



THE VOICE

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Minds We Meet

Interviewing Students Like You

Course Exam

ENGL 460 (The Ecological Imagination)

Four Odd Fitness Gifts

Health for the Hard to Buy For

Plus:

*Sovereignty for Who Exactly?
Getting Positive About Climate
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 Victoria Lang* 4

Articles

Editorial: *Sovereignty for Who Exactly?* 3

Four Odd Fitness and Health Gifts for Christmas 8

Getting Positive About Climate 11

Controlling the Mind: *Getting Serious*..... 18

Columns

Course Exam: *ENGL 460 (The Ecological Imagination)* 6

Music Review: *I Love You, Dwayne* 10

Homemade is Better: *Bruschetta*..... 13

Fly on the Wall: *Invisible Institutions & Educational Elixers*..... 15

Beyond Literary Landscapes: *Economics*..... 17

Dear Barb: *Two in a Bind* 20

News and Events

AU-thentic Events 12

Student Sizzle 19

Scholarship of the Week..... 19

AUSU Update 22

Comics

Chazz Bravado: *The Secret* 21

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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

Sovereignty for Who Exactly?

Karl Low



The Alberta Sovereignty Act, sorry, The Alberta Sovereignty Act Within a United Canada has been put forward. Because a title change means so much.

It's both better and worse than expected. Better because it does not actually say that federal laws or court decisions at any level can be ignored, rather that the government can instruct provincial bodies not to enforce federal restrictions. This has a host of problems, of course, as a lot of criminal legislation, such as many of the laws around financial fraud and insider trading, are federal in nature, not provincial. Not that I'm suggesting anybody in the UCP might have an interest in making it more difficult for the federal government to enforce such laws. Certainly, after all, every elected member there is a paragon of virtue.

Worse, however, because as it's currently written any enactment of it could lead to significant changes in Alberta legislation with no oversight, no hearing, and no real limits on where or how that change could be applied. Which is odd, because for

a bill that's supposed to be protecting Alberta's sovereignty, I can see no reason why Alberta's own laws would need to be changed in anything other than the usual fashion.

No legitimate reason, I should say. There might be plenty of reasons why the UCP would like to change laws without oversight. We saw this when they first tried to change the laws around coal mining on the eastern slopes. Public outcry forced them to back away, but if they hadn't had to make the legislative changes public, people might not have been aware until they started seeing large parts of the environment being hauled away.

Currently, some members of the UCP have suggested that any changes to legislation the bill causes would still have to go through the normal procedure, but the bill itself says nothing of the sort. I mean, it doesn't specifically say they don't have to, but it gives a new procedure for the laws to be amended (that being that the Lt. Governor of Alberta says so based on what they think is 'advisable' to handle whatever reason was put forward to start the process), and no indications that the normal procedure would still apply.

Now the UCP government has come forward and suggested they're willing to take amendments to the bill. But the amendment is simple. Section 4.1 a) is the part that gives the Lt. Governor the power to amend Alberta's laws without oversight. Take that out, and what's left is almost exactly what we have today, with the exception that the Lt. Governor can make the orders rather than a cabinet minister having to take responsibility. Either the UCP have no idea how to handle legislation so can't see how to do that on their own, or they simply don't want to. Or both, I guess. I could see both.

At any rate, we'll see what comes of this in future weeks, in the meantime, check out our latest student interview with a visiting student who intends to pursue her Masters of Counselling at AU, or our latest Course Exam, where we look at AU's latest English course, English 460, or some of our latest advice on unusual Christmas gifts. Plus there's always the latest in events, scholarships, reviews, life advice, ruminations on AU, recipes and more!

Enjoy the read!

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

MINDS WE MEET



The Voice Magazine recently had a chance to chat with Victoria Lang (she/her), “a born and raised Calgarian who loves to spend ... time in the mountain terrain and relaxing inside during a cold day.” Victoria obtained her “BA in Psychology from Saint Francis Xavier University in Nova Scotia and got to enjoy the small-town experience while also seeing everything the east coast has to offer.” She is currently an AU “non-program student acquiring prerequisites for the AU Master of Counselling program with the anticipation of being a Marriage and Family Therapist.”

Victoria let *The Voice Magazine* know how she best studies and provided some personal study tips for students. “I normally study best after a good workout as I find it raises my overall energy levels and increases production. I keep motivated by reading *Psychology Today* and keeping up with the latest research and studies,” she stated.

She also had some advice for new and prospective students. “I would advise them to research the path(s) they are interested in and map out what they want the result to be, this is because some programs require more schooling later, volunteer work, or field work. Other than this, I would encourage them to have fun and make the most of their learning experience!”

When she is not studying, she keeps busy. She stated, “I love to travel and have been all over the world, although visiting my family in California is always the top of the list. When I am not travelling, I like to go to the gym or relax with my guilty pleasure of reality TV.”

Victoria let *The Voice Magazine* know about several of her most memorable vacations. “Over the years I have had a lot of memorable vacations and when asked which one was the best I had to divide them into different categories; one being the food scene and the other being experiences. I would have to say my trip to Egypt, Israel, and Jordan when I was 14 would be the top of the list for experiences. It was a family vacation and our tour guide was able to get us in to meet the Israeli army and participate in some of their styles of training. Food wise, I would have to say India trumped with their exceptional flavors and creativity, whereas East Asia was a close second,” she explained.

Jessica also finds time in her schedule to read. “I would have to say the current book I am reading *Highway of Tears* by Jessica McDiarmid has had the largest impact on my life so far. It is an eyeopener for anyone as it is about the pursuit of justice for missing and murdered Indigenous





women and girls. With respects to current events regarding the racism and indifference Indigenous Peoples face within our society. It motivates me to continue my journey to become a counsellor and help those who have suffered a great deal of trauma.”

When asked who in her life has had the greatest influence on her desire to learn, Victoria chose her mother, stating, “My mom had the greatest influence on my desire to learn as she was unable to attend university therefore, she made sure I received the education necessary to succeed.”

Victoria described online learning as “a great experience!” She continued, “There is a plethora of interesting courses, and the professors are incredibly reliable. Although I did previously graduate from an in-person university, I love the freedom that AU gives me to take my courses anywhere and work at times that are convenient for me.”

Her most memorable course was also the first she took at AU, namely PSYC 315: Psychology and the Mass Media.

“This is because I love psychology and I find media studies interesting, but most of all I had a great tutor who was reliable and enlightening. This in turn made my first experience at AU gratifying,” she explained.

As for communication with her course tutors? “I find that the tutors at AU are personable and understanding that there can sometimes be a learning barrier as it is an online university. Nevertheless, they try their hardest to help students understand the material and are engaging when doing so.”

When asked which famous person, past or present, she would like to have lunch with, and why, she chose Eminem. “Although there is not much depth to this answer, I do enjoy his music and creativity when listening to the writing style. One could argue he has an interesting background and life story. That lunch would entail a variety of my favorite foods such as curries, dim sum, and sushi.”

As for her most valuable lesson learned in life? “My most valuable lesson learnt in life was to live life to the fullest. This was instilled in me from a young age to just enjoy doing the things you love. Therefore, I travel a lot and am working towards an occupation that will be fulfilling and something I enjoy doing. It is cliché but if you do something you love you will never have to work a day in your life.”

And her proudest moment? “The proudest moment in my life would be graduating from Saint Frances Xavier University and being honored into the

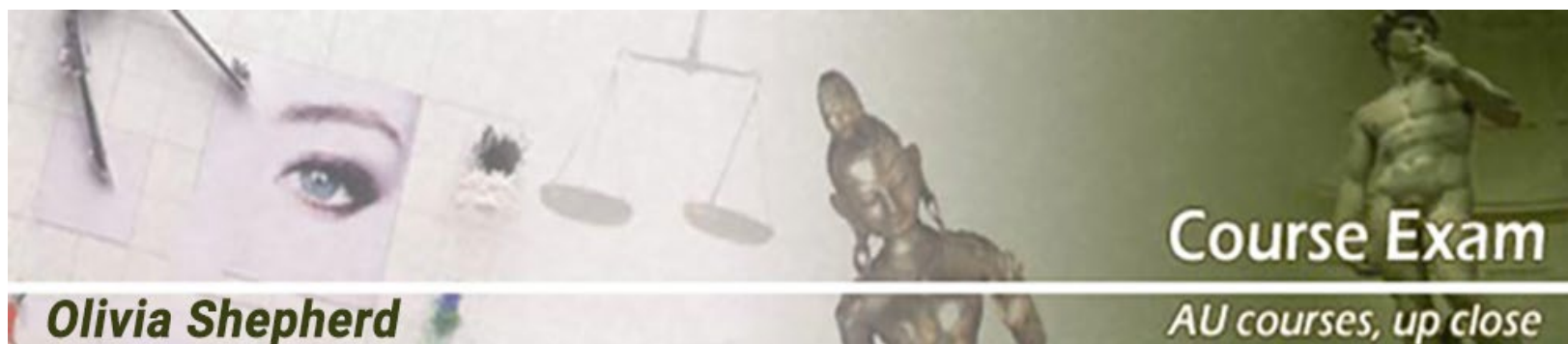


tradition of attaining an X Ring. I was the first member of my family to graduate from a secondary institution.”

As a final thought, Victoria added, “I would just like to end with saying that AU has helped my transition back into academia stress-free and I feel supported by the AU community.” Best of luck Victoria!

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.



Course Exam: ENGL 460 (The Ecological Imagination)

Olivia Shepherd

English 460—Athabasca Universities’ newest course offering in the English department! This course will allow students to investigate the links among literature, culture, and the environment while considering the role of cultural and literary analysis in the face of climate crisis and ecological complexity. ENGL 460 is a three-credit arts or humanities course with a challenge-for-credit option. ENGL 211 and ENGL 212 or equivalent first-year English courses are the prerequisites for this course, and it is recommended that students take at least one intermediate literature course as well.

Meet Dr. Paul Huebener: Course Coordinator and Professor

For this article, *The Voice Magazine* had the opportunity to interview Dr. Paul Huebener. Dr. Huebener has a PhD. from McMaster University, where he studied the politics of time in literature and culture in Canada. His curiosity led him to ponder, “how does time serve as a form of power, and what can literature teach us about it?” He notes that he was lucky to have wonderful doctorate supervisors who encouraged him to stay curious, which has now allowed him to “help students create unique questions they can be excited about.” He is involved in a variety of English courses at AU, including, but not limited to, ENGL 211 (Prose Forms), ENGL 302 (Introduction to Canadian Literature), ENGL 433 (Post-Colonial Literatures), and of course, the newest offering, ENGL 460. Dr. Huebener is also a renowned author, with his latest work, *Nature’s Broken Clocks*, being nominated for several awards, in which it was a finalist for all.

In his spare time, Dr. Huebener has been learning to play the guitar, “slowly,” he says, for about twenty years. He also enjoys the scholarly projects that he undertakes solely for his own curiosity

and enjoyment stating “it’s a privilege to be able to choose how to dedicate ourselves to something we find meaningful.”

Who Should Take This Course, and Why?

Dr. Huebener mentioned in the interview that “we live in frightening times. Despite this, human relationships with the environment are incredibly diverse and contain much cause for enjoyment and wonder.” He continues to say that “much like the environment itself, environmental literature is a diverse and complex realm ... the humanities play a central role in how we understand and relate to the environment.” This realm of study allows students to engage with fascinating works of literature and other cultural texts, and studying environmental literature can “help us face our troubling times with a sense of wisdom and purpose.” Students who care deeply about climate collapse, climate justice, and finding new ways to be hopeful about the future will gain much from ENGL 460, as this course “lets us think carefully about how people imagine the ecological world and our place within in — not just in terms of ecological crisis, but also in terms of wonder and the unexpected.”

Students who enjoy a bit of creativity and a sense of freedom in their work will also benefit greatly from ENGL 460. “Students who want to write traditional analytical essays are free to do so, but they also have the option to present their work in other forms.” Think videos, podcasts, narrated slideshows and more—if this catches your creative eye, you’re in for a treat. “We’ve also looked for ways to reduce the emphasis on grades, so we can prioritize the process of learning in terms of students’ interests ... your experience in the course will involve assessing your own work and deciding how to make projects meaningful to you.”

Course, Assignments, and Exam Details

ENGL 460 will allow students to evaluate the concerns at stake within the environmental humanities; assess the role of literature and imaginative representation in responding to ecological complexity; apply the skills of close reading and secondary research in order to assess the ways in which the assigned texts approach cultural assumptions and concepts associated with the environment; analyze the ways in which relevant literary concepts such as theme, metaphor, irony, form, and genre operate within specific texts; and create thoughtful, articulate, original analyses of the assigned texts and concepts, perhaps surprising themselves and their instructor with new insights.

ENGL 460 is divided into seven units. Unit 1 focuses on Climate and the Imagination through the field of ecocriticism and considers works about literature, the environment, and the imagination. Unit 2 examines Amitav Ghosh’s novel *Gun Island*. Unit 3 is called Encountering the Earth and it examines works of theory, memoir, and poetry about engaging with the environment from personal and societal perspectives. Unit 4 examines Helen Macdonald’s memoir *H is for Hawk*, and Unit 5 examines *The Sasquatch at Home* by Eden Robinson. Unit 6, The Anthropocene and Its Erasures touches on works of theory and poetry about the geological epoch known as the Anthropocene. Lastly, Unit 7 examines Kim Stanley Robinson’s novel, *Aurora*. The readings in this course are “compelling books and other readings for students to examine.”

To receive credit for ENGL 460, students must submit all four assignments, including a brief self-reflection that is part of each of them, and receive a minimum grade of 50% on each assignment. The first assignment is two short analytical essays, weighted at 20%. The second and third assignments can be an analytical essay or alternative-medium assignment, both of which are weighted at 25%. The last assignment is also an analytical essay or alternative-medium assignment, weighted at 30%. There is no final exam for English 460. Dr. Huebener says that as part of your assignment projects “you can go outside and interact with your environment in a new way, you can create social media posts about representations of the environment, or you can

even create a mock final exam for this course and explain how and why you would assign this exam to future students.” The assignments offer creativity and flexibility to take your work in all kinds of different directions so long as students “develop an analytical perspective on literature, culture, and environment.” Dr. Huebener wants students to know that “this course can become whatever you make it, and we’ll be encouraging you to make the most of it.”

Majoring in psychology with a minor in philosophy, Oliva experiences an existential crisis at least once a semester and psychoanalyzes everyone she knows.



Four Odd Fitness and Health Gifts for Christmas

Marie Well



I have four somewhat odd fitness and health gadgets you may want to give a loved one for Christmas. They are the chin-up/dips bar, the Gua Sha knife, the neck weight, and the respiratory muscle builder. I use two already. I'm ordering the chin-up device at the end of the month, and I want to research further before buying the respiratory muscle strengthener.

First, the chin-up/dips bar.

I've already given up on bodybuilding, as I've heard that the culture has a lot of drug abuse, which can start with steroids and extend even to illegal drugs. So, I'm instead turning my sights on strength and cardio training. So, the next addition to my workouts is a chin-up and dips bar. And wait until you see the benefits!

I'm getting this specific device for Christmas. A Stampede booth hosted a challenge to see who could hang from a bar for two minutes. And I know only one person who can hang from a bar for one minute and 45 seconds—and he's super fit. So, my goal is to hang for fifteen seconds at first and, within two months, for one minute and 30 seconds.

I would like you to consider the benefits of hanging from a bar, especially if you suffer back or shoulder pain:

It stretches the spine. If you have spinal pain, then know that hanging from a bar decompresses the spine. I have a beloved friend who is going for back surgery. I wish she would first speak with a sports doctor to assess the value of bar hanging as an alternative therapy. And I'm all for natural cures. I would never see a chiropractor, especially after hearing stories of patients ending up with paralysis from chiropractic treatments. But bar hanging seems like an ideal solution.

It stretches and strengthens the shoulders. If you have shoulder pain, consider talking to your doctor about hanging from a bar to correct your concern. And if you want strong shoulders, called "deltoids," then bar hanging is an option. Specifically, shoulder strength will help you with any overhead or forward pushing.

It also strengthens the grip. Grip strength is an indicator of longevity. For example, I recently failed to twist the lid off my organic sauerkraut jars. Thanks to the bar hang, I'll be able to pop those lids off like bottle caps in a few months.

Second, the neck device:

You want this device if your gangbusters on working out already. I put this ten-pound kettlebell on the chain and put the helmet on my head. I then did thirty yeses—just nodding yes, then paused, and repeated for three sets. On the third set, my neck became painful, and I had to take a three-week holiday from neck exercises. The neck device does, however, make you look like a cool cyborg if that's a goal in the gym. But I'd only recommend this gift to someone who already has a thick neck and spends a lot of time in the gym. I might get a five-pound kettlebell and try again. I'd recommend starting with no weights and building up slowly.

Third, the respiratory device.

Here is an even better model if you want to exercise simultaneously. I have yet to try this, but I'm tempted. It strengthens the breathing muscles in your body. As a result, it's beneficial for asthma sufferers and for athletes. For example, it strengthens athletes' ability to breathe during high-intensity aerobics. It works because you breathe through a device restricting the oxygen flow into your lungs, so you must breathe harder, strengthening your respiratory muscles. At least, that's how I understand it. But would meditation or high-intensity cardio generate a similar benefit?



Fourth, the Gua Sha knife.

I own one of these and receive many neck-and-back Gua Shas. It's basically like spreading butter on your body with a knife. It causes your flesh to grow pink or even red. It looks scary but feels like a massage. I bought my friend a Gua Sha knife for Christmas because she has lupus, and the Gua Sha knife benefits the disease. That's because it causes new, healthy muscle tissue to grow. (It's also excellent for arthritic joints.) But it's essential to take a course on Gua Sha before trying it out. There are some excellent Gua Sha courses on Udemy. Physiotherapists do Gua Sha, but they call them Graston knives. And these physiotherapists can charge around \$60 for fifteen minutes of treatment.

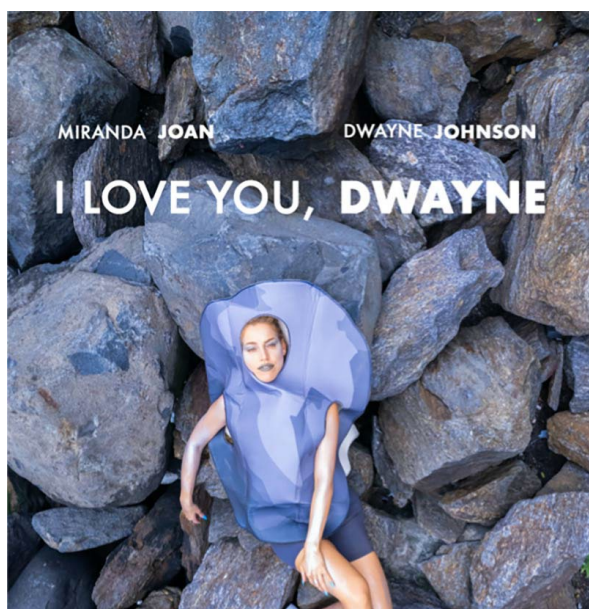
If I had the privilege to buy you a Christmas gift, which of the above would you most want if any? A simple yoga or even a chair yoga class (for those with primarily upper body mobility) might instead appeal to you. No matter what you choose, exercising gets more exciting as you grow fitter. And the health benefits you'll reap will astonish you.

With the new year approaching, it's time to consider taking your body to peak physical fitness. After all, you've got unlimited potential. And here is an opportunity to realize more of what makes you eternally powerful. And as a final secret, exercise in any form can help you triumph over life's darkest moments.



Music Review—I Love You, Dwayne

Jessica Young



Artist: Miranda Joan

Single: I Love You, Dwayne

Songwriter and musician Miranda Joan has released her latest single, “I Love You, Dwayne.” The song is available any you get your music. Miranda has also released a music video for the single, available on [YouTube](#).

Miranda was born in Montreal, raised in Vancouver, and presently lives in New York City. “I Love You, Dwayne” follows the release of her last single, “Overstimulated.” Although Miranda has only released these two songs (at least through her current label) she has lots of musical content on her TikTok. According to Miranda, “I Love You, Dwayne” showcases the playful and comedic side of her personality, as well as her sultry vocals. The song also features Jake Sherman

on piano, Randy Runyon on guitar, and Chris Ott, Jon Lampley, and Dan White on horns.

Of the track, Miranda says, “This is my love song to Dwayne, but it also is a nod to my childhood. The fact that I knew about Dwayne Johnson at all was largely due to the male influences in my life. I remember sitting through pay-per-view matches when I was young, sandwiched between my brother and his friends, and wanting so badly to hang out with the big kids. During lockdown, I fell down the Dwayne rabbit-hole because of my Dad’s recommendation to watch Hobbs and Shaw. I now know more about Dwayne’s life than I ever would’ve imagined; every line of my song is a reference to his life and career. I may not have started writing I Love You, Dwayne as a super-fan, but I can certainly say I ended up as one. The answer to your next question is yes, I do love Dwayne.”

“I Love You, Dwayne” clocks in at two minutes and thirty-two seconds and sounds like a mix of jazz and early 2000’s R&B. If you couldn’t guess from the title, the song is a tribute to Dwayne “The Rock” Johnson—WWE wrestler turned actor. Obviously, this song is meant to be silly, but with lyrics like, “So won’t you wrestle with me, Jabroni/Fighting for the law law/Like Hobbs and shaw shaw/So won’t you wrestle with me, Jumanji,” I’m left feeling more than a little uncomfortable. Furthermore, the lyrics aren’t so much comedy as they are simply referencing movies The Rock has been in.

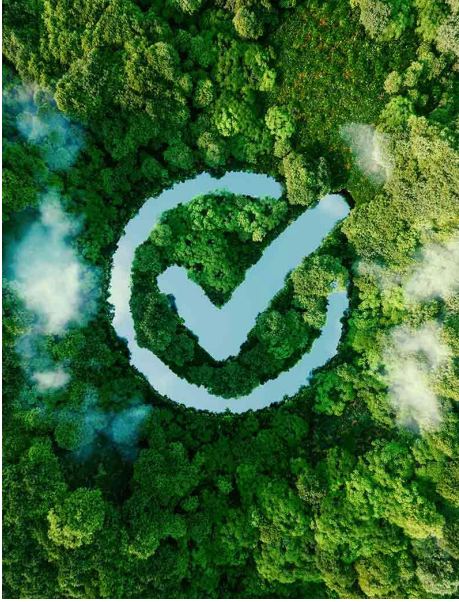
The music video features Miranda dressed in The Rock’s iconic black turtleneck/ gold chain/fanny-pack outfit, while she takes a life size, cardboard cut-out of Dwayne out on the town— “feeding” him drinks and cuddling up to the cut-out. This is cut with scenes of Miranda in a Moana-inspired outfit, as well as dressed as a literal rock, sitting among a pile of boulders. She finishes the video with The Rock’s signature eyebrow raise from his wrestling days. Honestly, it felt gimmicky and like Miranda was trying too hard to be funny.

Overall, I wasn’t a fan of “I Love You, Dwayne.”

That being said, Miranda does have a beautiful voice, and I would love to hear some of her non-comedic songs. You can check out Miranda Joan on [TikTok](#).

Getting Positive About Climate

Alek Golijanin



There are many reasons to get positive about climate change. The world's biggest polluters are changing their ways. The ozone layer is slowly repairing itself. Electric vehicles are slowly becoming the norm. Technology is being leveraged to clean up the oceans. Single-use plastics are in the process of being phased out in first-world countries. Most importantly, we have survived the 12-year doomsday window where climate change was supposed to destroy our planet. So, the next natural question becomes "how should we talk about climate change if we are not going to create a 'sense of urgency'?" The answer to that question is simple science and economics.

An introduction to greenhouse gasses

A greenhouse gas is a gas that is really good at absorbing, rather than reflecting or being unaffected by, energy, particularly longer wavelength light energy, with the end result being a release of heat. Most of the talk around greenhouse gasses centers around the Earth's atmosphere, and the main greenhouse gasses are water vapor, carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, and ozone. The Earth's atmosphere already has the ideal amounts of greenhouse gases required to sustain life on Earth, keeping us warm enough to not be Mars, but not so warm that we turn into Venus. But man-induced greenhouse gasses are a danger to that balance that sustains much of Earth's life, including us. The biggest sources of greenhouse gasses tend to be coal mining, coal plants, oil production, land transport, air transport, sea transport, industrial processes, industrial agriculture, fertilization, landfills, and the thawing permafrost. Out of all of these sources, the one we have most control over is the use of fossil fuels.

The accumulation of man-induced pollution that is in the atmosphere traps a lot of heat energy that then contributes to the heating up of the atmosphere and the entire earth. Although there is no definitive science that confirms that climate change causes any particular storms, the science does say that the warming of the Earth's atmosphere can lead to greater intensity and frequency.

One example of how a heated atmosphere can lead to greater intensity and frequency of extreme weather changes: tons of global warming pollution goes up into the atmosphere and it traps heat energy, and that heat energy has to go somewhere. That same heat can contribute to greater water evaporation off the oceans, while the oceans also absorb most of the heat, and water vapor is a greenhouse gas also. When that water falls as snow or rain, it comes in larger downpours and causes flooding, and winds get stronger. In addition to the higher intensity, sea levels also go up. Therefore, higher temperatures have a compounding effect on animals, plants, people, and ecosystems.

Methane > Carbon

Out of all the greenhouse gasses, Methane might be the most damaging once it is in the atmosphere. It is a myth that Methane is cleaner than coal because when you burn gas, you release only half the carbon dioxide as compared to coal and two thirds that of oil. However, molecule per molecule, one molecule of methane is much more dangerous because it can trap heat 80 times more than each molecule of carbon, and it is responsible for one half of all the global warming on the planet.

One solution that has been proposed is the Methane Pledge, an international pledge that is focused on reducing methane emissions by at least 30% by 2030 to keep the 1.5-degree Celsius

temperature limit within reach. What makes the Methane Pledge so promising is that it already appears to be working. Ford, GM, and Volvo have committed to green steel. Lafarge has committed to green cement, and it is being bought because it's better. The airline and shipping industries are committed to sustainable fuel, and one example is Maersk and their commitment for their next 8 ships to be carbon free. In addition to all of this, wind, solar and other renewable energy sources are becoming cheaper than the dirty sources of fuel that most of the world still runs on.

The biggest polluters are trying to change

Every country would like to become cleaner and to develop intelligently, but the biggest barrier is that access to electricity is not a reality for many people. Developing countries require financial assistance to transition toward a green economy, and this is important because a majority of the increasing emissions are coming from developing countries. So, naturally, people will revert to using gas or cutting down trees if they do not have access to consistent alternatives to dirty energy. To put it in perspective, there are more people in India living without any electricity at all than there are people living in the United States.

China is responsible for 30% of greenhouse gas emissions. That's twice as much as the US (15%) and the European Union (14%) and more than four times as much as India (7%). The interesting thing about China is that they are still building more coal plants than the rest of the world put together, but they are also building and installing solar and wind, more high-speed transmission lines, and smart trains and smart buildings, having chosen 2060 as their timeline to curb greenhouse gas emissions. Additionally, the pollution created in their industrial zones, which also happen to be very close to residential areas, has started to impact the health and wellness of children and adults, and it has resulted in designated health centers popping up in those areas. It is fair to say that China would benefit from setting more ambitious goals when it comes to curbing greenhouse gas emissions.

Talking about climate change

When it comes to talking climate change, it should come as no surprise that individuals that try to minimize the effects of climate change never truly

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

Library Chat

Tues, Dec 6, 10:30 am to 2:30 pm MST
Online, Hosted by AU Library
www.athabascau.ca/library/index.html
No pre-registration needed; access through chat box on home page

Library Chat

Wed, Dec 7, 10:30 am to 2:30 pm MST
Online, Hosted by AU Library
www.athabascau.ca/library/index.html
No pre-registration needed; access through chat box on home page

CIDER Sessions: The Interconnectivity of Heutagogy and Education 4.0 in Higher Online Education

Wed, Dec 7, 11:00 am to 12:00 pm MST
Online via MS Teams, Hosted by AU and IRRODL
www.cideresearch.ca/session/kim-2022
No pre-registration needed; access presentation through above link

Sweater Weather get-together (Edmonton)

Wed, Dec 7, 5:00 to 7:00 pm MST
CRAFT Beer Market, 10013 101A Avenue, Edmonton AB
In person, Hosted by AU Alumni Engagement Office
news.athabascau.ca/events/sweater-weather-get-together-edmonton/
Register through above link

MBA for Executives Webinar

Thur, Dec 8, 10:00 to 11:00 am MST
Online, Hosted by AU Faculty of Business
news.athabascau.ca/events/mba-for-executives-webinar-20221208/
RSVP through above link

Library Chat

Thur, Dec 8, 10:30 am to 2:30 pm MST
Online, Hosted by AU Library
www.athabascau.ca/library/index.html
No pre-registration needed; access through chat box on home page

AUSUnights: Holiday Edition

Thur, Dec 8, 5:00 to 6:00 pm MST
Online via Zoom, Hosted by AUSU
www.ausu.org/event/ausunights-holiday-edition/
RSVP through above link

All events are free unless otherwise noted.

explore the actual costs of fossil fuels. One example of that was on Joe Rogan's podcast, where Joe Rogan interviewed Bjorn Lomborg, a statistician who attempted to talk about climate change.

At one point in the interview, Lomborg said “.. *if we actually look at the data, we cannot tell right now, so that is the conclusion from the.. uh.. from the government agencies of the US as well, we cannot still tell that there is a fingerprint on climate change on hurricanes because there is such a natural variability that you cannot say this increase or this decrease is because of global warming.*” Although Lomborg may be a talented statistician, he did not seem to be knowledgeable on the science behind greenhouse gasses, like how the heating of land and oceans creates the perfect conditions for storms and droughts to occur, and that the people that are most affected by climate change are those living in the developing world. Any discussions that focus on climate change cannot overlook the global ramifications of climate change, and this is what happened with Bjorn Lomborg. Instead, Lomborg would do well for himself if he reviewed how 90% of the heat is absorbed by the ocean and what effect that has had on marine ecosystems, as well as the costs of environmentally induced asthma and other illnesses.

Declaring national emergencies on climate

Countries are declaring national emergencies on climate, but what effect are these declarations having? During one of Al Gore's lectures on climate change, he describes the declaration of national emergencies as a way to give the impression that more is being done. Gore acknowledges that there may be a few advantages that might come from the declaration of climate emergencies, but many governments that have made this declaration will still continue to engage in counterproductive measures. To highlight this point, Gore uses a global statistic that tells us how from 2020 to 2021, government subsidies of fossil fuels doubled worldwide, and that can be seen as taxpayers subsidizing the destruction of human civilization.

What much of the world needs is adaption supports, because to transition toward a greener economy, they require access to capital. So, if we want to get results on climate, changing structural problems around greenhouse gasses, we need to recognize that institutional power can trump movement power every time. This is not a bilateral issue, it is a universal issue, and it is a global threat that needs every nation to be onboard.

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

Homemade is Better Bruschetta

Chef Corey



With the Christmas and holiday season getting into full swing, you might find yourselves invited to or hosting a party. If it's a potluck, I have you covered! Bruschetta is usually a safe bet at some of these parties. It is light and easy to make, and most people enjoy it. It might even surprise you to know that it can be vegan. I wouldn't try to live off it, but I think it is tasty enough that you might not be able to make enough.

It might also surprise you that bruschetta in Italy refers to the bread, not the topping. In North America, we've grown accustomed to the topping being the bruschetta and the toast being the vehicle used to deliver it to our palate. In Italy, it is grilled bread, rubbed with garlic, and topped with olive oil. Some think that the Romans invented the dish. They would soak stale,

leftover bread in the first pressed olive oil to use it up. I find that ingenious; they wanted to make their food go a little further, so someone used the first pressed olive oil and ate it. It still amazes me when I find an accidental dish, or someone decides to try something brand new. A plethora of food was discovered due to someone's adventurous spirit.

As I mentioned, in North America, we know bruschetta as the toppings, not the bread. While we still toast the bread and brush olive oil over it, it is only used to get the toppings into our mouths. Today, carbs are seen as optional—even the enemy—to some. Those with gluten intolerances or celiac disease avoid wheat bread altogether, and it's rare to find a product that has the flavour and taste of wheat bread.



The topping we are used to typically consist of tomato, onion, garlic, herbs, and cheese. This recipe contains those most found when we think of bruschetta. The key to this dish is the size of your ingredients. You must take your time to cut everything into smaller-sized pieces. Ideally, each square would be 5mm by 5mm. Granted, that is very small, so just do your best. The salad needs to be cut small enough that it is considered bite-sized, and you can get all of it on a toasted piece of French loaf. You'll also want to cut your bread on a diagonal and keep them a thinner size, I'd say no thicker than a slice of bread. Rub a few garlic cloves on each piece of bread, then drizzle and brush them with olive oil. Bake at 400F in your oven for a few minutes to give them that toasted flavour and you're on the right track. When you have finished making your salad, you'll also want to give it some time to rest. This allows the flavours to blend and complement each other—a couple of hours at the very least, but no more than twelve. Too long and it gets soggy and the tomatoes break down, leaving more of a mush than a salad. Preparation early is essential, but too early is bad.

Let's get to and from our parties safely this year, and I hope you can enjoy some of the great lights and festivities that December often brings. When you eventually need a quick dish for a party, follow my recipe below and enjoy.

Bruschetta

Ingredients:

1 baguette loaf - 1/4" thick
 1/4 cup olive oil - for brushing
 8 Roma tomatoes- diced
 2 tbsp dried basil (fresh is great too)
 1/4 cup parmigiana cheese (grated)
 3 garlic cloves - minced
 1 tbsp balsamic vinegar
 2 tsp olive oil
 Salt & pepper

Directions:

- 1) Make your salad topping first, so it has time to blend. Mix the tomatoes, basil, cheese, garlic, vinegar, and two teaspoons of olive oil. Taste it before adding salt and pepper, then add salt until you are satisfied with the taste. You want to add at least ¼ tsp of salt. Let the salad rest in the refrigerator for three hours minimum.
- 2) Preheat your oven to 400F.



- 3) Use one or two cloves of garlic, bottoms cut off, and rub each piece of bread.
- 4) Brush on the olive oil to coat one side of the bread, and toast until the bread starts to brown. You will need to watch it but start at five minutes.
- 5) Once the bread is toasted, allow it to cool for ten minutes before adding the topping.
- 6) Taste the topping again once it's done resting. If it needs more salt, add some; otherwise, buon appetito!

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.

Fly on the Wall

Invisible Institutions and Educational Elixirs

Jason Sullivan



Baggage is a term implying years of accumulated dross, emotional and economic, the sort of thing therapists dream of as the purpose of their vocation. We carry with us our past and it colours our present and future, like it or not. Many key experiences are induced through participation in cultural institutions. Even the most mundane or maudlin of activities incite a riot of thoughts and feelings as shared experiences. For as it's in the nature of the mind to ruminate, so is it in the nature of our selves for society to take root. Athabasca lets us learn in a way that keeps us *in situ* in our social realms such that a unique additive enters our mental realm; it's almost like taking a secret potion to experience our world anew, one that lets us overcome past

predispositions about school.

Institutions like schools are not all that give our life its feel and form; invisible institutions like marriage and our family also form us. And where there are institutions there are rituals, some in the most unlikely of places. Finding myself at a memorial service for a 60's era musician member of the erstwhile Columbia Records band *Perth County Conspiracy*, a slice of baby boomer life was on offer (online). The community centre was in an area marked as the Adams Lake Indian Band and, in the larger picture, at a crossroads between BC's counter-culture vacation Shuswap and the more cowpoke-esque region I call *Kamloopsland*. The building lacked running water, but electricity allowed for plenty of music. Being on grid but down gravel roads that became dirt lanes and then almost disappeared in bracken and forest, one would be forgiven for imagining that this would be no normal funeral experience. There were slide shows, poetry readings, dramatic re-enactments, musical performances, and plenty of open-mic anecdotes. About normal. Being there supporting my spouse, I didn't fail to see if I could glean some commentary on educational and life experiences from a prior generation.

For the past century, rural folk like my maternal great grandparents notwithstanding, schooling *has* been a part of every life experience; it's an institution with a common bond. As I expressed my condolences and listened to a stew of folks born in those glorious post-war years of 1945-1960, one respondent in particular was keen to wax poetic on his time as a university math major. Lest anyone imagine hippiedom as merely a land of star-gazing and interpretive dancing, this fellow gleefully recounted how at Waterloo university he'd peeved a math professor by finishing first in the class. Hippies were supposed to be stoner slackers, went the stereotype. In those days, as today, some profs and/or schools will publicly list marks on a wall anonymously according to

student ID number. This was true too at Waterloo but for the student in question he was pleased that the professor had the temerity to give the star pupil's name in front of the class. I could see the pride reflect in this elderly fellow's eyes as the bonfire's light tickled and wavered up toward the autumn stars.

A top mark in math is no mean feat in *any* century, and one trick this man claimed was that at the time he actually micro-dosed LSD each morning. Later, he moved on from such a dalliance, but in those days it was part of his routine. If there's one thing true about educational institutions, it's that we all have our extra additives that individualize our educational processes. These, be they coffee or music or chocolate covered peanuts, become our private institution. The nature of a psychoactive substance is that it need not even *be* a physical substance; ideas can affect the mind deeply and powerfully. As counter-culture theorist Timothy Leary intoned that a drug "frees the nervous system from its ordinary patterns and structures" (online). However, instead of psychotropic substances, AU embodies a built in mind trip as we import academic realms into our everyday life. We get to imbibe education such that we see our life differently and perhaps grow a new sense of self. In any case, for education to work, we have to have a way of making it personal and meaningful. Schooling is like life that way.

AU is unique in that we can study and even write essays wherever we feel comfortable. Like hermit crabs, we carry our institution with us. Friends' birthday party getting dull? Skip the institutional formalities and do some editing in a quiet cubby hole! When I used to hang out at UBC Vancouver there'd be earnest students typing on laptops not only in coffee-shops, but under shady trees, at bus stops, and even in back alleys. The alleys were meticulously cleaned at that campus, by the way. As institutional denizens of an invisible college; AU being literally digital, we get to pick our classroom setting too. But we still have to make the process work for us. Physical institutions are only part of the picture, as with emotional baggage, institutions become ingrained in our psyches. In this sense modernity has liberated rituals from cathedrals and holy places. Yet I couldn't help but notice that, just as a quiet organized office room is key to success at AU, the church-like feel of this tiny community centre made the memorial feel about as normal as any other. Unique it was too, with its water cistern tub hooked up to one wall with a garden hose so that while handwashing wasn't an option, dish-doing certainly was. Besides, what really creates the bonds of institutional life are the human relations.

Marx in his day noted that work itself is a social act, a labour of interaction between creative thinking beings. Just as educational institutions depend on human participation, every other cultural act requires active interaction and caring. The memorial service I attended reminded me of this; in core conception it was like any other memorial and in that sense each generation is alike. I saw almost no cell phones with their telltale blue glow, yet, as the sunlight faded, the feelings and thoughts and traditions were familiar. As was the mix of joy and sorrow so unique to a group of people who say goodbye to a friend and colleague. When key social moments occur it's the abundance of affinity through fellowship that makes them feel real. In this sense, AU provides us with gateways to new social opportunities as we enter the rarified air of academic discourse and participate in the cultural institution of organized education.

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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

Economics

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 underscores and outlines various literary genres, authors, and recent reads and serves 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, we focus on major authors in the discipline of Economics. Economics can be defined as a “social science that seeks to analyze and describe the production,

distribution, and consumption of wealth.” In particular, “[t]he study of individual decisions is called microeconomics. The study of the economy as a whole is called macroeconomics.”

Economics can be divided into various subspecialties including Applied Economics, Development Economics, Environmental Economics, International Economics, and Labour Economics, among others.

Examples of notable Economics authors include Adam Smith, Karl Polyani, John Maynard Keynes, Amartya Sen, and Karl Marx.

What

Some examples of Economic texts include *The Wealth of Nations* by Adam Smith, *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time* by Karl Polyani, *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money* by John Maynard Keynes, *Development as Freedom* by Amartya Sen, and *Capital: Critique of Political Economy* by Karl Marx.

Where

These texts take place in the United Kingdom, the United States, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, India, and Germany.

When

These works were written in the 17,18,19, and 20-centuries.

Why

Economics texts may appeal to AU students who would like to understand our world. In particular, Economics is a way to “understand the news, make financial decisions, shape public policy, and see the world in a new way.”

How

AU’s wide range of diverse courses make it easy to study this topic in depth. Courses related to Economics 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!)

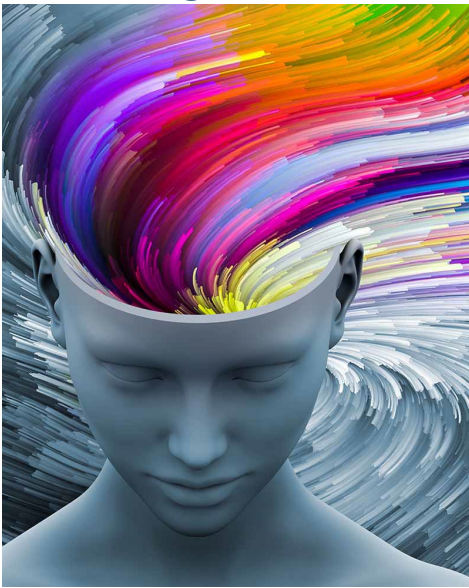
AU students interested in learning more about this topic may enroll in ECON 401: The Changing Global Economy, a senior-level, three-credit course, which “focuses on the economic aspects of globalization but recognizes that political, social, and cultural perspectives are also important.” (Prerequisites include ECON 247: Microeconomics or ECON 248: Macroeconomics – or any introductory Economics course.)

Students may also be interested in ECON 300: Financial Economics, a senior-level, three-credit course, which “introduces basic principles of finance.” (Please note that this course requires ACCT 250: Accounting for Managers or ACCT 253: Introductory Financial Accounting, as well as MGSC 301: Statistics for Business and Economics I or MATH 215: Introduction to Statistics. Students can also obtain professor approval.) Happy reading!

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

Controlling the Mind: Getting Serious!

Marie Well



I am training to be certified as a Marriage Foundation Counselor. Although the psychological community does not accredit The Marriage Foundation, I think the teachings are phenomenal. It's teaching me to control my mind. And controlling the mind should be a constant effort. That is if the objective is to find joy and love, no matter outer circumstances.

I'm trying to fully grasp what it means to control my mind so that I'm continuously joyful. For example, just last night, I had nagging thoughts that I wasn't fully grasping. They were like murmurs of pointless worries trying to lull me to sleep. (Many thoughts are mere distractions.) So, instead of engaging them, I thought of a friendly bird I spoke to earlier in the day. The bird squeaked with soft chirps as I said hello. Immediately upon thinking this, my mood brightened. That happy state was a vast improvement. So, my goal is to choose happiness throughout the day. And if a negative thought needs attention, I'll reframe

it immediately to a positive one.

But what thoughts should I dwell on? And how exactly should I reframe negative thoughts so that they are positive? I'm not entirely sure, but if a thought brings joy or love, it's the best thought. After all, joy is our birthright they teach me. However, they'll only advise me on how to control my mind. In other words, they offer a method that I can't disclose. But it's up to me to choose what I dwell on. So, I'm partly on my own, operationalizing what thoughts to choose.

I decided to come up with a list of positive or constructive thoughts to entertain throughout the day, particularly in replacement of worries or concerns. And then, I'll rank these positive thoughts in order of priority. For instance, I'll think of bringing joy to my partner and loved ones. I'll playfully muse over positive alternatives to mistakes I made during the day. I'll dwell on how I can give more results to my employers. I'll dream of fulfilling all my goals, however impossible they seem. Finally, I'll think warmly about the beauty within everyone, especially you. I'll smile at everyone and grow the heart's feeling of love daily, even during the heartaches.

And if a thought is genuinely negative yet pressing, I'll reframe it to the ideal positive. That's where I'll flip any negativity to pure love. And the more we love, the easier it is to love everyone. After all, every being is essentially lovable.

My parents are nearing the end of their lives. I'll take inspiration from the founder of The Marriage Foundation, Paul Friedman, when my parents depart. When his son committed suicide, Paul was overwhelmingly frazzled, but he maintained his happiness. When the dark night of the soul hits me, as it does for almost everyone, often multiple times, the most significant challenge will be maintaining happiness. I take heart that it is achievable. Will I achieve it? Will you achieve it? Yes! The mind is ours to control. Control the mind, and we master our world!

Scholarship of the Week

Digging up scholarship treasure for AU students.

Scholarship name: The Dalton Camp Award 2023

Sponsored by: FRIENDS

Deadline: January 6, 2023, 8:00 pm EST

Potential payout: up to \$10,000

Eligibility restriction: Applicants must be Canadian citizens or permanent residents of Canada. To be considered for the secondary student prize, applicants must be enrolled full-time at a recognized post-secondary institution.

What's required: An online application form with contact info, a 50-word bio, along with a maximum 2000-word essay on the link between media and democracy.

Tips: Read the [Rules and Regulations](#) carefully.

Where to get info: act.friends.ca/page/90789/action/1



Student Sizzle — AU's Hot Social Media Topics

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

AthaU Facebook Group

App invasion. A student has their computer taken over after downloading the app supposedly required to access new student email accounts; turns out it was a big whoops on AU's part because the app was never intended to be associated with student accounts. AU reps later report the app requirement has been removed.

Discord

Shaking all over. Students trade impressions of the November 29 earthquake that shook areas of northern Alberta.

Twitter

@AthabascaU tweets: "Announcement: effective Dec. 1, free confidential and professional mental health and wellness support for #AthabascaU students is now offered through Carepath by Bayshore You can find the Carepath app in the App Store and on Google Play t.co/fodkcGphbe."

Youtube

Missed AU Writer in Residence Myrna Kostash's talk Nov 24? Check out the video, "Writing About Ukraine" with author Myrna Kostash, posted by the St Albert Public Library.





Dear
Barb

Barbara Godin

Two in a Bind

Dear Barb:

I work in an office with five other girls. I get along well with all of my coworkers except one. Tara and I have been working together for 4 years and it has always been a bit of a struggle for us to get along. Tara is domineering and pushy and seems to want to be in the spotlight. She is always trying to overshadow me and my work, but she doesn't do this with the other girls. I get along great with my boss and I wonder if Tara is jealous of our relationship. She always tries to point out areas where I may have been able to do things more efficiently, or possibly missed something I shouldn't have. My boss attempts to remain neutral, which she does for the most part. A couple of times I asked Tara why she would feel a need to point out little errors I may have made, and she seemed to brush me off and say I was overreacting. I don't think I am overreacting, but her behaviour is beginning to wear on me, almost to the point where I am considering leaving my job. What is your advice, is there a possible way to resolve this issue or would I be better off going somewhere else?

Thanks, Lori.

Hi Lori:

Your situation is not uncommon. We spend so much time with coworkers that there is no way to completely avoid conflict. Because we work in close quarters, there is no way to

really avoid contact either. Also, since it is a work setting, we need to be careful with the words we use to handle this conflict. We have to remove our ego and take the time to listen to the other person. Conflict in the workplace needs to be managed professionally and there are effective ways this can be accomplished. Unresolved conflicts in the workplace will follow you home and impact your family life. You and Tara must address this issue before it escalates. It may turn out it was simply a misunderstanding. Suggest a time and place where you and Tara can sit down and discuss the issue face-to-face. Speaking face-to-face is much more effective than through emails or texting. Facial expressions relay more than can be expressed in a typed message. Often simply taking the time to meet with someone face-to-face will dissipate the situation. Remind each other of the fact that this is a workplace and you both want it to be as stress-free as possible.

Plus, the conflict between you and Tara will affect your workers, thus making for a tension-filled atmosphere. By keeping an open mind and trying to see the other person's point of view, you can work toward a resolution, maybe not 100%, but into a workable solution. The only exception would be if you are being treated poorly because of your race, sexuality, or religion, then you need to address your concerns with the Human Resources department.

I hope this information has been helpful to you Lori.

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 Secret**Wanda Waterman****CHAZZ BRAVADO, MALE FEMINIST: THE SECRET**

HAVE YOU NOTICED
HOW
MY BUDDY DON
EMANATES
A MYSTERIOUS
MAGNETISM
THAT DRAWS IN
GUYS LIKE ME
AND WINS
OUR FAWNING
ALLEGIANCE?
WELL I KNOW
HIS SECRET!



IT'S BECAUSE
HE SURROUNDS
HIMSELF
WITH GORGEOUS,
HEAVILY
PROCESSED
CHICKY-POOS.



HECK, EVEN A 2010
DODGE CALIBER
IS A MUST-HAVE
WHEN IT'S GOT
A SILICON-PUMPED,
BIKINI-CLAD BABE
STRETCHED ACROSS
THE HOOD!



I'VE NOTICED THAT
DONNY'S
RATINGS ARE
STARTING TO FALL,
BUT THAT'S ONLY
BECAUSE
THE HOTTIES ARE
LEAVING THE SALES
FLOOR.



BUT NOT
TO WORRY,
DONNY BOY!
ALL YOU NEED
TO DO
IS HIRE
A FEW MORE
LUSCIOUS
CHICKY-POOS!



AND IF YOU'RE
LOOKING FOR
A "HUMAN
RESURCES"
MANAGER,
CHAZZ IS
YOUR MAN!



UPDATE

COMMUNITY. RESOURCES . SERVICES

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.

Want a student leadership role?

The Circle is formed by Indigenous AU undergraduate students. It meets at least four times a year to share and discuss what is going on in AU's Indigenous community. Sitting members also choose a Circle representative to attend AUSU student council meetings and bring the perspective of the Indigenous Circle to the decisions made by the council.



Did we mention you will be compensated for your time and expertise?

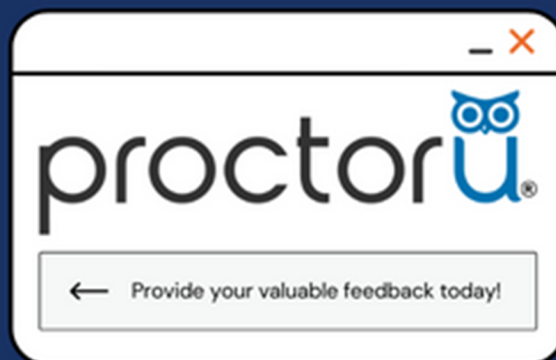
Indigenous Circle members receive a \$60 honorarium for each meeting attended. You meet every 3 months via Zoom and meetings are traditionally 1-hour long.

We want you to apply!

Email indigenous@ausu.org with a *personal statement of interest* describing (1) your connection to the Indigenous community, and (2) why you want to be on the Indigenous Circle at AUSU. A member of the Circle will connect with you to discuss the next steps.



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