

# THE VOICE

Vol 30 Issue 40 2022-10-23

## Minds We Meet

Interviewing Students Like You

## Tips for Self Compassion

Dealing with Past Trauma

## The Problem with Kim & Kanye

The One That Matters

*Plus:*

*Council Connection  
AUSU Awards & More!  
and much more!*



# CONTENTS

*The Voice's* interactive Table of Contents allows you to click a story title to jump to an article. Clicking the bottom right corner of any page returns you here. Some ads and graphics are also links.

## Features

Minds We Meet: *Interviewing Jessica Anderson* ..... 4

## Articles

Editorial: *Too Soon by Half*..... 3

The Problem with Kim and Kanye ..... 6

Tips for Self-Compassion with Trauma ..... 8

Radically Different Diets: *How they Changed my Life*..... 9

Council Connection: *Sept 15, 2022 Meeting*..... 11

The Multi-Billion Dollar House of Cards..... 16

Why Her Pain was Beautiful ..... 21

## Columns

Fly on the Wall: *Pondering the Essence of Learning* ..... 13

Music Review: *Ginger Wildheart and the Sinners*..... 17

Homemade is Better: *Shredded Hashrowns* ..... 18

Beyond Literary Landscapes: *The Short Story*..... 19

Dear Barb: *Baby Nana*..... 22

## News and Events

AU-thentic Events ..... 5

Scholarship of the Week..... 10

AUSU Update ..... 24

## Comics

Poet Maeve: *Open Eyes-ation* ..... 23



**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, Alek Golijanin, Jason Sullivan, Wanda Waterman, Corey Wren, Jessica Young, and others

Views and articles presented here are those 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](#).

*The Voice* does not share its subscriber list with anyone. Even I don't look at it, it's all on auto.

Volume 30, Issue 40

© 2022 by The Voice Magazine

ISSN 2561-3634

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

***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

### Too Soon by Half

Karl Low



“Musical Chairs in Reverse” is what I called my last editorial. Turns out, I wrote too soon. Today, newly non-publicly-elected premiere Danielle Smith made her selection of Alberta’s new cabinet. The party that tends to argue for small government now has the largest cabinet and most provincial ministers that Alberta has ever seen.

With a total of 26 ministers and 11 parliamentary secretaries, these 37 UCP members make up over half of their 60-member caucus. These positions come with extra pay (\$60,000 per minister, \$27,000 per ‘secretary’) on top of their \$120,000 base salary. This is a cost of over 1.8 million per year. Looking back, this exceeds Mr. Kenney’s former cabinet by seven ministers and two secretaries. So that’s an extra \$474,000/year that Albertans now get to pay.

To put it in perspective, for roughly the same amount, with around 43,000 students at AU, the additional pay for Alberta ministers could basically purchase a free course for every student. Unfortunately, Advanced Athabasca County Education

Minister Demetrious Nicolaidis was not affected by the cabinet shuffle, so you’re probably better off applying for [AUSU’s Awards & Bursaries](#). (You’ve got until Halloween, so don’t procrastinate).

Personally, I was hoping that at least the new premiere would mean a more significant cabinet shuffle and at least bring in some fresh eyes to consider whether AU should be concentrating on supporting a small town as opposed to educating students. I didn’t expect that Ms. Smith would simply be bringing more chairs out. In retrospect, though, I probably should have. As she has yet to be elected and it would only take 17 disgruntled UCP members to put her in a minority government position, it shouldn’t be any surprise that there a lot of money being splashed around in the legislature right now. It doesn’t bode well for her election chances, after all, if she technically lost the UCP’s majority before the conservative voters of Medicine Hat went to the polls.

But enough about that. In better news, this week’s issue has some fun articles to ponder over, whether it’s our latest Minds We Meet interview with a student who loves the tech aspect of AU, an article by Elisa on a strategy to handle those stressful situations that surprise us sometimes, the ‘triggers’ as they’re called, or commentary on popular culture, looking at what Kim Kardashian and Kanye West’s very public breakup can tell us about much more serious issues than Kim Kardashian and Kanye West, we’ve got quite a selection in this week’s Voice Magazine!

Not only are there still scholarships, events, recipes, and music reviews, but on the more philosophical side, we also explore Freud and how if education is just a sublimation of animalistic urges while everything proceeds to death, why it’s still worth it. Okay, it doesn’t sound terribly uplifting when I put it that way, but you might be surprised by this week’s Fly on the Wall.

And I can’t forget advice on everything from diets to what to do when you’ve become a grandma twice over but still haven’t gotten your kid out of high school.

On top of all that, we’ve also got the report from the September Council meeting. The budget one, and you might be surprised to know, it wasn’t unanimous this year. Enjoy the read!

# MINDS WE MEET



*The Voice Magazine* recently had a chance to chat with Jessica Anderson (*she/her*), a third year Bachelor of Human Resources and Labour Relations (BHRLR) student, who is currently residing in Airdrie, Alberta with her family, although she is “a born and raised Calgarian.” Jessica added, “The City of Airdrie is located on Treaty 7 territory. I acknowledge this land as the traditional home of the Blackfoot Confederacy, including the Siksika, Piikani, and Kainai, the Tsuut’ina Nation and Stoney-Nakoda Nations, including the Goodstoney, Chiniki, and Bearspaw, and the People of Métis Nation of Alberta, Region 3.” She continued, “I am a proud Metis person on my mother’s side. I live with my husband Chris and our two daughters Matilda and Maeve. Also dog-mom to Lulu and DeeDee (Yorkie Jack Russell Cross and a Schnauzer).”

“Although currently enrolled in the BHRLR degree program, she had previously completed her University Certificate in Human Resources and Labour Relations from Athabasca University (AU) in 2017. She stated, “I will be returning to work as a HRIS Analyst in January; however, once I complete my program, I plan on

completing AFOA Canada's Certified Indigenous Human Resources Professional program designation and the CHRP Program. My long-term goal is to continue my career as an HR professional in career counselling specifically assisting Indigenous youth [to] figure out what path they can take to achieve the career they want. I would also like to be proficient in Indigenous diversity training for corporations during the hiring process.”

*The Voice Magazine* also asked Jessica for some study tips, and she had some great ones for AU learners! “I’m such a technology-based learner so I appreciate the e-text programs that allow me to highlight the e-text, create flashcards on the spot and access wherever I am. I also schedule study time (go-time is nap time and after bedtime when my kiddos are asleep!) and utilize a calendar/study schedule of my own creation. Keeping myself organized is key for me and I even schedule in time when I’m not studying to make sure I don’t burn out. (Sundays are my off day!)”

She also had some advice for new students, stating, “If you are taking multiple courses at once, make sure you balance courses with final exam requirements vs those without a final exam. For example, if I’m taking four courses, I ensure only one or two have final exams. I struggle with final exams so ensuring I am not trying to remember more than one or two courses full of content really helps me! Also go to the orientations, attend AUSU events, get as involved virtually as you can —your voice matters!”

When she is not studying, she spends time with her family, reads books, cuddles her dogs, and enjoys soccer and boxing.

Jessica's love of reading was evident as *The Voice Magazine* inquired about which famous person, past or present, she like to have lunch with, and why. Jessica chose Agatha Christie, stating, "I'm a huge murder mystery fan and adore her books. We wouldn't have lunch but have afternoon tea because we share a love for tea. She used to put clotted cream in her tea, and I would if I could!" She also had a choice of book that has had an impact on her life, namely *The Joy of Less: A Minimalist Guide to Declutter, Organize, and Simplify* by Francine Jay. "It's amazing how clutter can impact your mental health negatively. I learned to focus on owning less and instead creating experiences/memories for our family being together."

She credits her husband with having the greatest influence on her desire to learn. She stated, "Super cheesy, but my husband has influenced me the greatest. He is the most intelligent person I know and has this motivation to accomplish anything he sets his mind to is so inspiring. He is an excellent writer, very involved in the Dungeons and Dragons community, taught himself how to 3D print miniature figurines and paint them. He is always very supportive of anything I pursue and encourages me to do what makes me happy."

She also described her most memorable vacation with her husband. "Our honeymoon was magical in Disney World! We spent too much money on mickey ears, Halloween memorabilia and yummy food!"

Her experience with online learning has been positive so far. "I find technology-based learning easier than traditional brick and mortar schools (I was at Mount Royal for a few years) and love the flexibility to be able to raise my family, work full-time and continue with my education," she stated.

Her most memorable AU course has been HRMT 386: Introduction to Human Resource Management. She stated that it was one of her first courses at AU, and had solidified her commitment to HR. In addition, Jessica also enjoyed CMIS 311: Supporting End-User Computing, mentioning her "wonderful" tutor, Terry Taylor.

As for communication with her course tutors? "Honestly, I think the response time could be faster. I would love to see virtual tutor and student introductions so we can get to know the tutor at the beginning of each course. It could be during the tutor office hours and that way we have a face to the person marking our assignments and

## AU-thentic Events Upcoming AU Related Events

### Online workshop: Strengthening communities using the co-operative model

Tues, Oct 25, 10:00 to 11:30 am MDT  
Online

Hosted by AU and the Alberta Community Co-operative Association  
[news.athabascau.ca/events/online-workshop-strengthening-communities-using-the-co-operative-model/](https://news.athabascau.ca/events/online-workshop-strengthening-communities-using-the-co-operative-model/)  
Register through above link

### Library Chat

Tues, Oct 25, 10:30 am to 2:30 pm MDT  
Online

Hosted by AU Library  
[www.athabascau.ca/library/index.html](https://www.athabascau.ca/library/index.html)  
No pre-registration needed; access through chat box on home page

### Library Chat

Wed, Oct 26, 10:30 am to 2:30 pm MDT  
Online

Hosted by AU Library  
[www.athabascau.ca/library/index.html](https://www.athabascau.ca/library/index.html)  
No pre-registration needed; access through chat box on home page

### Library Chat

Thur, Oct 27, 10:30 am to 2:30 pm MDT  
Online

Hosted by AU Library  
[www.athabascau.ca/library/index.html](https://www.athabascau.ca/library/index.html)  
No pre-registration needed; access through chat box on home page

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

Thur, Oct 27, 3:00 to 4:00 pm MDT  
Online

Hosted by AU Faculty of Business  
[news.athabascau.ca/events/doctorate-in-business-administration-dba-information-session-20221027/](https://news.athabascau.ca/events/doctorate-in-business-administration-dba-information-session-20221027/)  
RSVP through above link

*All events are free unless otherwise noted.*

exam. Will be an opportunity to ask questions because I'm sure the tutors receive the same questions over and over from students via email."

If she were the new president of AU, Jessica's first project would be "Zoom Tutor Lessons (at least an introduction with each course to start) where tutors and their students can get together in an interactive environment for common questions and answers can be discussed." She continued, "I would also make the Student Orientation for AU – Moodle (or new system) mandatory completion before any courses can be enrolled. I'd like to see a chat function during business hours that can be recorded (a ticket can be created in the back end) and answer the one-off questions students have so they don't have to wait up to 2 business days."

On a personal note, Jessica's shared her most valuable lesson learned in life. "My dad is my hero. He's given me a lot of life lessons along the way but the one that stuck out the most was when he said to me 'The opinion of others does not matter. All that matters is what you think and what you want.' It's part of why I wanted to finish my degree, I want to finish what I started." And her proudest moment? "The birth of our two daughters. They are the absolute best parts of my husband and I."

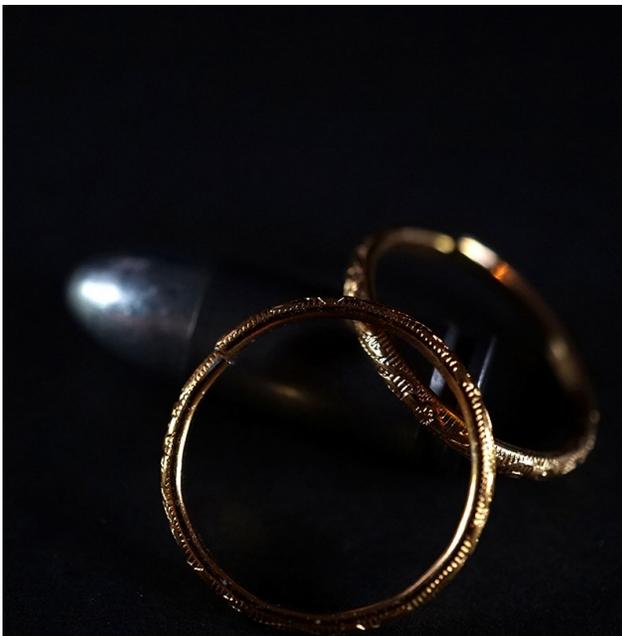
As a final note, Jessica let us know, "I really appreciate AU and the part they have had on my education journey. Yes, the road has been bumpy from when I started in 2014 but I know this is where I'm ultimately supposed to be." Best of luck Jessica!

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!

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

## The Problem with Kim and Kanye

Jessica Young



If you know anything about Kim Kardashian and Kanye West, you'll know that there are, in fact, many problems regarding the celebrity exes. From Kim Kardashian's insensitive remarks telling women to "get up and work" to Kanye's antisemitic statements on Instagram, the duo largely represents what is wrong with Western society.

Over the course 2022, Kim Kardashian and Kanye West have gone through a very public, very messy divorce. They had been together for eight years, married for six, and have four young children together. The drama and controversy associated with the exes has been pretty hard to miss if you've used the Internet at all in the past year. Kim Kardashian made headlines when she began dating (and eventually broke up with) SNL-alum Pete Davidson. Meanwhile, Kanye, who is diagnosed with bipolar disorder, has been speculated to be going

through a mental health crisis—repeatedly engaging in hate-filled online rants targeting Kim, her

family, Pete Davidson, and many others. The most shocking of which includes accusing Kim of kidnapping their children and threatening to harm Pete Davidson while he and Kim were in a relationship.

Listen—I'm a sucker for celebrity gossip. I love indulging in TMZ articles, trash TV, and YouTube tea channels when I have a minute to relax; but the drama between Kim and Kanye has crossed the line from silly entertainment to a terrifying display of domestic violence.

For victims of intimate partner violence, leaving the relationship is the most dangerous time. The abuser is losing control of the victim and they will take desperate measures attempting to regain that control. One study found that an abusive man murdering his female partner was almost always precipitated by the victim leaving or threatening to leave. Although we don't know what was going on behind closed doors when Kim and Kanye were together, the media has documented the escalation of Kanye's erratic, manipulative, and threatening behaviour since Kim left. Furthermore, Kanye made open threats to Kim's new partner, Pete Davidson. Kanye even went so far as to depict himself killing Pete in the music video for his song "Eazy." Another study of intimate partner homicides found 20% of homicide victims were not the domestic violence victims themselves, but family members, friends, neighbors, persons who intervened, law enforcement responders, or bystanders.

In light of these statistics, it is incredibly disturbing that the media continues to minimize Kanye's abuse of Kim, even painting it as funny or romantic. Not only is this further victimizing Kim and her children, but it also has the potential to trigger other victims of domestic violence who may relate Kanye's behaviour to the actions of their own abuser. The media continuing to capitalize on this situation also sends the message to young, impressionable minds that this terrifying behaviour is no big deal; that this is what relationships can sometimes look like.

Trever Noah, host of The Daily Show, has been one of the few celebrities to date to call out Kanye West's abuse of Kim. He publicly addressed the situation, saying that it's been "spun into a story that seems fully tabloid but I think deserves a little more awareness from the general public, because it touches on something that is more sensitive and more serious than people would like to admit." He goes on to explain, "You may not feel sorry for Kim because she's rich and famous, because of the way she dresses, because she appropriates black culture, because she tells women they're lazy, broke the internet and then didn't put it back together, whatever, you hate her. But what she's going through is terrifying to watch, and it shines a spotlight on what so many women go through when they choose to leave."

Trever poignantly goes on to say, "If Kim Kardashian cannot escape this, then what chance do normal women have?"

Kim Kardashian has an estimated net worth of \$1.8 billion. She has security guards, a closeknit family, influential friends, and all of the resources in the world at her fingertips. Yet, *she cannot escape Kanye's abuse.*

It is time that the media calls out Kanye West's behaviour for what it actually is—intimate partner violence. It's time that the media stops giving an abuser a platform to continue harassing his ex-wife. It is time that we, as consumers, stop engaging in content that is perpetuating violence against women. It's time that Kanye is forced to stop abusing Kim and is held accountable for his actions.

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

## Tips For Self-Compassion With Trauma (Especially When It Seems Silly Or Stupid)

Elisa Neven-Pugh



This article is written in the hopes self-compassion is used when it is realized that a potential trigger may arise, even if it is just mentioning the name of a movie that was traumatizing in childhood. To be clear it is not meant to be used as a substitute for professional assistance. My only aim is to assist self-compassion.

The first thing is to understand that no trauma is stupid. If you got impacted by something, even if it was “just a movie” there’s a reason. What I’m saying is be kind to yourself, please. If you punish yourself even further, it only becomes nightmare material for who knows how long. 17 years for me.

### **Make a bullet list explaining the trauma.**

Does it make you feel vulnerable? Does it bring up insecurity? Write it down. Or speak it out. But don’t make a paper that goes around in your head, to

overthink, just get it out without judgement. Then, you’ll see you’re not being so stupid. There’s deeper meaning behind reactions, in my experience. For example, being traumatized because immobility is used to administer torture in *The Mummy* when I was 10 and I couldn’t get off the couch and was too scared to ask for help.

### **Allow for the possibility that you may be triggered.**

1. Make a commitment to let emotions happen whatever they are
2. Once you have this potential in mind make a plan with yourself for if it does happen.

For example, my plan for overcoming trigger nightmares includes:

- feel emotions,
- pray, and
- turn soft music on.

If you want to change prayer to something more secular, that’s completely fine. The idea is to make a plan beforehand that gives strategies for self-comfort. If it is a deeper trigger, you may want to have the number of a friend or crisis line on hand.

3. Acknowledge your preparation, this will put you in a positive mindset especially before sleep

### **Finally, Celebrate any steps forward.**

The second last step acknowledges changes before the incident while this last one is part of the debriefing stage. I can’t promise that you won’t be triggered just because you acknowledged and tried to live in acceptance that it might happen. Life is difficult. Sometimes no matter what you do, you’ll get spooked. However, I want you to acknowledge that perhaps you calmed down just

a nanosecond quicker than usual and again you came up with strategies this will help you have compassion and move on as best you can.

As I said, I am not an expert, but I hope that these tips help you have compassion for you and potentially bring healing.

#### References

Sommers, S. (1999). [Director] *The Mummy*. [Film] Alphaville Films.

*I'm Elisa. I have cerebral palsy quadriplegia. More importantly, I have a great family, wonderful opportunities, and a deep faith. I'm inspired to write to help others learn and conquer invisibility syndrome.*



## Radically Different Diets How they Changed My Life

Marie Well



Back during my undergrad, I was anorexic and out of shape. I drank multiple pots of coffee and decaf daily. In addition, my diet consisted of a bit of hummus and pita bread at dinner time. As a result, I could barely run ten strides without petering out.

But then I met a mentor who got me in top physical shape. Soon after, I started meeting with the university wrestling team, paying for private lessons from a five-time world champion and Olympic contender. After that, I exercised for up to five hours intensely daily. But my diet was still poor: mostly pizzas and power bars.

I later stopped exercising and started eating sausage, cakes, cheese, and ice creams. But unfortunately, it wasn't long until I grew deathly ill after developing a chronic condition. I would frequently throw up on the side of the highway and grew so sickly that I convinced myself I had two years left to live. Given this, there was no way I could hold a job.

But then, a dear friend with a PhD in Biology encouraged me to read books on diet and nutrition. So, after reading countless books on diet and disease and using a diet app that recorded all my nutrients, I devised a high-fiber diet. It had no added sugar, no added salt, no oils, no processed foods, no bread, and nothing cooked. Instead, it mainly consisted of fruits, vegetables, canned salmon, beans, sweet potatoes, nuts, and seeds. I also started exercising, working up to two hours of fitness daily.

My diet turned my health around and enabled me to enter a decent career. However, the diet didn't build much muscle. It just kept me relatively lean. But I slept a lot during the day. So, when I started my full-time job, I stopped exercising.

However, over the last four months, I started exercising again and went on a new diet with surprising results. I'm exercising two hours a day, six days a week. I focus on weights (using bands), cardio, lots of ab work, and a stretch, and I have more energy and health than I've had over the past fifteen years.

But my diet is high in protein. I eat a baked chicken leg and thigh, a can of salmon, plain Greek yogurt, and many almond/cashew milks daily. In addition, I put matcha tea in my milk, yogurt, and water. (In short, I'm addicted to matcha tea.) I eat an orange, apple, berries, cucumber, sweet peppers, celery, and nuts daily.

But the surprising result is how healthy I feel and how radically my body has changed. For example, just yesterday, I carried a four-liter jug of milk in one hand like it was a feather. This surprised me as I struggled to hold a four-liter jug with both arms, huffing away, around six months ago.

I've only been sick once on this high-protein and matcha tea diet. Likewise, my energy and health are a thousand times what they used to be. And the muscle gains are significant.

The strange thing is, I think I'm in menopause, yet I feel the happiest I've ever felt and healthier than I felt since my late 30s.

The key takeaway is that you can choose to be healthy and fit despite disease, age, or condition. At least, that's my philosophy. For instance, suppose you have disabilities such as prosthetic limbs or partial or total paralysis. In that case, you can still do exercises to increase muscle tone. Even in the case of complete paralysis, you can still train the musculature of the eyes to use technologies that aid in, say, writing books. I'm not an expert in assistive technologies. However, I believe the trend is toward thought-activated typewriting. And who knows what technology may offer tomorrow.

And I've heard of great cancer recovery stories that involve fitness, diet, cold therapy (such as cold showers and ice baths), and deep breathing techniques.

So, if you choose a diet, choose health. But don't be afraid to research and experiment with diet and fitness regimens, as there are no failures, only data. Then, use that data to get optimal results.

As a final caveat, the only published diet I would have considered was from a book called *How Not to Die*. But its app had some poor advice when it came to carbs. (If I recall correctly, muffins were on the list.) However, the last time I looked, the app made much better carb recommendations.

## Scholarship of the Week

Digging up scholarship treasure for AU students.

**Scholarship name:** The Smooth Movers Scholarship

**Sponsored by:** The Smooth Movers

**Deadline:** November 30, 2022

**Potential payout:** \$1000

**Eligibility restriction:** Applicants must be high school, university, or college students in Canada, U.S, Australia, or Europe.

**What's required:** An email with a 900-word essay expressing your thoughts on what the future of housing will look like, along with a 2-minute video explaining your thoughts on the topic.

**Tips:** Read the Challenge section for possible essay topics.

**Where to get info:** [thesmoothmovers.com.au/the-smooth-movers-scholarship/](https://thesmoothmovers.com.au/the-smooth-movers-scholarship/)



## Council Connection September 15, 2022 Meeting

Jana Menard



On September 15, 2022, at 5:32 PM Mountain Time, Karen Fletcher, President of AUSU, started, covering the usual items such as land acknowledgements and attendance.

During the agenda discussion, Advocacy Coordinator Duncan Wojtaszek advises postponing policy reviews; you need a mover and seconder to approve the agenda, then a member can move to table an agenda item until the next meeting, and the mover and seconder of the agenda could accept this as a friendly amendment. Councillor Amber McDuffe inquired if we could move through the agenda items and table what Council does not get through. Duncan states that this is germane but whatever is last on the agenda is likely not going to be tabled, which means bringing it back in the next meeting, as that includes the question-and-answer

period. It is interesting to learn how these processes work and how the Council manages the time in the meetings.

The Council then moved through the regular business, approving the agenda, previous minutes, and action items unopposed. Karen moved to postpone the position policies to allow people more time to read through these policies, as they'd discussed earlier, and this motion passed unanimously.

### Membership

The first significant item to be discussed is a motion to change membership policies for member representatives on AUSU committees. The most considerable change is to allow non-councillors serving on a committee to be eligible for AUSU scholarships, bursaries, and awards as they are currently not. It was noted that this change stems from a procedural change, previously, students' names were used for the application, but they now use the student's ID, so there is little danger of bias or favoritism.

Other changes discussed were changing member removal processes from AUSU committees to an automatic removal with no tribunal and how membership applications are reviewed. Amber suggested that applications be evaluated with the same process as awards committees review applications, allowing the Council to review applications ahead of time and select their top applicants. This seemed to be met with general agreement though it was noted this would take up more councillor time.

Council then proposed changing the process by which Indigenous Circle members are selected. The current process had self-identifying indigenous students voting in new members; this process was chosen to ensure the circle was reflective of Indigenous students and prevent oppression; however, because the circle only consists of two members, Council is proposing it returns to the previous model of Council appointing members. In this process, the Executive Committee will review all applications, consult with members of the Indigenous Circle, and provide their recommendations to the Council to ensure the Indigenous Circle continues to exist and not overextend the only two members. Once the Indigenous Circle has sufficient

membership, the process can change to ensure the committee is represented by Indigenous students.

Council voted to approve these changes unanimously with an action item for the discussed revisions.

### **Budget**

An essential task of this meeting was to approve the budget for Oct 1. The critical discussion on the budget was regarding the \$28,000 allocated for an in-person retreat. Amber brought up concerns about spending such a large portion of the budget on an in-person retreat when other parts of the budget suffered from cuts due to declining enrollment, especially when you consider that the AUSU council is an online organization representing students of an online institution.

There were dissenting voices from many councillors, many adding in suggestions to make the retreat more cost-effective or voicing concerns on how to implement a virtual retreat while preventing "Zoom fatigue" and accommodating schedules so all councillors can be involved.

This issue was hotly contested, and it was noted by some councillors that they would not be able to vote in favor of the budget if these issues weren't resolved; Jodi advised they could approve this budget and always reallocate funds later, for example, if they cancel the in-person retreat. The budget was put to the vote, and the motion passed nearly unanimously, with only Councillor McDuffe voting against, and an action item was created to review and discuss alternative plans for the retreat.

As AU is an online university, insisting on spending a large part of the budget on an in-person retreat does not seem to align with the experience of the very students the union represents. It will be interesting to see how Council addresses these concerns and, ultimately, if they decide to proceed with the in-person retreat.

### **Future Advocacy**

Council discussed the pros and cons of students being able to use Open Educational Resources (OERs), which are publications accessible for free by public domain in place of textbooks by Pearson or Nelson. There are concerns about OERs having outdated information or affecting the standing of some programs that require recognition from occupational regulatory agencies. Council amended the work plan to clarify the goal is to advocate for students to be able to choose between e-texts, physical texts or OERs, which will give students more choices and reduce costs. A survey or town hall may be held to discuss this further in the future.

A priority for AUSU in the 2022-2023 year will be advocating for better student health services, including reviewing Homewood health. Some suggestions councillors mentioned included Homewood having more employees with diverse backgrounds so students can speak with someone with their shared lived experience. Also, Homewood health only allows you to access services over the phone, even if services are in their local area; Council will be advocating for more accessibility options like in-person sessions.

AUSU plans to advocate to ensure all programs are reviewed every four years to ensure students are receiving education to the current standard and information is updated.

They will be writing to the Canadian Alliance of Students Associations (CASA) to ask the Federal Government to expand the verify.me log-in program, so you do not need to bank with the "Big Six" (the six large banks in Canada) to access federal student loans.

## Awards Programming

There were many details discussed regarding the awards programs, such as who approves emergency bursaries and the accessibility of year-round bursaries during award season.

Council will be looking into options on how students can submit video applications, as some students may not have a YouTube account; one suggestion was to allow students to submit the video on any social media platform. Others noted that some students might not want to share their social media account publicly. Council will be looking into whether they can have an option for applicants to upload a video directly to their website as part of the application. Another change is to allow councillors to ask applicants for more information; they will provide students with five business days to submit the requested information.

It was also noted that AUSU and AU have an agreement to pilot an Indigenous Student Award program to run in AU's January award cycle. To allow Indigenous Circle members to be eligible to apply for this award, it will not be awarded through the AUSU awards committee. Instead, AU will choose the recipient. After one year, the Council will vote on whether to make this a permanent award.

Amber requested that the agreement for this award with AU be amended to have two officers of the exec committee as the signing authority instead of the Executive Director to better reflect that the organization is being run by the students. Concerns were brought forth that this could delay the implementation of the agreement and does not significantly change the document, and therefore is not necessary. Amber put forth a motion to amend the document, but the motion failed when put to the vote; the original motion to approve this agreement passed.

The meeting wrapped up with councillors submitting their reports as presented and sharing acknowledgements. The next meeting is tomorrow, October 20, 2022. But if you're interested in seeing what came of those action items, there's still time to get involved. Contact [governance@ausu.org](mailto:governance@ausu.org) and let them know you'd like to attend!

*Jana Menard is a Bachelor of Arts student majoring in Political Science and minoring in English. She enjoys photography, watching documentaries, and hiking, all the while drinking too much coffee.*



## Fly on the Wall Pondering the Essence of Learning

Jason Sullivan



### Give Sigmund Freud a Chance

We're all born dumb, literally lacking the facility of language and any semblance of deftness or acuity when expressing complex thoughts and feelings. Much later, after socialization teaches us to translate our wails and tantrums into words and essays, we might rest on our laurels and come to an age-old conclusion: maybe all our learning has simply taught us how little we know and how newt-like our personal wisdom really is. Here the meaning and impetus of education is called into question. What does all the hard work of learning add up to?

Dreamy visions of an ascent to lofty vistas of knowledge and success may abide in the hearts of

many an AU student. At some point, though, as we reach our goals we may face the fact that whatever is within us that drives our desires for learning is of a two-fold nature. On the one hand we are always essentially ourselves, give or take a few life lessons and academic achievements, and on the other hand we do seem to change and go somewhere in our lifetime within our minds. Our cells regenerate but our selves remain consistent; maybe this is why our elders sometimes say that the more they learned in school the less they realized they knew.

Sigmund Freud, that theorist so easy to avoid in a culture of TED talks neuroscience with a general aversion to thinking of our admittedly-animal selves as essentially sexual, had much to say about our dual nature as creative and destructive beings. Far from a penis-obsessed infantile thinker, Freud believed that our quest for learning (or money, or love, or the perfect hobby) was about the feeling of efficacy and power achieved through success. As we knife our way through our textbooks the real meaning of the symbolic phallus comes clear; it's about using our essential powers to accomplish something, not literally about any particular sex organ. (The origin of the phallus issue ties into Freud's study of how kids learn about genders and that's another story, and closer to the stereotype). The key thing is that, for adults, phallic symbols are anything symbolic of power and power is detached from the literal penis. All this is by way of saying that language allows us to repress our more animal instincts so that we may accomplish more powerful things in arenas of culture and discourse.

We're animals who seem to be on a trajectory from birth to death that leads to a sense of purposelessness, while also being capable of many amazing feats of writing, climbing, loving, and discovering. Freud felt stymied at the contradictions between our evolutionary origin within humble rocks and inert objects, and our creative drive to express and create and procreate ourselves. Education almost seems pointless if our fate in death is to revert to an inanimate state of stasis.

Freud claimed that we tend towards inanimate reality as a part of our heritage as mere sticks and stones. A few extracts suffice to explain how he imagined that we were drawn to our mute, blind and unthinking origins; that is, the state of nature into which we are born as wordless infants.

"Everything living dies for internal reasons-becomes inorganic once again-then we shall be compelled to say that 'the aim of all life is death' (70)

"It would be in contradiction to the conservative nature of the instincts if the goal of life were a state of things which had not yet been attained" (70)

"First instinct...the instinct to return to the inanimate state" (71)

"Constantly created afresh and easily dying...ever more complicated detours before reaching its aim of death" (71)

Creativity for Freud was a form of repressive desublimation; we do cultural things to release some energy that would otherwise lead us down a more bestial path. By releasing energy in one manner, we avoid expressing it in another. Instead of engaging in orgiastic Woodstocks with our fellow humans in one big cultural Garden of Eden, we instead take part in work and productivity and organized play. Repairing shingles on a doghouse takes the form of, well, a doggy style kind of afternoon. The goal of life would seem to be fulfillment, and yet education involves a higher state of being, surely!

Yet all acts of accomplishment lead to a sense of satisfaction. This led Freud to ponder "what is the important event in the development of living substance, which is being repeated in sexual reproduction, or in its fore-runner, the conjugation of two protista?" (79). Perhaps our aquatic origins as polliwogs finds modern expression in the forward locomotion of our mental

accomplishment. By this approach it's no doubt that education is an end in itself but not one we can ever say is fully done, fully accomplished for all time. The questions remain, however, whether we really glean something that we can say changes us to our core and what it is that drives our thirst for knowledge.

The road to learning isn't smooth, either. Our instinct to procrastinate muddies the waters of our desire to succeed. Life is complex and so is learning; Freud concluded by seeing "opposition as being, not between ego instincts and sexual instincts but between life instincts and death instincts" (93). As we age, the aphorism that the more we learn the less we know may seem truer in that textbooks become outdated, and our academic interests evolve. Who hasn't laughed at some juvenile writing from their past or pondered at the breathtaking idealism or ignorance (or both) of prior social media posts?

Yet somehow what gives us life more abundant in our learning remains with us as an essentially inquisitive and creative trait. Only when we die inside and fall to a level of cynicism or disinterest in the face of possible educational opportunities do some of our best essences pass away; "the life process of the individual leads for internal reasons to an abolition of chemical tensions, that is to say, to death" (81) Growth has its corollary in our inner drive to learn. So long as we seek to grow in our minds, our life spirit shall carry us to new and exciting scholastic projects.

Finally, where facts and trivia derive satisfaction at times, it's where reality carries us away to new and divergent hypotheses and wanderings that the real magic of education kicks in. "By repeatedly combining factual material with what is purely speculative and thus diverging widely from empirical observation" we may arrive at a new and more personalized epistemology in our chosen discipline and, in the last instance, in our life as a whole (81). Athabasca allows us to expand our minds and our resumes while the rest of our life carries on; nevertheless, the great bugaboo of common sense may prevail upon us to ask: are we really learning anything, or do we just think that we are?

By realizing our thoughts into words, we surpass our prior potential; the magic of learning isn't necessarily in the answers so much as in the process. While life can seem like a series of happy accidents, our learning depends upon us being intentional with our thoughts and words. Being intuitive helps, but no amount of intuition can substitute itself for the book learning that academia requires. Think of how, say, our political leanings change over a lifetime. Or how culture evolves and/or devolves. Perhaps trends and regime changes mean that whatever we learn today will be old facts tomorrow.

In that case maybe the best accomplishment of attaining our diploma or degree, will be the raw fact that we learned how to stay the course and finish a task lasting longer and bigger than a month or a year. The educational impulse that gravitates us to the gleaming light of capital "K" Knowledge comes at AU to provide a line of reference for our life. And maybe, just maybe, we may discover "staggering richness and power within us of so many things of which we are not aware" (Zilboorg in Freud 3). We're better off for these personal discoveries as we grapple with our coursework. Mental growth may just be the true hallmark of higher learning.

#### Reference

Freud, S. (1928/1967). *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. Toronto: Bantam Books.

Zilboorg, G. In Freud, S. (1928/1967). *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. Toronto: Bantam Books.

*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.*



## The Multi Billion Dollar House of Cards

**Alek Golijanin**



How many people are old enough to remember when YouTube was first launched back in 2005? The creators behind YouTube were three friends who had worked together at PayPal. Sometime after PayPal was acquired by eBay, the group of friends concluded that ordinary people would enjoy sharing their personal videos and making them available for the whole world to see. This simple idea exploded, and YouTube was acquired by Google in 2006 for \$1.6 billion. The internet giant moved hastily to monetize the platform and it has become one of the most significant returns on investment in the history of technology.

In 2021, YouTube had brought in close to \$30 billion, one of Google's best revenue streams, accounting for around 10% of all revenue. The revenue is generated from two different places: advertisements on monetized videos and subscriptions for access to premium features. The ability to earn such significant amounts of revenue has allowed YouTube to create a revenue sharing model for

individuals who decide they want to create and share content on the platform but only if their videos generate enough interest in the form of views, likes, and comments.

There is also a darker side to the YouTube ecosystem that has the potential to harm Google's revenue-generating capacity, and it has to do with the artificial boosting of views, likes, comments, and subscribers. The way that it works is that content creators need to 'invest' in the promotion of their video so that they can generate higher view counts and have greater engagement through likes, comments, and subscribers. These are the metrics that YouTube algorithms are designed to track and if they detect a popular video, they are more likely to recommend the video. The higher the metrics are for a video, the greater the payout to the content creator is. However, artificial boosting has the potential to be a threat to Google's bottom line because it negatively impacts the advertising experience and how much companies may be willing to spend to advertise over YouTube.

The underworld of paid promotion is a market that is very lucrative for techies that know how to set up the necessary infrastructure to game the system. If you are an aspiring "social influencer", perhaps you may need to consider about investing in the promotion of your content in order to get on a level playing field. For individuals that manage to break through on social media platforms, any discussion about the underworld of paid promotion is highly shunned. It is eerily similar to the first and second rule of fight club which is that you do not talk about fight club.

I remember when Instagram started purging fake accounts back in the mid-2010s. Back then nobody had any idea about the artificial boosting of posts, but this issue barely affected regular users. Many of today's social medias favourite darlings saw their followers drop by hundreds of thousands of followers. It was hilarious. Imagine being a celebrity that was lucky enough to be financially free and being so insecure that you need to spend tens of thousands of dollars to make yourself seem popular. Unfortunately, this purge was a one-off situation as Instagram never carried out another purge, nor would any other social media platforms follow suit. It makes sense

because social media platforms are valued more if they have more users, an issue we are seeing unfold with the Elon vs Twitter debacle.

So why does any of this matter? Well for starters, school-aged children are fed a narrative about social platform “influencing” which seems to be contributing to a greater number of kids trying to replicate the success of these so-called influencers. Unlike becoming a professional competitor in sports, gaming or eating, no amount of time or investment will make up for the inability to artificially boost your posts. But school-aged children have no idea about this reality nor the fact that very little that makes it online is actually real. After all, who can blame school-aged children for being deceived, adults of the 70s and 80s thought wrestling was real while adults of the 90s felt the same way about Jerry Springer.

*Alek Golijanin is an AU alum who considers himself a gentleman first, a scholar second, and a combat sports fanatic third. In that order.*



## Music Review

### Ginger Wildheart and the Sinners

Jessica Young



**Artist:** Ginger Wildheart and The Sinners

**Album:** *Ginger Wildheart and The Sinners*

Ginger Wildheart and The Sinners have released their debut self-titled LP, *Ginger Wildheart and The Sinners*. The album is available for streaming anywhere you get your music.

The UK band was formed in 2019, and consists of Ginger Wildheart, Neil Ivison, Nick Lyndon, and Shane Dixon.

Of the band itself, Ginger says, “Me and The Sinners met for the very first time in the studio, in

preparation for recording an album together. We figured out that if we can’t get along with each other then the music would be ultimately worthless. So we went to the pub and got drunk together. The next morning the music started flowing with ease. This is the sound of friendship.”

*Ginger Wildheart and The Sinners* has ten tracks: Wasted Times; That Smile; Footprints in the Sand; Lately, Always; Dirty Water; Work In Progress; Breakout; Six Years Gone; Not the Staying Kind; and Code of the Road. There are music videos available on the band’s YouTube for several of the songs, including: Wasted Times, Footprints in the Sand, and Lately, Always. “Dirty Water” and “Six Years Gone” are cover songs, originally played by Status Quo and Georgia Satellites, respectively.

Ginger Wildheart and The Sinners sound like a cross between The Beatles and Tim McGraw. Now, I’m certainly not saying they are as prolific as The Beatles, but I feel like that is the vibe that the band is going for. The album is easy listening—the songs are generally upbeat and relatable with a few catchy hooks thrown in. However, most of the tracks are pretty indistinguishable from one another. As a whole, the album feels like any other generic country album. This might not be so bad if you’re into country music, but to be honest, country is not my thing.

“Wasted Times” is about wasting time in a relationship that wasn’t right for either party, and dealing with the conflicting feelings of knowing the relationship is toxic but still feeling the pull

of the other person. Ginger sings, “But any time you’re lonely/there’ll be a big old open door/You’re part of me like one of/these tattoos/Wasted time’s never wasting time with you.” The music video for “Wasted Times” is simple footage of the band performing, using the vintage effect to make the video look old. A little cheesy, in my opinion.

“Footprints in the Sand” references the popular Christian poem about God carrying people through tough times, but insisting that a single set of footprints in the sand means that you are walking alone. Ginger sings, “So when you find yourself/climbing out of the rubble/Remember there was only you/to hold your hand.” The music video for this song uses the same performance footage from the “Wasted Times” video mixed with shots of a man on a beach.

Overall, I wasn’t a fan of Ginger Wildheart and The Sinners. I did like the content of their songs, but I just can’t do country music.

Check out Ginger Wildheart and The Sinners on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).

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



## Homemade is Better Shredded Hashbrowns

**Chef Corey**



There are many ways to make hashbrowns. I wrote about one way in April of 2021. That article was about making cubed hashbrowns. I mentioned there that you wanted to boil the potatoes before frying them. The key to good hashbrowns is pre-cooking the potatoes; sometimes that means par-cooking them in a deep fryer like you would French fries, roasting them in the oven, or boiling them, which means that any whole pre-cooked potato is perfect for breakfast. You can slice, dice, shred, or mash them. This time? I’m focusing on shredded hashbrowns.

I got the idea for this recipe from a scouting camp. We used dehydrated hashbrowns for the camp and fried them in a pan until they were golden brown and delicious, or GBD for short. When you cook the potatoes, you remove some of the starch in them, leaving only the natural sugar. This sugar reacts with heat, the Maillard reaction, and you get golden brown. Or possibly burnt if your heat is too high and you don’t have patience.

If you haven’t bought one yet, get yourself an electric griddle. Set your griddle to 350F when cooking almost everything. There will be some foods you’ll need at higher or lower temperatures. But I exclusively use 350F for everything; eggs, bacon, French toast, garlic bread, hamburgers, hashbrowns, and grilled cheese. I can go on, but I won’t. An excellent electric griddle will give you so much versatility in cooking.

Back to hashbrowns, I used some leftover potatoes from the night before. I shredded them up while they were cold and started to fry them on my griddle. I add some butter, salt, and pepper to season them, but you can add



so much more. To shred them, I used my trusty box grater; just watch your fingers. I have a lot of machines in my kitchen, including a stand mixer with a shredding attachment and a food processor with a shredding attachment, but I use my box grater because I want to be careful with these potatoes. The machines do a decent job at hard foods and cheeses, but soft foods like cooked potatoes turn out terribly. So do yourself a favour, and use a box grater, it will take longer, but the result will be worth the time.

### Shredded Hashbrowns

#### Ingredients:

2-3 cooked potatoes (cold, whole, peeled, grated)  
 1 tbsp canola oil  
 1-2 tsp salt  
 1-2 tsp pepper

#### Directions:

- 1) The night before you want to make hashbrowns bake your potatoes in the oven for one hour.
- 2) Once cooked, put them in the fridge overnight.
- 3) The following day peel the skin off and use your box grater to shred them.
- 4) Once shredded, let them rest while you heat your electric griddle to 350F.
- 5) Put 1/3 of the shredded potatoes in a bowl and add 1 tsp oil per batch.
- 6) Toss the potatoes in the oil to coat them.
- 7) Start frying them on the griddle until they start to brown.
- 8) Add salt and pepper just a few pinches at a time but taste the hashbrowns to ensure you've added enough. Remember, it's easy to add salt but impossible to remove.
- 9) Repeat with the rest of the batches and serve it with peameal or regular bacon, eggs, toast, and your morning beverage of choice.



*Corey Wren is a student at AU's school of business management and a stay-at-home-parent of three who graduated from NAIT's culinary arts program in 2007.*



### Beyond Literary Landscapes The Short Story

**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 week's column focuses on introducing readers to the short story genre, as well as reminding readers of some of the genre's classics, and as an inspiration for further reading.

The short story can be defined as "brief fictional prose narrative that is shorter than a novel and that usually deals with only a few characters." Unlike novels, which often deal with complex storylines, short stories may concentrate one or several scenes.

Some examples of well-known authors who have written short stories include Thomas King, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Nikolai Gogol, Shirley Jackson, and Edgar Allan Poe. Other examples include Ernest Hemingway, Roald Dahl, Alexander Pushkin, and Leo Tolstoy.

### **What**

Examples of short stories include "Borders" by Thomas King, "The Yellow Wallpaper" by Charlotte Perkins Gilman, "The Overcoat" by Nikolai Gogol, "The Lottery" by Shirley Jackson, and "The Fall of the House of Usher" and "The Tell-Tale Heart" by Edgar Allan Poe. Additional examples include "A Clean Well-Lighted Place" by Ernest Hemingway.

### **Where**

Many of these short stories are set in the United States, the United Kingdom, and Imperial Russia.

### **When**

These writings are set throughout the 17, 19, and 20th-centuries or even beyond.

### **Why**

These particular short stories may be of interest to AU readers who would like to read more about the macabre, the curious, and the tragic. In addition, these short stories may appeal to readers interested in social critiques.

### **How**

AU's wide range of diverse courses make it easy to study this topic in depth. Courses related to the short story 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 211](#): Prose Forms, a junior-level, three-credit course, which "examine[s] a variety of fictional works in prose . . . [such as] American, British, and Canadian short stories and novels, ranging from the nineteenth to the twenty-first century." (No prerequisites are required for this course, although learners are encouraged to take [ENGL 255](#): Introductory Composition.)

Students may also be interested in [ENGL 308](#): Indigenous Literature in Canada, a senior-level, three-credit course, which is concerned "with the origins of Indigenous literature in the oral tradition and leads to contemporary Indigenous writing in English," and includes various short stories. (Note that this course requires several prerequisites, including [ENGL 211](#): Prose Forms and [ENGL 212](#): Poetry and Plays.) Happy reading!

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

## Why Her Pain Was Beautiful

Marie Well



If you want to know what you've been doing in the past, look at your body today. If you want to see what you'll be doing in the future, look at your mind today. That's a Buddhist expression, highlighting why it's essential to keep your thoughts vibrant.

As I walked home carrying a giant milk jug, I smiled at an older lady of African descent. Her face was serious but looked beautiful in its neutrality.

She looked at me slowly, and I continued to smile at her.

"You're so happy," she said, her face still serious.

I told her how I'd been training my mind to be happy.

She shook her head. "Someone can really hurt you," she said, and I saw pain fill her eyes.

I wanted to convince her that we all get hurt, but the goal is to grow closer to a place of love in response to pain. But she kept repeating that sometimes you

get really hurt. Her spirit looked gently crushed. She had really loved someone, I thought. She slowed her pace, and I could tell she had had enough of me. So, I filled my soul with love for her and went on my way.

Later that night, I watched a [near-death experience video](#) I had seen earlier in the day. The woman in the video claimed she temporarily went to heaven, where she encountered a heavenly library. The library mainly consisted of books that recorded the lives of every living soul. The woman in the video said she then studied those books and experienced all those souls' emotions. Some souls had neutral feelings, while others were vibrant. And she said that even the evil in the world was profoundly necessary as it allows us to grow.

At that moment, I realized, "Whether good things happen or evil, always make your thoughts vibrant."

Similarly, The Marriage Foundation, which offers courses I'm taking, says that some people grow immensely in one incarnation. In contrast, most others may only grow a little. I believe the way to grow the most is to keep one's thoughts joyful and love-filled no matter what happens. It takes great discipline and constant watching of one's thoughts. It also requires abandoning all judgments of others, celebrating the uniqueness of all others, and letting go of ego. But most of all, it requires selflessness.

But don't get me wrong. The woman I encountered did not appear at all vibrant, but the look of pain on her face seemed beautiful. That's because her soul was beautiful. And she was at the crux of an opportunity to grow. And that growth is intended for us to arrive at a state of higher love.

Every soul is beautiful, I believe. The pain, the joy, the struggles, and the overcoming—it all has a purpose. And that purpose, in my mind, is to learn to love.





Dear  
Barb

Barbara Godin

## Baby Nana

Dear Barb:

*My fifteen-year-old son is going to be a father again! Three months ago his 15 year old girlfriend (at the time) gave birth to a baby girl. I am a grandmother at 35, not what I planned for my life, or my sons' life. In fact, I am almost finished my degree at AU, now I will probably end up being pretty busy with these babies since their parents are so young. I am a single mom and thought I had educated my son so there wouldn't be an unwanted pregnancy, but I guess not. When the first pregnancy happened I was angry but tried to maintain my composure and had a good talk with him. I'm afraid I might lose it this time and end up alienating my son. He said the girl told him she was protected and he believed her. I just don't know what to do; he is obviously not listening to me. He has been educated at school as well, but he's just not getting it. Is there something I am missing, something else I can do so this doesn't happen again? Desperate Grandma.*

Dear Grandma:

As parents we can do all the right things and teach our children to be responsible, but they mess up. Unfortunately teenagers are often governed by their hormones, not their logic. I can definitely understand your devastation at this happening twice in such a short time. You have every right to express your disappointment with your son, but that's really all you can do. If you become angry and lose contact with him, you will also

most likely lose contact with your grandchildren. Your son needs your support, as does the mother of his child, and his pregnant girlfriend. Have you considered talking to the parents of these girls, perhaps you could come up with a plan to help these young parents? I know this was not your plan for the future, but life sometimes throws us a curve and we have to adapt to a new normal. Your son is very young and with the proper support and love he will hopefully be able to get this life together and become an awesome adult and father. Without your support, he really doesn't have a lot of options and could easily go down the wrong path. Also, I believe your grandchildren will benefit from having you in their life.

I found a booklet [with information about the rights of young parents in Canada](#), although most of the referrals are to locations in New Brunswick, the booklet applies to legal rights, responsibilities and obligations in all of Canada.

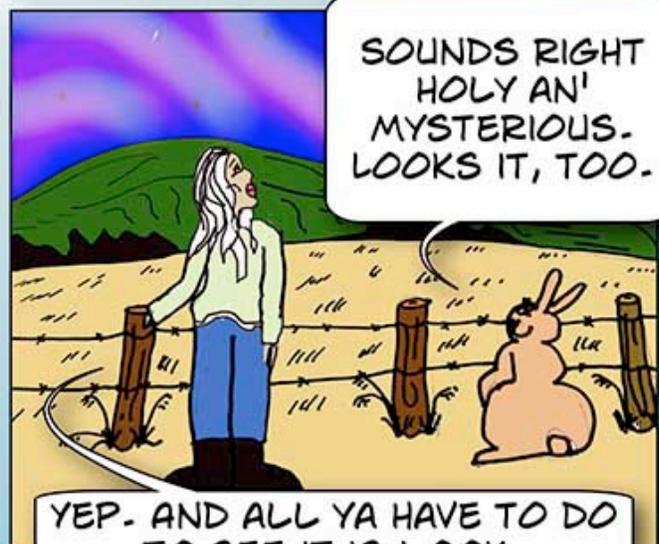
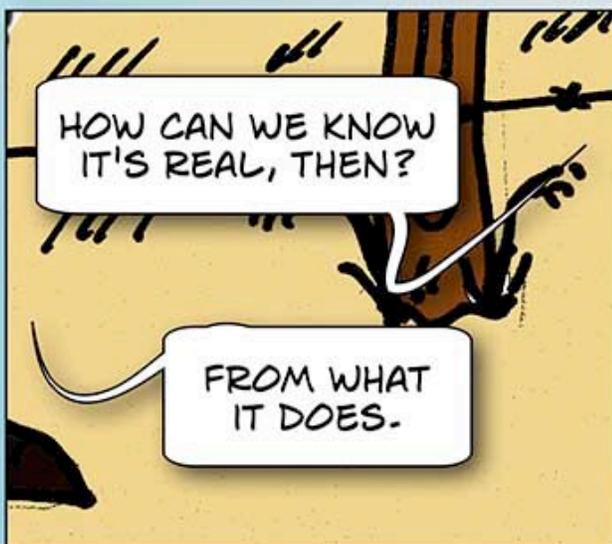
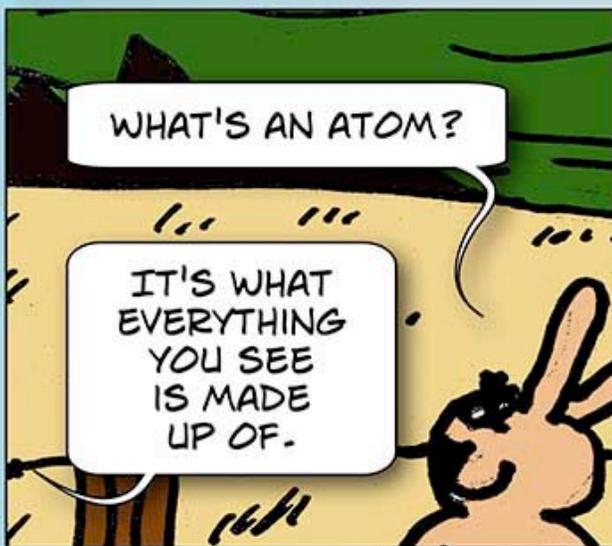
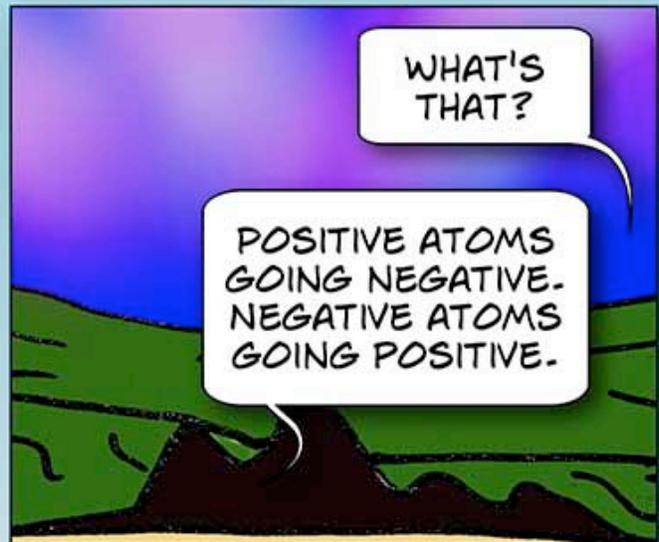
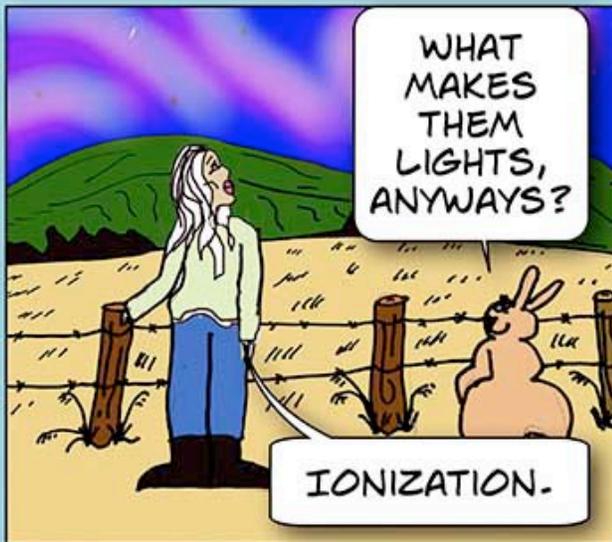
Thank you for your email and remember grandchildren are precious gifts.

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



Poet Maeve  
Open Eyes-ation

Wanda Waterman



# AU SU

# UPDATE

COMMUNITY. RESOURCES . SERVICES

Are you an **Indigenous Learner** interested in **Student Leadership**?



Join us for a **Meet & Greet** **Info Session**

**October 24 @ 5 p.m. MT**

**AU  
SU**  
AWARDS & BURSARIES

Fall  
Awards Cycle

Applications  
**Open**

**October 1-31**

Tanisi! The [Indigenous Circle at AUSU](#) is looking for up to ten Indigenous undergraduate students at AU to join the organization by representing Indigenous learners at AU, AUSU, and the wider student community. The Circle meets on Zoom at least four times a year and members receive a \$60 honorarium for each meeting attended.

### Want to know more?

We're hosting a [Meet & Greet Info Session](#) so you can talk with sitting Indigenous Circle members, learn more about the opportunity, and ask any questions you may have.

**RSVP on Eventbrite**

### Apply now for [Fall Cycle Awards & Bursaries](#) from October 1-31!

AUSU's Awards and Bursaries Program celebrates the success and spirit of AU undergraduates and supports students facing financial hardship. Students currently taking any AU undergraduate course are AUSU members and eligible to apply. There are eight diverse categories to apply to so [check out the complete list](#) on our website. Please email [ausu@ausu.org](mailto:ausu@ausu.org) with any questions or feedback about the AUSU Awards & Bursaries Program. Note that applications will be reviewed in November and the selection process is done by the [AUSU Awards Committee](#).

Provided by

[ausu@ausu.org](mailto:ausu@ausu.org)

**AU  
SU** Athabasca University  
**Students' Union**

Please send us your valuable opinions, feedback, and suggestions. We are committed providing quality content and look forward to hearing from you!

---

---

# CLASSIFIEDS

---

Classifieds are free for AU students!  
Contact [voice@voicemagazine.org](mailto:voice@voicemagazine.org) for more information.

---

---

## THE VOICE

---

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

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

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

---

[www.voicemagazine.org](http://www.voicemagazine.org)

---

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

Contact *The Voice* at [voice@voicemagazine.org](mailto:voice@voicemagazine.org).

To receive a weekly email announcing each issue, subscribe [here](#). *The Voice* does not share its subscriber list.

© 2022 by *The Voice Magazine*

ISSN 2561-3634