warm up.
- 9) Add the rice and stir to loosen the rice.
- 10) Add the eggs and stir longer if they are not already scrambled.
- 11) Add the soy sauce and mix.
- 12) Taste for salt and add more if needed.
- 13) Transfer to a serving dish and serve family style.
- 14) I hope this translation is correct: 请享用 (enjoy your meal)



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



Unearthing classic articles from previous issues of The Voice Magazine

Catastrophic flooding in B.C. recently prompted us to wade through the vault to see what our writers past have had to say about previous floods.

At least I have a basement to be flooded. Bill Pollett wallows in some therapeutic self-pity while he mops up. "The floods have incapacitated the furnace and resulted in seemingly endless hours of work continuing into the wee hours of the morning in ankle-deep water with sponges, buckets, and a faulty submersible sump pump." Lost & Found – A Tsunami of Self-Pity, November 24, 2006.

On the sunny side of disaster. Two weeks later, Pollett muses on Vancouver's apocalyptic weather, and the effect it has on community spirit. "We have seen the sky turn carbon-paper black, pouring upon our hood-shrouded heads a deluge of enough icy cold rain to drown cats and dogs, nearly submerge the family automobile, and create puddles large enough to have their own tidal systems." Lost & Found – A Taste of What's To Come, December 8, 2006.

Beyond Literary Landscapes Postcolonialism, Part II

Natalia Iwanek



From my early beginnings as a young introvert, the public library has always been a bit of a refuge. Years later, not much has changed, albeit with an additional affinity for endless hours spent scouring second-hand bookstores to add to my ever-growing “to-read” pile.

For one bookworm to another, this column will be underscoring and outlining various literary genres, authors, and recent reads and can serve as an introduction for those unfamiliar with these works, as a refresher for long-time aficionados, and maybe as an inspiration for readers to share their own suggested topics. Do you have a topic that you would like covered in this column? Feel free to [contact me](#) for an interview and a feature in an upcoming column.

Who

This week’s column is a bit different, as it serves as the second part to the previous discussion of Postcolonial Theory and Criticism. With this bit of background in mind, students interested in an

introduction to Postcolonial Literature may pursue the writings of Chinua Achebe, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o, and Salman Rushdie.

Those interested in Postcolonial Literature may also consider the works of V.S. Naipaul, Wole Soyinka, Ben Okri, Orhan Pamuk, and Naguib Mahfouz.

What

Postcolonial Literature is an umbrella terms for author’s from and the study of “a very wide range of writings from countries that were once colonies or dependencies of the European powers.”

Some classics in this genre include *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe, *Devil on the Cross* by Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o, and Salman Rushdie’s *Midnight’s Children*.

Where

As evident from the genre’s title, these works span a wide geographical area throughout the globe. In an effort to provide a brief introduction to the topic, this particular column focuses on literature from Achebe’s Nigerian lens, wa Thiong’o Kenyan perspective, and Rushdie’s analysis of India.

When

These novels mainly take place during the late-19th and 20th centuries.

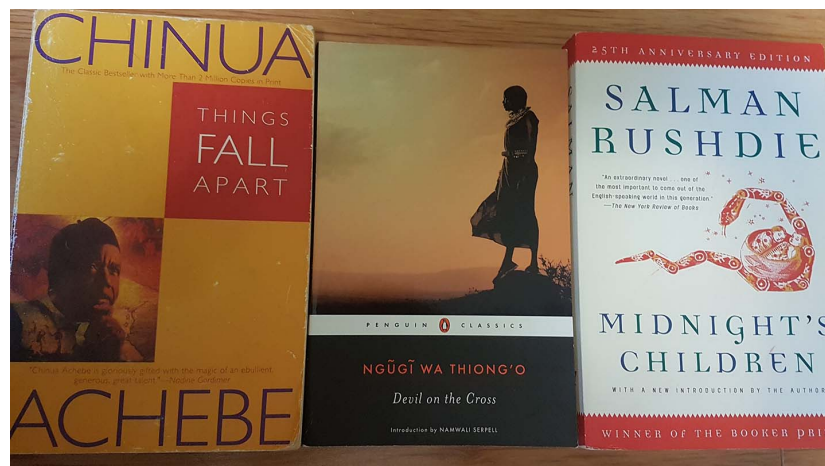
Why

For readers interested in understanding the former colonial system, its continued effects, as well as a more in-depth look at the experiences, cultures, and languages of peoples in Nigeria, Kenya, and India, these classic novels, as well as Postcolonial Literature in general, are a great start.

How

AU's wide range of diverse courses make it easy to study this topic in depth. Courses related to Post-Colonial Literature are available in a variety of disciplines, including one's that may fit into Degree Works. (Always check with a counsellor to see if these particular courses fulfill your personal graduation requirements!)

AU students interested in learning more about this topic are recommended to look into ENGL 433: Post-Colonial Literatures, a senior-level six-credit course that "compares the literatures in English of countries which have been colonised under the British Empire and which have subsequently achieved political and cultural autonomy: Canada, Australia, New Zealand, India, the West Indies, Nigeria, Kenya, and South Africa." (Note: This course is currently under revision.) In addition, students can also choose to enroll in ENGL 341: World Literature, a senior-level six-credit course, which "introduces students to literature from around the world." Happy reading!



Natalia Iwanek (she/they) is currently completing her Bachelor of Arts in English with a minor in Political Science at Athabasca University.



Music Review—1221

Jessica Young

Artist: Ryan Hamilton
Album: 1221

Singer-songwriter Ryan Hamilton will be releasing his new album, *1221*, on November 26th, 2021. The album will be available for streaming anywhere you get your music. Additionally, Hamilton will be playing his third annual Holiday Hoedown show on December 9th, 2021, live streaming from the Historic Church in Stephenville, Texas.

Ryan Hamilton and his band were booked to play multiple UK festivals during the summer of 2020; however, they were brought to a screeching halt by the pandemic. During 2021, with touring still off the table, Hamilton began a project, recording at his home studio and releasing one new track a month. These singles, which

include a combination of covers, newly released originals, and collaborations with friends, will be released as the full album, *1221*.

The album consists of twelve songs: “How Could You Want Him (When You Know You Could Have Me)”, “Deja Vu I Love You”, “Caught up in a Moment”, “Satellite”, “Babies”, “Shots Fired”, “Big Man”, “Permanent Holiday”, “Banditos”, “Do the Damage”, “If Life Was a Movie”, and “Ready to Love Again”.

Looking through Hamilton’s social media, I wasn’t sure what to expect from *1221*. He describes himself as a “Singer. Songwriter. Harlequin Ghost. Wicked Cool Records recording artist.”, but I couldn’t find much information on his background. Perhaps ignorantly, I assumed the Texas cowboy would be making country music—but that’s not what I got when I listened to the album. Surprisingly, Hamilton’s music is a little bit of folk, indie, and pop-rock. It’s upbeat, catchy, and reminds me of 60’s music of the same genres. Hamilton’s voice also reminds me of Pierre Bouvier, the lead singer of Simple Plan—also not what I was expecting.

But I have to say—I love this album!

I was worried that *1221* would sound like a bunch of mismatched songs haphazardly thrown together to make an album, but that’s not at all the case. The songs flow together beautifully, creating a wonderful relaxing, happy vibe. Each song has a uniqueness so the listener can really tell the difference between each track, with Hamilton utilizing various instruments and distinct themes for every song. The lyrics are a mix of genuine, sweet, humorous, and even a little self-deprecating at times—you can tell Hamilton doesn’t take himself too seriously.

My favourite song is probably “Banditos”, which begins with the lyrics, “So how far down do you want to go? We can talk it out over a cup of joe, and you can stare into my eyes like I was a supermodel”. A close second would be “Ready To Love Again”, which is a lovely piano balled featuring a violin.

Overall, *1221* is a great album. It would be great to listen to while studying, taking a road trip, or when you just need a little pick-me-up. It’s exactly what we needed to help combat the pandemic-blues.

Check out Ryan Hamilton on [his website](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and [Instagram](#).

Jessica is completing her Bachelor of Human Resources and Labour Relations degree while pursuing her passion for writing and drinking coffee.

AU-thentic Events Upcoming AU Related Events

The Power of (Re)Thinking

Tues, Nov 30, 10:00 to 11:00 am MST

Online

Hosted by AU's PowerED™

news.athabascau.ca/events/power-of-rethinking/

RSVP through above link

How to APA: The Essentials of Formatting, Citing, and Paraphrasing

Tues, Nov 30, 1:00 to 2:30 pm MST

Online

Hosted by AU's Write Site

news.athabascau.ca/events/how-to-apa-the-essentials-of-formatting-citing-and-paraphrasing/

Register through above link

All events are free unless otherwise noted.

How to Avoid Workplace Gossip The Spiritual Way

Marie Well



Recently I went for lunch with a colleague. The conversation quickly became uncomfortable as the boss's wife was criticized, and I adore her.

So, how do we protect ourselves from getting dragged into the negative spiral of workplace gossip? And how do we stay professional when work conversations go awry? I did some research and thought about it, and here's what I've come up with:

Step 1: Don't confront the person gossiping and don't tattle on them to their supervisor. This is at odds with most online media, that say to confront and tattle. I disagree, as confrontation and tattling only create conflict and hurt feelings. Instead, feel compassion for your colleague, but in a caring and not a sympathetic way. Your colleague is probably experiencing a degree of suffering to gossip about another soul. Gossip always involves suffering.

Step 2: Say something positive about the target of the gossip. Mainstream media says to do this, and I agree. But I also think it's wise to say something positive about the person gossiping. "I really like the work you did on the X project. Do you mind if we talk about that instead? I've been meaning to congratulate you." Spend time every night thinking about the accomplishments of all your colleagues. That way, when one attacks or is attacked, you have a great rebuttal: "I really appreciate the way Mary dedicates after hours to ensuring our Time Sheets are up-to-date."

Step 3: If the conversation persists into gossip, then pull out your biggest arsenal: company wins and optimistic projections. You could say, "I believe the company has big growth potential, and I project we can double sales within the next quarter." Get everyone excited about the future so that there is no time for infighting. Spend your evenings daydreaming about advantages your company has or could gain that would lead to success.

Step 4: Talk strictly business at lunch. If the conversation moves onto your significant other, don't reveal anything. Say instead, "I don't discuss my personal relationships at work." Revealing personal relationships to people who you don't have a personal relationship with can be risky. The reason is that others can undermine your relationship or, worse, try to woo your significant other. Steer any personal conversation back to business: "I found a possible solution to reaching out to our target market. I think this could triple our revenue next year."

Lastly, the final step: Avoid going to lunches with the person gossiping. Simply say, "It takes two to three hours out of my day to go for lunch. I then feel the need to make up for lost time on weekends and evenings. My apologies, Sam. I'd like very much to go for lunch, but I have some pressing commitments. Do you think we could meet online to discuss business matters instead?" But do pray for your colleague and continue to think well of him or her.

Be the professional, always optimistic, never gossipy, and always focused on work. After all, that's how promotions are, in part, earned and feelings never injured.



Dear
Barb

Barbara Godin

Divorced Developments

Dear Barb:

I am a single parent of three children, and I have been divorced for five years. My ex and I got along great until he met his present wife. She has a child of her own and seems to want to shut my kids out of their dad's life. The kids are terribly upset and rarely see their father anymore. I hate that this happened to my kids. Also, my ex has not paid his child support for the last three months. He says that since he got married, he can't afford to pay it. I have tried to be understanding, but this is affecting my children's lives. I am afraid if I pursue this issue in court, my ex will stop seeing his children and I don't want that to happen. I feel like I am stuck and don't know what to do. I believe my ex loves his kids and he has been a good father until his present wife became involved. Looking for some advice on what the right thing is in this situation. By the way I live in Ontario. Thanks, Dawn.

Hello Dawn:

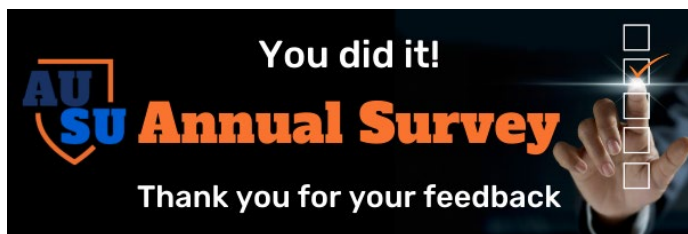
Thanks for your email. The right thing to do is for parents to support their children, both emotionally, mentally, and financially. Just because your ex has a new family does not mean he can stop supporting his children. The law in most provinces is fairly clear about that. However, if a person's situation changes and he establishes a new family, the amount of child support may be adjusted.

The only way a support order can be changed is through a judge, until then the original support order is in place and

the parent must continue payments as set out. You and your ex can decide together to change the amount and if you cannot come to a mutual figure, then the judge will decide according to Government of Canada's Child Support Table.

For example, if a paying parent has a gross annual income of \$100,000 and has 2 children and they reside in Ontario, the child support payment would be \$1,471 per month. Support orders vary slightly from province to province, but the basic premise is the same. In Ontario, the Family Responsibility Office was created to enforce support payments. They are responsible for collecting payments and sending them to the other parent. If payments are missed the Family Responsibility Office may garnish wages or take money out of bank accounts or even suspend a person's driver's license. Therefore Dawn, you do have a few options available. As far as your ex not seeing his children, that is unfortunate and if he chooses that option, he will come to regret it.

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.



Thank you to everyone who filled out our 2021 Annual Survey! We received plenty of valuable feedback and look forward to reviewing the results over the coming weeks.

AUSU will be randomly selecting winners today for the \$2,500 in prizes, and the lucky recipients will be contacted next week. Good luck to all those who entered! And thank you again for helping us in our mission to ensure an exceptional learner experience for AU undergrads.



AUSU presents the Pride Student Lounge hosted by [VP Community & Wellness Natalia Iwanek \(she/they\)](#). The Pride Student Lounge is a casual space for 2SLGBTQIA+ undergrads to meet, kick back, and chat about anything and everything [@AthabascaU](#)! Drop by and get to know your fellow 2SLGBTQIA+ students with Natalia, a force for student engagement! Grab the Zoom link today by emailing ausu@ausu.org. See you there!



AUSUnights are virtual student socials held over Zoom on the second Thursday of every month. They are a great opportunity to connect with fellow AU students, have fun, play games, and maybe even win some prizes and swag from your AU Students' Union! Email an RSVP to ausu@ausu.org and get the Zoom link today! This month will have a special holiday theme!



The Athabasca University Students' Union is excited to announce that, in recognition of our incredible partnership, Athabasca University is investing \$90,000 into AUSU programs and services.

About the unprecedented investment, AUSU President Stacey Hutchings said, "We know the pandemic has been difficult for AU Students. I am grateful that AU has heard us. This unprecedented investment in the Students' Union demonstrates the collaborative relationship forged between us and AU."

The funds will be injected into the current 2021-2022 fiscal budget, with \$66,600 going directly into the Awards and Bursaries Program, once again doubling the awards for both the November 2021 and May 2022 awards cycles. Another \$8,000 will bolster the Virtual Food Assistance Program.

"This investment in our student services will go a long way to help support undergraduates as they navigate their education. The money will go toward programs that allow us to support AU students in need."

The remainder of the funds will be reinvested into AU students through community and wellness initiatives such as student socials, special events, and contests. "We are beyond thankful for this investment to increase support to AU students, and for the strong partnership between our organization."



On behalf of the entire team at the AU Students' Union, we are excited to [welcome Leah Campbell to our AUSU Executive Team](#) as the new VP Finance and Administration! Leah brings a great deal of experience and enthusiasm to the role, and we look forward to working with her.

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

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Editor-In-Chief	Jodi Campbell
Managing Editor	Karl Low

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

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