



THE VOICE

Vol 30 Issue 13 2022-04-01

Minds We Meet

Interviewing Students Like You

Tribute to Ramen Noodle Day

It's Real! Here's Some Ideas.

A Strike About to Break?

AUFA Rejects Mediator's Proposal

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April Fools as Repressive Desublimation

Music Review: Foreigner

and much more!



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Views and articles
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of the contributors and do
not represent the views of
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
[here](#).

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Volume 30, Issue 13

© 2022 by The Voice
Magazine

ISSN 2561-3634

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



We love to hear from you!
**Send your questions and comments to voicemagazine.org,
and please indicate if we may publish your letter!**

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

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

Editorial

Karl Low

A Day For Everything and Everything in its Day



This week, we're talking with student and Taylor Swift fan, Caleigh, where she talks to us about her experience with AU on her journey toward the legal profession.

We're also celebrating Ramen Noodle Day, which, believe it or not, is not an April Fools' prank, but rather an actual day celebrated on April 4th. I have to admit, I first got the article and was thinking "Okay, but the Voice comes out after noon, which is technically after the April Fools' allowed fooling period." Fortunately, I searched things out and realized that this is a real thing.

It seems there is pretty much a day for anything you care to name under the sun. There's a day for pancakes. A day for spaghetti (Jan 2). One for Pizza (Feb 9). Cheesecake. Grilled cheese. Hummus. Ice Cream, and more.

All these days seem crazy, and you'd be understood if you thought it was some sort of crazy conspiracy of the card companies, but when have you ever seen a card for National Grilled Cheese Day (April 12, if you're wondering)?

Meanwhile, one of the most significant health challenges across North America is obesity, yet it turns out there is not, it seems, a National Salad Day. (Though I suppose the World Vegetarian Day on October 1 might be considered close).

Are we just stupid? At what point does it become the reasonable option to give up on humanity? On one hand, World Obesity Day—a day to help people fight obesity, not celebrate it, just to be clear—was on March 4th this year. The same day as National Pound Cake day. I'll just let that sit with you for a minute.

And what's crazier is, nobody cares about any of this. You didn't even know there was a National Quesadilla day, did you? Of course not, why would you? Yet there is. Somewhere, somebody thought quesadillas were important enough to have their own day. More concerning, however, is that somewhere, somebody thought that anybody else would give a damn.

Of course, the truth is, they don't. They just want another excuse to market a product and take up our time and attention. After all, if there's a registered "day" behind it, then it doesn't seem quite so much like they're simply trying to get your attention and money, but that they are simply coalescing with the wider society. They're not trying to get into your wallet, but your heart. If that happens to give them a passage to your wallet, well, they can't really help that, right?

As I get older, I get more and more aggravated with all advertising. It is the search for advertising dollars that has lead companies like Facebook to encourage harm to our society by constantly seeking to increase "engagement". It is corporate advertising that has desensitized so many of us to the calls for attention to causes that truly matter, such as obesity, mental health, education, and others. Organizations and people fighting to better society are fighting for our attention among those wanting to sell us bouillabaisse (December 14) and frozen custard (August 8th).

So if AUFA finally does strike sometime after their Ramen Noodle Day strike vote, will anybody really notice? Or will it be drowned amidst the selling of eggs Benedict (April 16) and buttermilk biscuits (May 14)?

Enjoy the read.

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 Caleigh Avramenko (they/them), currently residing in Calgary, Alberta, the traditional Treaty 7 territory of the Blackfoot Confederacy (the Siksika, Piikani, and Kainai First Nations), the Tsuut'ina First Nation, the Îyâxe Nakoda First Nation (the Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Wesley First Nations), as well as the Métis Nation of Alberta (Region 3).

Caleigh is “currently [enrolled] in the Human Resources Management major and ... hoping to go into law school at some point after gaining some experience.” They explained, “It definitely gives me a bigger introduction into how the law works and is applied, as well as establishes the administrative roles necessary.”

On a more personal note, Caleigh stated, “I was actually born and raised in Calgary! Living here all my life has definitely given me a ton of stability, though I don’t

think I’ve ever gotten used to the cold and wind! If I were to describe myself it would definitely be as part of a community of educators.”

Apart from studying, Caleigh is “a very athletic person,” explaining “Running, climbing, in the summer and fall hikes and swims are definitely also my go to. Any of the other days I feel a tad lazier I follow the traditional Netflix-binge with naps or a good book. I’m definitely going to attempt knitting or sewing at some point in the distant future, though.” Caleigh also finds time to read and watch television despite a busy schedule. “Funnily enough, even though I’m involved in a philosophy course, I’m reading *The Genealogy of Man* by Nietzsche for fun. As for T.V., I’m finally getting around to watching *The Office* for the first time and rewatching *Buffy* for the 100th time.”

The Voice Magazine also asked Caleigh about pet peeves. It turns out it is “people who chew with their mouth open,” which is apparently “one of the worst sounds and experiences.”

When asked who in their life has had the greatest influence on their desire to learn, Caleigh mentioned, “myself,” explaining, “No joke – I’ve always just loved school and consuming information, going to university was a pivotal next step. I wouldn’t feel like myself if I hadn’t.”

As for their experience with online learning so far? “It’s definitely a better fit for me from the traditional university learning experience I had before I came to AU. I tend to like it more as I get to work full time while studying [and] those days I feel extra productive I have an unlimited amount of work to do! The motivation, when I’m not feeling extra productive, could use a little bit of help though.”

However, like many students, Caleigh did waver about continuing with their schooling, stating, “Moving out and getting a full-time job after separating from my family last year – it definitely became a point of should I/shouldn’t I and questioning if I was capable. My friends were definitely the biggest drive to get me to push myself to where I needed to go!”

As for communication with course tutors? Caleigh mentioned, “They’re really good – they go above and beyond to respond to your question while providing more food for thought, plus they tend to get back within the two-day period.”

When asked which famous person, past or present, they would like to have lunch with, and why, Caleigh chose Taylor Swift, admitting, “I am obsessed with her and her music. I’m definitely one of the weirdos on Twitter speculating about her next new release.” And the lunch? “I’m in love with Ethiopian food – definitely some of the best I’ve had.”

As for Caleigh’s most valuable lesson learned in life? “Anything you mess up, or do “wrong” is always a positive – there’s always a chance to learn and you just found one!”

And the proudest? “Probably the first A I ever got in Uni – it felt surreal and like any doubts I had about my abilities were disproven – especially since it’s still the hardest class I’ve taken to this day.” Best of luck Caleigh!

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

Scholarship of the Week

Digging up scholarship treasure for AU students.

Scholarship name: SeniorCare.com Aging Matters Scholarship

Sponsored by: SeniorCare.com

Deadline: May 15, 2022

Potential payout: \$1500

Eligibility restriction: Applicants must be currently enrolled (or enrolling in the Fall of 2022) full-time in any 2-year or 4-year university or college program, and either currently caring for a aging loved one, working within the senior community, or intending to pursue a career that will have an impact on the elder population.

What's required: An online application form with contact and academic info, along with a 800-1000 word essay on why aging matters to you.

Tips: Scroll down to read the essays from the previous years' award recipients.

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



One Step Closer A Strike at AU

Karl Low



If you haven't already heard, the Athabasca University Faculty Association recently voted to reject the mediator's proposed agreement between the faculty and AU management. This isn't the end of negotiations however, as the AUFA has indicated they'd be willing to postpone a strike vote if AU agrees to not use lockout powers in the near future, and wishes to return to the bargaining table and provide assurances against a lock-out, the AUFA will delay the proposed strike vote.

Barring that, however, the vote will go forward on April 4, 2022. Even that does not mean that a strike is inevitable, though, as the AUFA has said that they hope having the mandate from the membership to strike will serve as additional pressure for the university to provide a better deal than that which the mediator has prepared.

AUFA has a notice about why this is

happening on their website, in particular noting that "AUFA wants AU to succeed so we would not propose something that AU would not be able to afford. In the past 10 years, AU has had a surplus nine times, and is on track to reach a surplus this year as well!"

On their side, AU notes, "We approached all bargaining tables with clear intentions around changes to collective bargaining contracts that are balanced and better align with our vision. We want to avoid a labour disruption. We remain committed to negotiations, and keeping the university open to those who want to learn." They also provide a lot of information about the possible effects on students in their [Athabasca University Bargaining: Student FAQ](#) page. But most importantly for undergraduate students, they noted "we anticipate being able to provide the majority of our students with the resources and support they need to continue with courses that have been started."

But there's more than just the administration and the faculty association at work here, as AUSU is keenly aware of how the people who will undoubtedly be the most affected by this are the students. To that end, I approached the current AUSU President, Karen Fletcher, and asked her a few questions.

So, who's at fault for this thing? That is, which side do you think might be being more unreasonable?

President Fletcher: This has been framed as an AU vs AUFA problem, but there's a third major actor here which is the provincial government. AU is required, by law, to present a balanced budget, [and] they have to do that before knowing what their major grant will be for the year. They are also trying to update the back-end of their systems to make a number of situations better for students, this is an expensive multi-year project that has tied up a lot of resources at a

time when post-secondary funding isn't great. At the same time AUFA, reasonably, wants cost-of-living raises for their members so their pay doesn't functionally decrease. The major source of the problem is the provincial funding process and amount of funding universities across Alberta get.

AU says they have a plan to allow most undergraduates to be able to continue without noticing much of a difference. Does AUSU feel that's the case, or are they underestimating the level of support students will require or their ability to gain more contract instructors that will be able to handle the concerns of students who are already in courses?

President Fletcher: AU has tutors and faculty (professors); the union that is going on strike is the faculty one, which also includes IT people and some support staff. Tutors aren't going on strike. I'm in two courses right now, one with a tutor (course A) and the other with a faculty member (course B), in the event of a strike I would continue to get support for course A, and in course B I would be able to work through things on my own but wouldn't have office hours or email to ask questions. Most of AU courses are taught primarily by tutors, when AU says most of the undergraduate courses will continue without much of a difference what they mean is that most students' primary contacts will still be working as normal. A student with a number of smaller, upper-year niche courses (which are more likely to be taught by faculty) would have a very different strike than a student who is taking more popular AU courses (mostly taught by tutors).

The most important take aways here are that different students will be impacted in different ways depending on what they're taking, and that it's some of the behind the scenes processes that might be more of a concern. An online university with an IT department on strike could become unpredictable.

On that note, as a precaution I would suggest all students download any e-texts they need and assignments and course material (if it's not in a PDF already you use file>print>print to PDF to save the sections of moodle to work offline). In the event of a strike AU will find external IT people to hire, but unexpected outages will likely take longer to resolve since it will be by people unfamiliar with the current systems.

Has AUSU set aside any resources (staff time, funding) to deal with a possible increase in student complaints if a strike happens?

Good advocacy means anticipating problems before they happen and speaking up to make sure that there are ways to prevent a crisis rather than just reacting, so I've already spent a lot of time speaking with the university about specifically how students might be impacted and working to figure out what workarounds we can use to help students in the event of a strike. I've spoken to the senior administration of the university, but also financial aid, accessibility services, and Nukshahtowin, about how students interacting with their departments would need, and have tentative meetings with the university that will happen in case of a strike so we can connect with them weekly, and our commitment to ensuring students get through this means we'll make sure we have enough dedicated time to advocate for our students.

Obviously AUSU's concern is going to be first with the students, so how does that look?

President Fletcher: If AUFA strikes I see it like AU is a ship going through the storm, the student union doesn't get to take the wheel but it's our job to make sure no one goes overboard. So we've

been spending a lot of time asking questions like "If someone's grades aren't in but they're in financial aid, how to we make sure they get their next semester's funding?" "Will students who use accessibility services still be able to write exams?" "What happens if you need faculty to approve your paper topic... do you just write the paper and hope for the best?" We're students which means we understand what it's like to navigate being a student at AU and what parts could break, and how that impacts students, we've been able to bring up a number of important scenarios AU hadn't thought of. So far we've had a number of conversations with both AUFA and AU about very specific groups of students we're most concerned with and what sort of possible solutions could be used in the event of a strike to make sure those students don't get left behind.

Advocacy during a potential strike would look like meetings with AU administrators to find solutions for particular groups of students who have run into a problem. That might mean we need to talk to one group about students who are ending a semester on a particular date and are full time students with OSAP (Ontario financial aid), and another set of meetings with another part of the AU team about how to help a student that cannot progress through a particular course without some academic support from a faculty member that's not there. We would also have ongoing communication with AUFA. The fact that different students are going to be having different experiences of a strike would mean that how we advocate for different students will vary by what their needs are.

Is there anything else you think important for students to know about the situation right now?

President Fletcher: Here's an infuriating fact: AU is the only university in Alberta that doesn't have an Essential Services Agreement. AUFA applied for an exemption, AU didn't contest it. They appear to agree that counselling services, including the crisis counselling, isn't essential for anyone's health or safety. They say use Homewood Health. AUSU has been vocal about this, and this is very much one of the things I'm focused on.

Here's the link where they say "we're here when you need us.":

<https://www.athabascau.ca/support-services/mental-health-and-wellness/getting-help.html>



Unearthing classic articles from previous issues of The Voice Magazine

The 1st of April is traditionally a day for fools and pranks. *The Voice* traditionally eschews "fake-story" pranks, but that doesn't stop us from acknowledging what others do on the day.

Does anybody flash-mob anymore? *The Voice's* regular web feature offers links to videos of various pranks. "We'll have the uncanny sense of being unable to trust anyone, because even the most serious-minded person might loosen up

on April Fool's Day and try to pull our leg." [Click of the Wrist – Play the Fool, March 25, 2011.](#) (For links to several classic flash-mob stunts, see also [Click of the Wrist — In a Flash](#), from April 12, 2013.)

Enough with the fools already! Serious-minded *Voice* editor Karl Low rhymes off reasons he dislikes April Fools. "It's become almost a way of a company showing how 'cool' it is by developing some absurd prank." [Editorial: Paradox of Fools, April 1, 2016.](#)

Tribute to Ramen Noodle Day

Three Types of Ramen Noodle Broth and Why you Should Try Them All.

Xine Wang



Bottom left is the classic Shoyu ramen with a dark brown and almost transparent broth.

Believe it or not there is a day for this delicious Japanese comfort food. With the globalization of food, ramen restaurants are available in all big cities and even some small rural regions I've visited in the past. If you're a big ramen fan like me, this will be a great excuse to celebrate national ramen day on April 4th.

Ramen is a key part of Japanese culture and cuisine. Noodles are served in rich broth flavored with a variety of meats, fish, and other ingredients. Noodles are typically wheat noodles that can sometimes be customized to be highly "au dente" (chewy) or softer varieties. Toppings can range from corn, pork chashu, nori, bamboo shoots, soft boiled eggs and much more. Many fusion-style restaurants even offer non-traditional toppings such as bok choy, pickled ginger, or pumpkin slices. The toppings are endless, and so are the combinations.

In speaking to the almighty ramen broth, there are a few varieties that have captured our hearts (and stomachs), have you tried them yet?

Shoyu

Shoyu, aka soy sauce in Japanese, is a delicious, light broth. The broth is typically brown, clear and has an intense meaty or soy sauce flavor. You might think soy sauce is an everyday Asian ingredient, but a well-concocted bowl of shoyu ramen isn't easy. As a self-proclaimed ramen snob, I need shoyu broth to be flavorful with more than just an overpowering soy sauce flavor. Typically, the broth is boiled for hours with an arrangement of meats, dried mushrooms, herbs, and even dried seafood. If your shoyu broth feels like it's overpowered by soy sauce flavor, it hasn't been done right.

Miso

This is another all-time favorite ramen broth of mine. Miso is made from soybean fermented to perfection and made into the form of a paste. If you've ever had miso soup as an appetizer before your sushi feast, you'll know the aroma of fermented soybean. The broth is murky in appearance either with a white, yellow, or red hue. This is a thicker, richer broth that wraps around the wheat-noodles so well. Well-prepared miso broth should be rich and non-watery. If your broth tastes watered down or MSG-heavy it's not prepared right.



Spicy miso is a common variation of the classic miso. Still a murky, soy-based broth with ground chilli pepper or chilli oil.

Shio

The translation of Shio might leave you wondering why the Japanese are so uncreative at naming delicious ramen broths. Especially since the names so underestimate the complex flavors of the broth. Shio directly translates to salt in Japanese. But don't be deceived by the name, shio soup base has a yellow tint that is clear and resembles that of chicken broth. However, when prepared right, it has an intense umami flavor. Sometimes seafood such as clams and fish are used to create the stock giving it a clean but sophisticated flavor profile.



Shio ramen with a yellow tinted clearer broth as seen on my trip to Japan in 2019.

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

Student Sizzle — AU's Hot Social Media Topics

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

AthaU Facebook Group

Planning the party. A student wonders what time June's online convocation ceremony will take place so that family can plan the watch party; still waiting for AU to update the convocation page.

Discord

Studying on the double. A discussion in the #general channel revolves around Letters of Permission in order to take courses at another university while registered in a program at AU.

reddit

Wonderin' when this would come up again. The semi-regular question of what courses are easy GPA boosters. Maybe a spring thing? A few responders offer their recommendations.

Twitter

@AthalascaU tweets: "Confused about how to properly cite secondary sources in APA, MLA, or Chicago styles? #AthalascaU's Write Site has all the expert advice you need! #writingtips #research t.co/P7DU1SSt4R."



Discover What Excites You

Marie Well



When you're bursting with passion, you gain a superpower. You can achieve so much more than you ever imagined possible. I believe you're here in this world because you have something amazing to offer, and the best way to discover your gifts is to unwrap what makes you exude pure passion.

If you are not 100% certain of what makes you explode with excitement, you might ask yourself a few questions, starting with "What do you look most forward to during the day?"

I recently subscribed to Masterclass, which features courses by celebrities and industry leaders, and I gravitated to the interior design and fashion design lessons, which I didn't realize were even my interests. And now I can't stop watching class after class.

So, if you were to access Masterclass, what would draw your interest? Fashion, gardening, running, cooking, acting, singing, writing, acting, politics? Truly, you might

be surprised at where you end up, not just as a consumer, but as a producer.

But once you discover what you most look forward to, unravel it so that it's so big, you get goosebumps. Think of the biggest bang it could possibly make, and put yourself in the driver's seat. And the driver's seat is not in a car, but in a rocket ship, custom made for you by you, metaphorically.

What do you most often buy?

I've bought hundreds of books over my lifespan. I've learned that, to find the gems, I need to invest money. To become an expert on my favorite focuses—marketing and design—for instance, I need to acquire as many certifications, diplomas, maybe even degrees as I can while hustling at my day job.

Where does your money go?

What you invest in signals what you are passionate about. If what you invest in is not toxic, consider investing as much as you can to aim for greater heights. For instance, if you're a clothes hound, then that's a passion. Consider investing in courses on personal style or paying for style coaches or taking fashion design lessons to stretch your passion further. One woman whose book I read said that someone discovered her home overflowing with clothes, shoes, and boots she bought, and clothes she had bubbling in color dyes on her stove, and he selected her for a costuming career that led her to dressing celebrities on set.

What do you most often do?

A friend of mine raised her kids with tons of crafts. She had crafting tools and kits I had never seen before in my life. Her homemade Halloween decorations are scarier than ones in the movies, and her Christmas trees are decorated with loads of homemade trinkets. She's meant for creative heights.

Consider what you most often do. Are you baking, gardening, playing sports, even simply watching sports? What you spend all your time doing speaks to your passions. But sometimes

the gems within those passions are hidden until you get the right exposure. For instance, you may enjoy theatre, but not realize you were meant to do stand-up comedy. Say, your loved one died in the past year, and you've been feeling a daily sense of doom. But a friend drags you to a comedy club, which momentarily takes you away from your suffering and bursts you into fits of laughter, and you realize, "This is what I was meant to do." Often, the big life moments help us assign meaning to our passions in ways that ignite them. If what you do most often is not already a passion, it most likely is, given the right catalysts and exposure.

What do you like to talk about?

I always admired people who sat at coffee shops and just chatted about work. I dislike our company socials where they all drink alcohol and chat about anything that comes to mind. But I love our corporate events where the discussion is strictly about work.

What would you say are your three favorite topics when you talk to your partner, your best friend, your children, or your mother? Look back at your texts and see what topic comes up most. They're hints at where your passions reside.

And blow those interests up into bigger and bigger dreams, like a helium balloon that grows so large it sweeps you off your feet and into a higher realm. That's what makes life exciting: the impossible dreams realized; the rags to riches stories; the so-called nobody turned famous.

Who do you admire?

I love women in leadership roles and enjoy befriending them. Some of the most amazing women in my life started off as my professors, mentors, employers, or superiors, and they all became treasures in my world. These women all were strong, smart and often spiritual. They are not only leaders, but mostly marketers and PR experts.

Your partner or child may be the biggest focus of your admiration, as my partner is. But consider who might also be worthy of your admiration out of big names globally. And if you possibly can, buy Masterclass. It'll expose you to the most talented people in the world, and you'll know right away which ones you most admire. The ones who evoke your greatest admiration may reveal your hidden passions. And their successes may one day be yours.

What are you great at doing?

I performed at top of class in almost all my math classes at university. But math was not my passion; the high grades were. So, I left the math department and have since forgotten how to solve basic integrals. I love marketing, so marketing analytics bring in some of that math mindset.

What you're good at hints at what you might be passionate about. If what you're great at is not your passion, then find ways to weave it into your passions. The more you blend your talents in with your passion, the easier it is to realize big dreams. And every gift you've been given has a purpose you are meant to realize.

So, dream as big as you can. Dream of winning a Nobel prize. Dream of making your first million in the stock market. Dream of being on the cover of Vogue. Dream of having a blockbuster film made of your life story.

It's all possible. Nothing can truly stop you. You have unlimited potential.

Dare to dream big.

Music Review

Foreigner

Jessica Young



Artist: Sophia Marie

Album: *Foreigner*

Los Angeles native Sophia Marie has released her debut EP, *Foreigner*. The album is available anywhere you get your music.

Foreigner is an exploration of Sophia's feelings of being a foreigner both domestically and abroad. It draws most heavily upon her own personal relocation from Los Angeles to Washington, D.C. to study International Politics at Georgetown University, the D.C. dating scene, and her helpless obsession over men with foreign accents. Sophia describes herself as an ambitious, lust-for-life, nomadic kind of girl; a hopeless romantic without a particular direction, one who doesn't know exactly who she wants to be. She feels that her storytelling reflects that indecisiveness,

that impulsiveness, and that desire to do everything while she's young.

Foreigner consists of three tracks: Venice Beach to D.C.; Narcissist; and Foreigner. Sophia is currently shooting the music video for "Venice Beach to D.C." with fellow Georgetown University student videographer and is hoping to release it by the end of March 2022.

Right off the bat, Sophia Marie gave me Olivia Rodriguez vibes. Sophia's cover art for *Foreigner* is reminiscent of the cover art for Olivia's debut album, *Sour*—the pouting, preppy girl against a child-like backdrop and bubble-gum pink bubble letters.

While *Foreigner* certainly sounds like it's also influenced by *Sour*'s infamous combination of pop, pop-punk, and bedroom pop, it doesn't quite hit the mark.

My main issue with the album is the lyrics. First, the lyrics are so specific to Sophia's experiences. The lyrics focus on specific events in Sophia's life, as opposed to the way she felt about those events. The ability for people to relate to the music is arguably the most important part of being a songwriter, and unfortunately, I don't think many people would be able to relate to Sophia's exact experiences. How many people in the world have grown up in California and moved to D.C. to study international politics? A few, I'm sure, but not enough to gain a real fan base. The song "Venice Beach to D.C." contains lyrics like, "Find me in these dive bars/Beach blonde hair and a red guitar/I show up to lecture halls with bright pink Beats/No, I don't stay out of the way/Neon clothes so they know I'm here to stay/Flip flops and short shorts and Aviator sweatshirts are a dead giveaway." The track "Foreigner" is perhaps the most relatable track, for women who are really into shallow men with accents.

On top of being so specific, the lyrics lack any kind of flow. While Sophia has a lovely voice, the songs are delivered in a half-singing, half-speaking format that makes them feel choppy and all over the place. Again, this style is extremely reminiscent of many of the songs from *Sour*. I think Sophia has a lot of potential as an artist if she continues to work on her musicality. But, overall, I wasn't a fan of *Foreigner*.

However, you can still check out Sophia Marie on [Instagram](#).

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

Fly on the Wall

April Fools as Repressive Desublimation

Jason Sullivan



An April Fool's joke, honed to perfection and often benefiting from the victim being recently awakened from an overnight slumber, serves for more than mere guffaws. Laughter on this day serves to shine torchlight on the nature of everyday reality; that is, normality's relatively preposterous underpinnings. Life, like our learning, requires levity to function. Does humor mask or reveal important truths, though? At AU we dodge many trappings of well-adjusted academic life: long rat race traffic jams and repetitive classroom debates about current events come to mind. Occasionally fissures appear in the normal meaning of reality. The question might be asked: are we still the fools of society?

Consider the notion of common sense. Study hard, get good grades, have a pleasing life narrative. It all can be swept away with a laugh when it becomes too boring. Identities are not such a simple riddle, however. During recent, err, cross-examinations about her views on gender and sex (social science famously shows how gender is cultural and sex is physiological), the newest US Supreme Court Justice Nominee replied: "I'm not a biologist" (Jackson, online). While the literal setting was no laughing matter, guffaws were heard across the pop cultural spectrum.

Jackson might have meant that she figures that our gender, regardless of our inclinations, is tied to science. That means that if we have 2 X chromosomes that makes us female and if we have a Y and an X chromosome we are male, and case closed. Or Jackson's answer could mean that she didn't want to reply so as to leave space for each of us to decide our gender according to how we feel in a day or a lifetime.

As a kid who from, preschool on, was called Hazel (owing to my middle name), I can tell you that occasional schoolyard taunts reminded me that being a girl was something I had to decide for myself as a boy to reaffirm my identity and maintain my psychological balance.

Being called a girl meant I had to answer the same basic question of a Supreme Court justice to-be. At a tender young age, before hormones defined their gender, most kids figure out the differences in physiology. The legalese for such a question might best be circumvented by an answer to the effect of girls pee sitting down and boys pee standing up? So, the joke seems to be on society when common sense falls prey to political correctness. Of course, twitters from the meme-ocracy peanut gallery disguise the real reality of gendered violence. Whether biology is destiny has cultural consequences that are surely not above anyone's moral pay grade.

What is Fun Hiding? Humor as a Hidden Hand of Constraint: Repressive Desublimation

So, who is the joke on when reality gets obfuscated? Conveniently, for most cultural questions there abides a Marxist Frankfurt school analyst who has studied possible explanations in detail. In this instance the concept of *repressive desublimation* serves the purpose. In short, *repressive*

desublimation (RD) connotes the idea that culture represses our essentially creative, seemingly sexual, drives, and then releases them in small bits akin to the flaking away of a tasty puff pastry after it was dropped off of the lip of a college dorm roof as a prank. As the pastry bounces along the side of the building, and before it hits a too-anal professor in the noggin, it shears off bits of itself. This anticipated release provides humor to all except for the butt of the joke. This is where desublimation occurs: by releasing humour, or awe, or joy, or competitive drives (think here of the all-too-masculine concept of a pissing contest where combatants compete to see who can create the longest and widest arc) a sense of fulfillment is achieved.

Thus, RD shows how entertainment in all its form suppresses the essential creative drives of we humans. April Fool's is no exception: by making absurd and preposterous gestures people relieve some cultural tension before being expected to return in lockstep to ordinary, mundane, reality. And all the while in the background (cue spooky music) convention and conformity are enforced and with even greater precision and efficacy. April Fool's, like Mardi Gras and Carnava, allows for a brief suspension of convention to better enforce societal expectations.

But You Don't Have to Take My Snide Word For it.

Repressive desublimation, then, is essentially the fact that sports and arts and pleasure all serve to mask the fact that culture itself represses are most creative of instincts. Experts claim:

"Herbert Marcuse argues that the mass production and distribution of art and its concomitant permeation of almost every aspect of daily life has destroyed what was most potent in art to begin with, namely its antagonism toward the ordinary (Walter Benjamin's word for this is *aura*). This antagonism is achieved via the process Sigmund Freud called *sublimation*, which according to psychoanalysis is what happens when the libido is brought under the control of the reality principle: gratification of sexual desire is delayed and transformed into an aesthetic achievement or what Marcuse refers to as Eros. Under such conditions, Marcuse argues, the artistic realm is an 'other' dimension, radically distinct from and intrinsically antagonistic to everyday life, and society can therefore be said to be two-dimensional at least. It is the loss of this dimension through the process of desublimation whereby Eros is reduced to sexuality that results in society

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

Virtual Student Lounge

Mon, Apr 4, 12:00 to 1:00 pm MDT

Online via Zoom

Hosted by AUSU

www.ausu.org/event/virtual-student-lounge-3/

RSVP through above link

CHAT with AU Library

Tues, Apr 5, 10:30 am to 2:30 pm MDT

Online

Hosted by AU Library

library.athabasca.ca/page/ann

No pre-registration necessary; access through CHAT link on home page

CIDER Session Series: The Multiple Realities of Professional Development for Online Contingent Faculty in Canadian Strategy and Practice

Wed, Apr 6, 11:00 am MDT

Online via Microsoft Teams

Hosted by AU's International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning (IRRODL)

www.ciderresearch.ca/session108

No pre-registration required; access through above link

CHAT with AU Library

Thur, Apr 7, 10:30 am to 2:30 pm MDT

Online

Hosted by AU Library

library.athabasca.ca/page/ann

No pre-registration necessary; access through CHAT link on home page

All events are free unless otherwise noted.

becoming one-dimensional and therefore unable to resist the transformations imposed upon it by the changes in the mode of production.

Where before in art and literature representations of artists, prostitutes, adulterers, and so forth testified to an other, perhaps utopian, life, now they are simply an affirmation of the existing order and carry no power of negation. Desublimation is in this sense repressive. So-called sexual liberation, Marcuse argues, comes at the price of the destruction of Eros, which leaves us with an intensified sexual existence but no resistance to the present, no space that can be considered 'other'" (Oxford, online).

One might in passing note that the best comedy is surely an art form. This may be why an April Fool's joke contains a joyful element when successful and a dire foreboding when executed poorly. I once, to my detriment, made an ill-advised April Fool's joke to a then-spouse that I'd picked up divorce papers that very morning. Her and her lady friend, despite the latter's good humour and fascinating revelations of her Kutenai Nation's bawdy humour, were suitably unimpressed.

Likewise, if a Supreme Court justice came to work one fine sunny American morning wearing a wedding dress, and humming Shania Twain lyrics, those in attendance would be just as appalled as if she'd claimed to not know how to define *woman*. Twain sang:

"No inhibitions, make no conditions
Get a little outta line
I ain't gonna act politically correct
I only want to have a good time
The best thing about being a woman
Is the prerogative to have a little fun...oh, go totally crazy, I'm a lady
Men's shirts, short skirts
Oh, oh, oh, really go wild-yeah, doin' it in style
Oh, oh, oh, get in the action, feel the attraction
Color my hair, do what I dare
Oh, oh, oh, I want to be free yeah, to feel the way I feel
Man! I feel like a woman!" (online)

Marcuse would claim that despite attempts at liberation, sexual and behavioural, capitalist consumerism and superficial cultural norms still entrap Twain and her lady friends. For her part, Twain gleefully seems to be, as they say, taking the piss in that often times ladies who go a bar-hopping (not unlike the song *Froggy Goes a Courtin'*), often seem to have as much or more fun dancing with each other than in dealing with their lummoX-esque gender counterpart. In the moment it's fun and makes ordinary patriarchy more bearable and yet...life continues basically unchanged. The joke in such instances is also on the guys silenced from participation in the song's romp. These are guys who (it's true) get all coiffed up for a night of *bar star* heroics only to end up kind of bored and definitely lighter in the wallet from buying lady's their drinks in vain. No wonder academia seems a better climate to really engage with other beings, and plus the music's quieter and more conducive to intelligent discourage! Nevertheless, a sense of humour goes a long way as does knowing your audience.

To be sure, jokes depend on social context and who is telling them. Humour, like all entertainment, is lashed to expectations. In fact, a pre-millennium high school graduation tradition in my hometown (now a *verboden* tradition along with the smoke pit and assorted underwear strung up once a year on top signs) was grad-napping. Each of us males, even your humble and lowly *Fly on the Wall*, were snatched out of bed early on a June morning and dressed

in womanly finery, complete with water balloon boobies that invariably knocked over coffee cups at A and W due to our masculine lack of proclivity with the deployment of such appendages. Most everyone laughed at the time, but back now in 2022 it all seems a bit inappropriate. On the other hand, who knows what sort of gendered humor and normality will be acceptable in another quarter century. If there's one thing we learn at AU as we expand our minds, it's that knowledge pauses for no one. And *that* fact is no joke.

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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.

Beyond Literary Landscapes Brazil

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.

From 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 column serves as an introduction to the works of Brazilian novelists, educators, and scholars, a reminder of some of the country's classics, and as an inspiration for further reading.

Well-known Brazilian novelists include Jorge Amado and Paulo Coelho, while Paulo Freire is a great example of a famous scholars and educator involved with Brazilian literature.

In particular, Amado was a Brazilian “novelist whose stories of life in the eastern Brazilian state of Bahia won international acclaim,” while Coelho is a “Brazilian novelist known for employing

rich symbolism in his depictions of the often spiritually motivated journeys taken by his characters.”

In terms of non-fiction, learners may be interested in the works of Brazilian educator Paulo Freire, the former director of the Brazilian National Literacy Program, who developed an interactive method of education, as well as helping found Brazil's Workers Party. Freire “sought to empower the world's oppressed through literacy programs that encouraged social and political awareness.”

What

Some of Amado's well-known works include *Dona Flor and Her Two Husbands*, while Coelho's popular works include *The Alchemist* and *The Valkyries*. Other options include Coelho's *By the River Piedra I Sat Down and Wept* and *The Winner Stands Alone*. In addition, students can also consider Freire's *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.

Although written in Portuguese, these texts are available in a variety of translations.

Students interested in authors with similar subject matter and themes may research the works of Colombian author and journalist Gabriel García Márquez, noted for novels, such as *100 Years of Solitude*, *Chronicle of a Death Foretold*, and *Love in the Time of Cholera*, as well as Brazilian author Clarice Lispector, known for novels, such as *The Hour of the Star*.

Where

Many of these works are set throughout Brazil, including Bahia, Rio de Janeiro, and Pernambuco states.

When

These works often take place in the late 20-century.

Why

Readers who are interested in magic realism, spirituality, education, poverty, oppression, and love, may be interested in these Brazilian works.

How

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

AU students interested in learning more about this topic may enroll in ENGL 492: Research and Writing Projects in Literature, a senior-level, three-credit course, in which they “may wish to focus on a particular literary theme, idea, or theoretical problem.” (Students are required to contact the course coordinator prior to registering to discuss topic ideas.)

Another option is ENGL 458: The Latin American Novel, a senior-level, three-credit course, which focuses “on fiction and memoir written in the context of history, politics, culture, identity, and genre,” and covers the works of abovementioned Brazilian author Clarice Lispector. Happy reading!

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

Workplace Anxiety

Marie Well



I recently returned a bottle of medication to the pharmacy. “It’s not working,” I said. “I think the active ingredient has expired. I lie awake for three hours each night, but the medication normally knocks me out within five minutes.”

I took home a brand-new bottle of medication, which had a year’s expiry date rather than two months, much to my pharmacist’s dissatisfaction. He thought it was an issue that my doctor could resolve. I knew differently.

But after two more nights of lying awake for three hours, I realized, “It’s me, not the medicine.”

And then I recalled a pattern that happened to me a decade ago, during my work term as an event coordinator within a laboratory. I went through a phase of work where I’d lie awake all night, unable to sleep. And that eventually turned into full-blown workplace anxiety so severe that I couldn’t work full- or part-time for the next decade.

But I have dreams of becoming a Chief Marketing Officer at a firm, and anxiety doesn’t bode well for such a role. Or does it? A loved one who earned over half a million salary a year

would get anxiety, which I later read is a common symptom of people who are exceptionally responsible. So, maybe anxiety plays a part in roles with high levels of responsibility.

But I’d rather strive to overcome the anxiety before it strikes, so here’s some strategies I use.

Say loving kindness meditations during the day. When alone, saying out loud, “I love you,” to anyone and everyone who comes to mind is a form of self-soothing. And a soothed spirit is a calm, not stressed, one.

Seek to resolve workplace issues. For instance, if you oversee a team, but are going through some rough patches, then take leadership courses or read books on leadership. I find the best leadership books and courses are made by top sports coaches. Whatever weaknesses you might have at work, actively find ways to resolve them by acquiring the necessary skillset.

Put love into every task. Infusing all your thoughts with love toward activities is a great healer, especially when you feel unwell or unmotivated. Sprinkling in laughter and smiles can make a stressful endeavor more fulfilling.

Normalize the anxiety. Once the anxiety comes in, chances are it may reoccur over your lifespan. You can always learn skills from books or psychologists to turn your state around, and once you have those skills, you can reapply them as needed.

Stay away from all caffeine, even herbal teas. Caffeine increases anxiety responses. Cut out every little bit of caffeine. That means remove all caffeine, even decaffeinated beverages (which have caffeine) from your diet. Some articles I’ve read insist that even some herbal teas have traces of caffeine.

Exercise, but only before 6 pm. Exercise is critical for stress reduction. But try to exercise before 6 pm so it doesn’t prevent you from falling asleep.

Eat foods that alleviate anxiety. Avoid eating chocolate, sugar, and processed food. But do try to eat foods high in omega-3 to keep the stress at bay. Salmon, avocados, and flax seeds are great sources. And if you can, try to eat plenty of raw plant-based foods.

Journal. Journal your daily issues, dreams, and concerns, but take inspiration from sports playbooks. In other words, write down what happened, what went wrong, and how you could do better.

Pay to see a psychologist. I phoned a psychologist for an appointment today. Two hundred bucks for one hour! So, I passed. I'll learn the self-made woman's way: books, Google, and past successes.

Bedtime is swiftly approaching. I didn't nap at all during the day. I studied leadership from a world-renown coach. I phoned a psychologist, and plan to work on my playbook. I'm about to exercise, although a bit late.

I just wish I did more loving kindness meditation. Thoughts filled with love seem to wash the stress away better than anything else I've ever tried.

Homemade is Better

Sausage and Egg Breakfast Sandwich

Chef Corey



I'm on a bit of a breakfast kick on these last few recipes. If I'm running with a good thing, let's not change it. For this week, I used my sausage recipe from a few weeks ago to make this recipe. Instead of forming them by hand, I used a metal ring. If you don't have culinary rings at home, don't fret. You can use a multitude of devices to form patties. A large aluminum can is handy, and if you've made my spaghetti sauce recently or are planning on using a large can, they work perfectly. You can also make them rustic; just try to thin them out more than previously. I also used rings for the shape of my eggs. Again, rustic is okay too, don't feel pressured to make it exactly like I do or other restaurants that serve something similar.

Until recently, I believe, Tim's used prepackaged egg patties. I presume this is because they looked and tasted exactly like a brand I used to rep when I worked as a food salesperson. Starbucks gets their sandwiches frozen, then heats them in fancy ovens that work like convection ovens and microwaves. We are using real eggs so that the taste will be significantly better. I also used my griddle and set it to 350F, but you could use a non-stick frying pan set to medium-high heat for the sausage and medium-low for eggs. You want to take it easy with your eggs; lower heat is gentle and will heat them evenly without as much browning. I



break the yolks when cooking the eggs because it causes less of a mess later. If you prefer the yolks intact, that's okay too.

When I made this meal, I cooked my sausage first, then toasted my English muffins, then cooked the eggs. When I built the sandwich, I put my egg on first, sausage, and cheese. I fed my kids, and they loved it. My youngest has decided she doesn't like eggs, so I made hers with sausage and cheese, she ate it up! I hope to enjoy this recipe and make it over and over again.

Sausage and Egg Muffins

Ingredients:

One sausage recipe

4 English muffins

4 eggs

4 slices of cheese (I used process cheddar, but use what you want)

Directions:

- 1) Make steps one to five of my sausage recipe.
- 2) Form the sausage into thinner patties.
- 3) Cook until browned on both sides and reach a temperature of 175F.
- 4) Toast your English muffins, then add butter.
- 5) Crack your eggs onto the griddle and break the yolks. Cook them thoroughly on both sides.
- 6) Add your egg to one-half of the muffins.
- 7) Add a sausage patty.
- 8) Add a slice of cheese.
- 9) Top with the other half of the English muffin and bon appétit!





Dear
Barb

Barbara Godin

The Tipping Point

Dear Barb:

My husband and I are having a dispute. We went out for dinner last week and the restaurant was very busy. Our waitress brought our drinks and didn't return for quite a while to take our orders. She walked by us several times to bring other people drinks and food. I will admit it was frustrating, but I could see that she was doing her best to serve everyone.

My husband was not so understanding. He felt we should have been served sooner and that there should have been more staff working. The problem arose when it came time to leave a tip. I felt it was not the waitress' fault, as I could see she was doing her best. My husband decided to leave a small tip, he says a tip is based on the quality of the service. I felt he should have left her the average 15% tip. What do you think? Thanks Sarah.

Hello Sarah:

Thank you for taking the time to write. Many factors go into deciding how much to tip. The average tip is usually 15%, so unless the service is extremely bad 15% should be fair. When deciding to leave less, it is dependent on whether the server deliberately provided bad service, or did the bad service result from circumstances beyond the server's control?

For example, you feel that the service was slow because the restaurant was busy, in this case I would suggest tipping the server the average amount and speaking to the

manager of the restaurant, explaining that you were unhappy with the excessively long wait for service. Since most restaurant managers want to keep their clients happy, they may reduce your bill, or provide you with a coupon for a free dessert etc. This way you are not penalizing the server for something that is beyond their control.

On the other hand, if you noticed the server ignoring you and spending excessive amounts of time at other tables chatting, it would be reasonable for you to reduce the tip, and you may also mention it to the manager. Tipping is not mandatory, but it is socially implied and not tipping is seen as cheap or rude. The average tip amounts vary from province to province throughout Canada. For example, according to a 2018 study by Global News the average percentage in Ontario is 14%, Alberta is 13.9% Northwest Territories is 15%, as is Prince Edward Island. I hope this information will help on your next restaurant visit.

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



Chazz Bravado The New Pronouns

Wanda Waterman



The Chazz-Man
is finding it hard
to remember
what to call
you Chicky-poops.



Some of you
are demanding
to be referenced
as "they" or
"them".



But then
I'm a male feminist,
so I totally
get it!



And in the interests
of solidarity,
I'm gonna start
calling myself
"we" and "us."



That's right,
the Chazz Man
is now
the "Chazz Collective!"



Care to join us
for some in-depth
"consciousness raising"?



Attention AU Students!

AUSU's Spring awards application period will be open from **April 1-31**.

[Visit our website now](#) and check out the awards and bursaries open to AU undergrads this spring cycle.

AUSU is also excited to announce that our Spring Awards & Bursaries program will once again be doubled!

Spring Awards & Bursaries

Academic Achievement Scholarships (6 available) reward excellence in scholarship to AU students.

AUSU Bursaries (10 available) aid students with exceptional life circumstances in financial need.

Balanced Student Awards (8 available) recognize the effort of students balancing multiple commitments.

#Igo2AU Awards (4 available) celebrate student diversity and allow students to express their joy for knowledge.

New Student Bursaries (8 available) aid students just beginning their studies at AU and have < 6 credits.

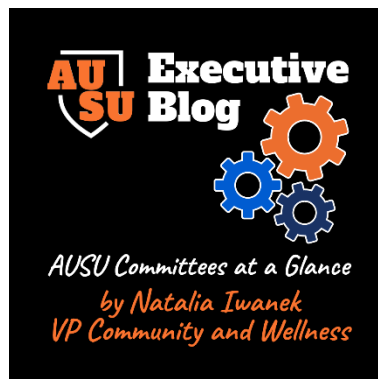
Returning Student Awards (8 available) recognize students returning to university after 2+ years away.

Student Volunteer Awards (6 available) recognize students volunteering in their community.

Ep. 55: E-Safety First

Our VP Finance and Administration Leah Campbell talks to IT professional Josh Dedul about the online world and protecting yourself against scams. These tips will be especially useful for AU students given the nature of distance education and how we are all connected via the Internet.

Starring: AUSU VP Finance and Administration Leah Campbell and Josh Dedul



Here's the latest monthly blog from your AUSU Executive Team!

Natalia Iwanek, VP Community and Wellness, gives an overview of AUSU committees and updates on the hard work they have done this term.

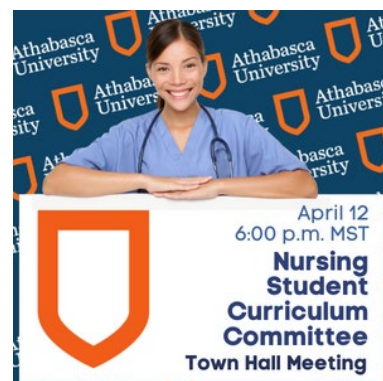
"AUSU committees help shape the services, supports, and advocacy efforts your Students' Union provides to all AU undergraduate students."

[Read the full post](#) to find out about AUSU committees and how you can get involved.

Hey Nursing Students!

Allow us to introduce the **Nursing Student Curriculum Committee**, whose role is to help amplify your voices.

The current committee is made up of your fellow nursing students, Alexander Si-Swires, May Bunn, Gagan Brar, and Leah Seaton, and we're excited to be hosting a Townhall meeting where students can share their feedback, questions, or concerns regarding AU nursing programs. The townhall meeting is available for students only, no members of faculty will be present.



The townhall meeting will be hosted via the Teams online meeting platform on **April 12 from 6-7 p.m. MST**.

Please email lseaton1@athabasca.edu or asiswires1@athabasca.edu for the Teams meeting link.

Join us and share your thoughts on how you would like to see improvements implemented within these programs. Please feel free to email Alexander Si-Swires for questions related to clinical, and Leah Seaton for questions related to the curriculum.

See you there!

CLASSIFIEDS

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

THE VOICE

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Publisher	Athabasca University Students' Union
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The Voice is published almost every Friday in HTML and PDF format.

Contact *The Voice* at voice@voicemagazine.org.

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ISSN 2561-3634