



THE VOICE

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Minds We Meet

Interviewing Students Like You

Lessons in Freedom

The Convoy Legacy

Mexican Street Foods

The Positives and Perils



Plus:

*Here's Looking at You
Homemade is Better
and much more!*

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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

Here's Looking at You

Karl Low



In case you weren't already aware, AUSU's by-election is currently in motion. Right now, candidates are coming forward to be placed on the ballot and run for AUSU. What does being an AUSU councillor mean? What does it get you? There's an article currently in the works to help answer those questions, but among the things it means is that you get to have a voice at the table. A table that recently decided to forego a payment from the Student Price Card organization and instead provide that payment directly to you in the form of a cheaper card. These cards can get you discounts at a number of merchants all across Canada, and even a few internationally.

Being on AUSU Council will also get you a front seat to all the goings on when things happen like the recent firing of former President Scott. Of course, given how the Board decided to avoid informing the students until it was a fait accompli, sometimes that doesn't mean a lot, but it will also mean you get to be in the discussions about the aftermath. You've got until February 26 to submit your self-

nomination, but those days can sneak by quickly, so don't hesitate.

In the meantime, however, I'm happy to announce that The Voice Magazine 2023 Survey is now up. One of the ways to make sure that The Voice Magazine stays relevant to students is to simply ask them what they need. So we've put together a short little survey about how the Voice is now and what you think it could do in the future to become even better for you.

And even if you think we're doing just fine, well, we'd like to hear that as well. So to sweeten the pot, we've got five \$100 Amazon Gift cards we're giving away to random respondents, as well as five Proctor U Exam Codes. All you need to do is go to our survey, answer just under 20 questions, and include your name and email address. The survey closes in 10 days, that's February 27, 2023, and we'll do a random drawing from all the respondents shortly after that.

You don't even need to be a current student to enter this one, because we know that there are Voice Magazine readers from all over, including graduate students, some members of the AU staff, and more, so we thought it only fair if the prizes could go to anyone at all!

Once you've done that, come back here and check out the latest magazine, including an interview with a student who's been doing online education since she was in seventh grade, a look at what the COVID-19 pandemic has taught us, and the perils and positives of some of the street food in Mexico from a student who recently travelled there for a holiday.

Also, if you're thinking of going on a diet, be sure to take a look at Homemade is Better this week, where Chef Corey talks about the keto diet, and provides a recipe that sounds good even if you're not dieting.

Of course, we've also got music reviews, advice, news, events, and scholarships. We've also got a consideration of the nature of beauty, and an interesting look at what happened with an experiment in tuition free education in Ontario, with ties to the notion of if the modern post-secondary education is simply working to reinforce the status quo.

So, find your favorite articles, or favorite author, think about what else you'd like to see in the Voice Magazine, and then head over to <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Voice2023> to make sure to get your entry (and your ideas) in for your chance for a nice little bonus, courtesy of The Voice Magazine and AUSU.

And, as always, enjoy the read!

Handwritten signature of Karl Low.

MINDS WE MEET



The Voice Magazine recently had a chance to chat with Kaleigh (she/her), from Calgary, Alberta, a Bachelor of Arts student, majoring in Sociology and a minoring in Anthropology. Kaleigh hopes “to become a social worker and [is] thinking about transferring into the social work program at UofC after two years.” She continued, “I want to open a sanctuary for teenagers in the system to come heal and learn how to adult instead of being thrown into it the moment they’re 18. With an animal shelter on the side.”

On a personal note, Kaleigh, who goes by Kal, is a 19-year old who lives with her friends and family. She continued, “I have a deep passion for music and photography and I deeply enjoy being outside. I was born in Calgary, but I grew up in a small town, about an hour from Edmonton, Alberta. I’ve got two siblings, an older sister, and a younger brother. Yup, I’m the middle kid. I’ve got a big ole dog named Zeus that we call our miniature horse. He is 9 months old and probably almost 100lbs, and not fully

grown yet.”

The Voice Magazine asked Kaleigh how she best studies, and the motivated student had some great processes. “My dreams and goals for the future keep me motivated to keep working. I’ve never been academically gifted but I work my hardest and get the job done by throwing on some music and zoning into what I’m doing. (Even if it does take me 2 hours to convince myself to do it).”

She also some great advice for new students or prospective students. “Don’t give up, there’s a reason you’re here and you chose to come back to school after high school. You’re doing amazing, you’re achieving goals and ask for help everywhere you can because it’s not a bad thing to do.”

When she is not studying, Kaleigh works on building her photography business, or is playing games or watching movies with her partner. She also mentioned that her life has been impacted by a David Goggins book, *Don’t Hurt Me*. She explained, “It challenges me every day to not let my past be an excuse to not achieve my goals, and to not settle just because I’m comfortable. Life isn’t meant to be comfortable.”

She had a unique answer on who in her life has had the greatest influence on her desire to learn. “My desire to learn has always been something influenced by media, by the people around me. My goal in life is to make people smile and with the way the world is some days I feel one more person making people smile doesn’t hurt,” she stated.

Kaleigh is an experienced online learner. “I’ve been online schooling since about 7th grade. It’s hard, I definitely find it difficult to keep to a schedule and not blow off school for more fun events but it has taught me more about myself and how hard I am willing to work to achieve what I want in life,” she stated.

Her most memorable AU course so far has been SOCI 305: Sociology and Crime, finding it “so fascinating learning about all the different interpretations of crime in the eyes of sociology and what has gone on throughout history.” She continued, “The first assignment I got to pick a topic on was psychosis as a cause of crime!”

As for communication with her course tutors? “I am very much so a person who avoids phone calls as much as possible, the communication as of right now is honestly something I prefer. Mostly emails and comments,” she stated.

The Voice Magazine also asked Kaleigh, which famous person, past or present, she would like to have lunch with, and why, and she chose wagu steaks with potatoes with Marilyn Monroe.

Her most valuable lesson learned in life “is that you are never done learning new things, the moment you believe you know all is the moment you stop having the possibility to continue thriving and advancing in life.”

And her proudest moment in life? “The proudest moment in my life might be the fact that I’m 19 years old, moved out of my parents house, paying my own bills, and I still chose to go back to school after high school without anyone having to really push me to do it.”

As a final note, Kaleigh stated, “It has been an interesting journey, I love having the choice of learning what I want to and not having to be confined by the constraints of early education. I’ve never been someone who learns the way schools teach and having the opportunity to learn the way that works for me is quite wonderful.” Best of luck Kaleigh!

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.

Student Sizzle — AU's Hot Social Media Topics

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



AthaU Facebook Group

DegreeWorks drops. A student expresses concern about disappearing course credits on the DegreeWorks table; responses suggest the program has been glitchy lately but it's possible to have corrections made (if the credits don't reappear on their own.)

Discord

Missing the memo. A question about the new Brightspace platform prompts a thread that discusses the gradual migration of AU courses from Moodle to Brightspace.

reddit

Good luck with that. After accidentally enrolling in the wrong course, a student wonders if it's possible to have the course-withdrawal fee waived. Responses so far suggest complete inflexibility on this one.

Twitter

@austudentunion tweets: "Listen to the latest episode of the AUSU Open Mic Podcast and learn about undergraduate student research at AU. <https://bit.ly/3K6fGPY>."



Lessons in Freedom

Barbara Lehtiniemi

The bizarre account of how truckers saved our sorry asses



One year later, I ponder the bizarreness surrounding the Freedom Convoy. By "bizarre" I am not referring to the Freedom Convoy protest itself—by comparison that was the most normal element. Bizarreness describes the conditions that prompted the protest, and the way seemingly normal people were led to believe things and exhibit behaviour that—outside the duress of a protracted pandemic—they would never have considered.

By early 2021—a full year after the pandemic's start, and a full year before the Freedom Convoy arguably hastened its end—people had had enough. "Pandemic fatigue", it was called. The series of measures various government bodies had implemented to slow COVID-19's spread did not seem to be slowing it much, if at all. Businesses were suffering. People were suffering. Education was suffering. It was all pretty bad (except of course for those sectors—manufacturers of PPE, for example, and courier companies—that enjoyed a boon during the pandemic.)

Schools and businesses were closed, then opened, so frequently that the situation was as wryly sinister as a Jack-in-the-box. You knew a lockdown was coming, you just didn't know when. Here in Ontario, restaurants were sometimes ordered shut with so little notice they had to throw out thousands of dollars of food ordered in for the next day's business.

Since the measures governments were trying weren't working well, they did what they naturally do—they did more of them! Measures were implemented so quickly after previous measures it was impossible to assess the impact of any particular plan. Many political leaders had enjoyed a surge in popularity at the beginning of the pandemic—they were so stalwart and reassuring—now they looked like drunkards playing whack-a-mole.

Then, the vaccines began rolling out. Hallelujah! I use that term deliberately, because many people treated the vaccines like a new religion. Everything was just awful, but The Vaccine was going to swoop in like a saviour and make it all better.

Except, it didn't. All the marketing science in the world couldn't make the vaccine live up to its hype. In spring 2021 when most adults were getting their first COVID-19 vaccine, it was already becoming apparent the vaccine did not fully prevent transmission. Oh well, at least it will protect you from getting so sick you have to be hospitalized. But did it? Many health authorities ceased disclosing meaningful statistics to the public by late 2021.

With vaccines rolling out and COVID-19 cases surging alongside hospitalization numbers, people began demanding explanations. Why is the pandemic not over? Why are the schools still closed? We did the "right thing" by getting vaccinated—when do we get our lives back?

Governments at all levels faced harsh criticism. With no tricks left in their bags, some politicians pulled out that old standby: dodge and deflect. Eighteen months into the pandemic, they announced the unvaccinated were to blame.

Well, that's something we can deal with. An enemy we can see. We couldn't fight the virus, but by god we can fight those dirty unvaccinated. Almost overnight, family member turned against family member, friend against friend. Unvaccinated people were "murderers". People transformed their fear of the virus to hate for the unvaccinated. They transferred all their pent-up pandemic anxiety to a target they could reach.

Egged on by our sneering prime minister and his merry media maestros, people began calling anyone who had not been "fully" vaccinated, or even anyone who questioned the efficacy of the vaccines, "anti-vaxxers."

Normally, people who had not lost their wits would understand anti-vaxxers are a very small minority who believe vaccines are designed to harm rather than help. Now that wits had gone out the window, many people seemed ready to believe that anyone not worshipping The Vaccine God—that is, anyone not fully vaccinated or anyone asking questions or expressing concerns about the vaccines—was an anti-vaxx devil.

It seems dubious some 5 million Canadians—roughly one out of every eight people you know—are anti-vaxxers. Approximately 60% of Canadians don't get a flu shot in any given year. Are they anti-vaxxers, too? People have many reasons why they decide to take—or not take—a vaccination. Just because they made a different decision than you doesn't mean they're nutters.

Despite Canada having one of the highest COVID vaccination rates in the world, some politicians decided they'd surf the wave of anti-unvaccinated fervor, and introduce vaccine mandates. In some cases, vaccine "passports" were implemented, denying those not fully vaccinated from certain locations and services.

Bizarrely, many people thought vaccine passports were okay. Actually, they thought they were great! People proudly waved their QR code over their head like they held a winning lottery ticket. Look how wonderful I am! How superior!

Despite knowing the vaccine didn't prevent person-to-person transmission, and despite eighteen months of workplace measures reducing contact between employees, employers were encouraged or ordered to bar the unvaccinated (or those not disclosing their vaccination status) from the workplace.

Did that help? Nope. Now, adding to the accumulated miseries of the pandemic and pandemic "measures", we had people thrown out of employment, permanently in many cases, and front-line staff put in harm's way trying to enforce coercive mandates like vaccine "passports."

When the federal government announced yet another punishing vaccine mandate, this one to prohibit unvaccinated truck drivers (who spend most of their time alone—in their trucks) from crossing the Canadian-U.S. border, they finally poked the wrong bear.

Truckers are not stupid. Truckers have plenty of time to think. Truckers belong to a tribe of thousands. They are organized. And—they have trucks.

Within weeks of the trucker-vaccine announcement, hundreds—perhaps thousands—of truckers were on the move—straight for the seat of federal government in Ottawa. As truck convoys steamed in from all directions, their numbers multiplied. Supporters lined roadsides and bridges to wave their support. This wasn't a "fringe minority" as our petulant prime minister described it—this was the people exercising their voice. Canadian people.

It took weeks for all these trucks to drive across the country to get to Ottawa. They were not invisible. Everybody knew they were coming. Everybody knew why. But, bizarrely, some politicians pretended either they didn't know, or it wasn't their problem.

Ottawa is the sometimes-reluctant host to hundreds of protests every year. The city, and the federal government, know how to handle protests. But for this protest—likely to be the largest one the city had ever seen, both the mayor of Ottawa and the prime minister of Canada decided on similar strategies—they would just ignore it. "Not my problem."

The weekend of the planned Freedom Convoy protest, the prime minister exited himself from Ottawa. The mayor stayed, but tried to downplay the protest as much as he could. On that first weekend, the mayor's biggest beef was parking violations. Within days, the mayor said he'd directed city staff to try to appropriate some of the convoy's donated support funds.

The Ottawa Police, who were later thrown under the truck, as it were, took the protest seriously, and helped mitigate its impact on everyday life in Ottawa as far as was possible.

Often when a protest is mounted against federal government policy, representatives of the government meet with representatives of the protesters to negotiate some manner of resolution. It doesn't mean the protesters' demands are met necessarily, but that they are heard, and the concerns will be given due consideration. The protesters go home.

For the largest protest Ottawa had ever seen, the official plan was to do—absolutely nothing constructive whatsoever.

And so the protesters stayed.

The city of Ottawa had to do something, despite great reluctant to acknowledge the protest at all. In an effort to "starve" the protesters out—deny them access to food supplies, toilets, and waste disposal—restaurants and grocery stores were persuaded to close, and garbage cans removed

AU-thentic Events

Upcoming AU Related Events

Library Chat

Tues, Feb 21, 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, Feb 22, 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

Faculty of Business Undergrad Program Orientation for New Students

Wed, Feb 22, 12:00 to 1:00 pm MST

Online

Hosted by AU Faculty of Business

news.athabascau.ca/events/faculty-of-business-undergraduate-program-orientation-for-new-students-20230222/

RSVP through above link

Library Chat

Thur, Feb 23, 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

Who, me? Cheat?

Fri, Feb 24, 1:30 to 2:30 pm MST

Online via Microsoft Teams

Hosted by AU's Write Site

news.athabascau.ca/events/who-me-cheat/

Register through above link

All events are free unless otherwise noted.

from downtown streets. All those businesses, who had lost so much earlier in the pandemic and could have benefitted from the influx of people, had to lose even more.

The truckers did not starve. They, and their supporters, trucked food in from all over the province. They brought in portable toilets. They collected their own garbage. How dare they!

The protesters, for the most part, were well behaved. On the second weekend, convoys of farmers on tractors drove to Ottawa to show support for the Freedom Convoy. Visitors to the protest were amazed to find how different the protest was from what they'd heard on media reports. Instead of angry men honking their horns at all hours, people found a community block party.

The federal governing party faced increasing criticism from the opposition party. "Do something!" they pleaded. But "do nothing" was the strategy, and the governing party stuck to that. (Oh, except for the flag-toting, resident-harassing *agents provocateurs*, but they don't officially work for the government, right?)

Until the guy at the top began to look ridiculous. The whole world was watching, and the truckers were winning. Truck convoy protests sprang up in other countries. "When will the prime minister act like a prime minister?" an opposition MP asked during a House of Commons question period. When indeed.

Enter the Emergencies Act. Probably the biggest gap between doing nothing and doing everything ever spanned in a matter of hours. Despite having done nothing for so long, suddenly the federal government felt like they need more tools to end the protest. They had not even picked up the first screwdriver, but now they needed jackhammers.

Whether or not the Public Order Emergency Commission looking into the federal government's use of the Emergencies Act finds it was justified or not, to me the end result is the same. The truckers won. The Freedom Convoy delivered our freedom. Not just for the unvaccinated, but for everybody. Even for those who, following in the steps of their dear leader, looked on the convoy and its supporters with contempt.

Mandates began lifting in all jurisdictions almost immediately. No more masks. No more passports. The kids could go back to school. Things opened up. Bizarrely, one of the final mandates to be lifted was the one requiring truckers to show proof of vaccination to cross the border into Canada. (Even people in positions of power savour the flavour of vindictiveness.)

The Freedom Convoy and the weeks-long protest in Ottawa lifted the veil of fear—from the public, anyway. Some politicians, I'm sure, still shudder when they hear a diesel engine.

As for the dreaded virus, it did as viruses do: it evolved. It morphed into variants less virile and more agile. More people got it (despite the high vaccination numbers) but fewer succumbed to it. No respiratory virus has ever been eradicated by vaccination, and this one is proving no different. It's still with us, and it's still serious. And we're living with it.

Before the next pandemic arrives, I hope we will have learned some lessons from this one. We have to be willing, from both organizational and social standpoints, to reflect on, and learn from, our collective and individual failures from this pandemic. Who knows if anyone will want to save our sorry asses next time.

Barbara Lehtiniemi is a writer, photographer, and AU graduate (BGS 2018.) She lives on a windswept rural road in Eastern Ontario.



Mexican Street Food Favorites

Xine Wang



I recently made a trip to Mexico to visit Tulum, Playa del Carmen and surrounding areas. It was my first time in Mexico so all was fresh and memorable. This trip was my first true trip after the COVID-19 pandemic. Finally, I was able to enjoy local street foods the way I did pre-COVID. Luckily, I did not get food poisoning however I found some of the spices and seasoning to be strong for me. At times my stomach did feel upset. The best part about Mexican cuisine is that the food vendors are available almost everywhere and at all times of the day. You can find food stalls open at 2 am or 9 am in the morning.

Tortas

These are a staple to Mexican cuisine. These are essentially the Mexican sandwich. Within a fluffy bun you will find all kinds of toppings combined with whatever proteins or veggies you can imagine. My favorite tortas during this trip had to be the al pastor torta. These are available at virtually any taco stand. They feature a delicious variety of toppings such as avocado, salsa, lettuce, pineapple, and pickled onions on top of thinly sliced pork that has been seasoned to perfection, oftentimes roasted on a vertical spit. Tortas are so hearty and so filling. No matter which area of Mexico I was in, variations of tortas existed.

Tacos

These are no doubt one of the most popular street foods in both Southern United States and in Latin America. Usually, tacos in Canada or the US are on top of a wheat-based tortilla. However, in Mexico, authentic tacos are made from corn flour giving a textured taste. Most locals ate tacos with a variety of toppings including pickled radishes, diced onions, cilantro and red or green salsa. Unlike the spices available in Canadian taco joints, these sauces really are not for the faint hearted. After pouring red chili all over my tacos thinking I could tolerate the spice well I ended up spending an entire afternoon in the washroom.



Marquesitas

This dessert is native to the state of Yucatan, Mexico. The dessert includes a crepe rolled similar to a taco but instead of savory toppings, it is filled with items like condensed milk, Nutella, jam, shredded cheese or an assortment of fruits from strawberries, bananas and mangos. After watching locals line up at these stalls at 10 pm, I decided to try one myself. It was an explosion of flavor both savory and sweet. It is one of the most delicious desserts I have tried, and so incredibly unique.

Crema de coco

I found crema de coco stalls all over Tulum area. This is a sweet combination of coconut cream, evaporated milk, condensed milk, and vanilla essence. In the 20-degree weather, this crema de coco or coconut horchata is both a perfect thirst quencher and dessert beverage. It is not overly sweet but has a strong coconut scent and taste.

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



Lessons I Learned About Love

Marie Well



True love is not what you see on TV. It's not critical. It's not unkind. It doesn't have expectations. It's never jealous. Real love is purely selfless and unconditional. I've experienced what the Western perspective of self-oriented love creates in a relationship. And I've experienced, on the other hand, what selfless, unconditional love produces. I seek to offer that perfect, selfless, unconditional love. Nothing compares.

And as it was just recently Valentine's Day, here are my thoughts on true—agape—love: the love you read about in the Bible. It's the only love I wish to create.

It ensures the significant other has free will—100% freedom of choice. I believe we are all entitled to our freedom of choice. That means we must allow our significant other to take on activities we may disagree with. After all, as one Voice writer expressed (and I view her as lovely), "We don't own"

the person with whom we are in a relationship. I believe this implies that we don't put limitations or boundaries on their choices. Putting restrictions is setting "conditions." The love I hope to give is purely "unconditional." To truly love "unconditionally," without conditions, we must ensure we enable the unbounded free will of our significant other. That's by definition of "unconditional."

It ensures we stay positive with our significant other all the time. Unconditional love is always kind. It never angers, criticizes, or hates. It only loves. I aim to love unconditionally, so to do so all the time, I must seek to enter a state of constant happiness. This sounds ideal, perhaps even impossible, but a goal in life is to strive for those perfect states. And what is more excellent than a state of either happiness or love?

It creates an environment where we will sacrifice everything for the happiness of our significant other. The person we choose as our life's partner is the one to whom we ideally give "unconditional love." Selflessness is essential, which is crucial to loving "unconditionally." And a central part of selflessness is a willingness to sacrifice anything and everything for our loved one's happiness. Most mothers know this sacrificial mentality. I believe that the same selfless, sacrificial love a mother gives her child must be given to our significant other. Ideal "unconditional" love is without demands or expectations. It's purely selfless—and, therefore, by definition, sacrificial--in its ideal form.

It keeps us in a higher state of unconditional love. Suppose we are determined to love our significant other unconditionally at all times. In that case, we are more frequently in that higher state of love. What better place to rest our souls throughout the day than in the bliss of unconditional love, regardless of outer circumstances?

And I hope to extend this sentiment to every living soul. In that case, I'll truly feel like I've reached that higher place of enlightenment—that coming "home." After all, as my childhood friend says of our walk in this world to the afterlife, "We are all walking each other home."



Getting Familiar with Briefing Notes

Alek Golijanin



In a world where everything is moving at high speeds, the ability to summarize important information in a one- or two-page document, also known as briefing notes (briefs), can transform an individual into a highly desired commodity. Whether it be in the private sector or public sector, the ability to write effective briefs is a disappearing skill, but it is a skill that everyone can learn to do well.

Briefs play an important role as a communication tool because of their ability to communicate important information up the decision-making ladder in a quick and effective manner. The purpose of briefs can include raising concerns, explaining ideas, providing advice, analyzing issues, and requesting feedback. Briefs will specifically focus on key facts, summarizing goals, challenges, and other important information, and they may slightly vary depending on the nature of a situation or the targeted audience.

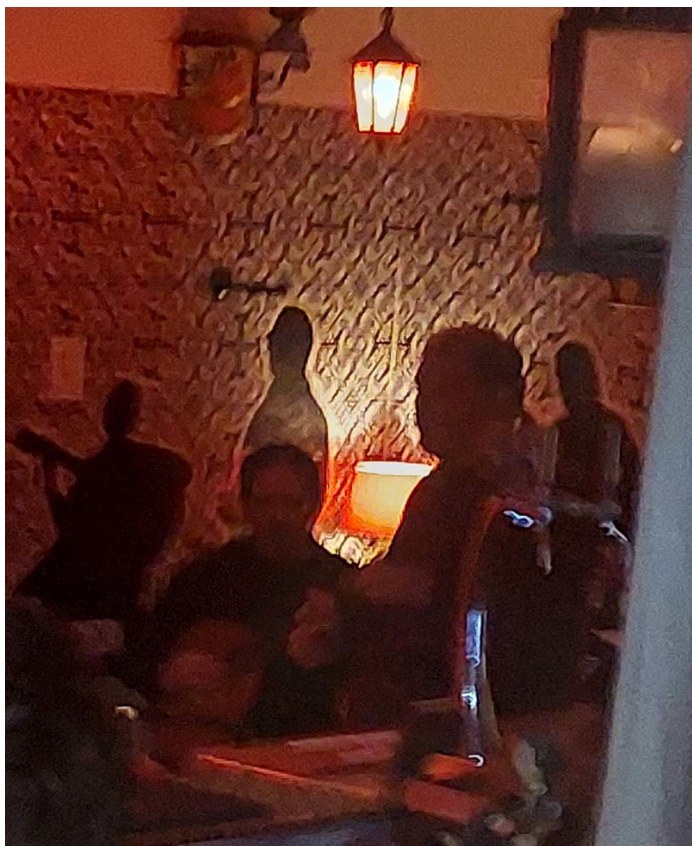
Some of the most common types of briefs include decision notes, information notes, issue notes, and house notes. Decision notes are designed to present information around a particular policy issue, and they often provide multiple options for decision makers to choose from. Information notes provide key information about a particular policy, program, or area of government. Issues notes focus on summarizing specific issues that are of importance. House notes are a combination of the three previous notes, and they are typically written for high-ranking decision makers, but it is important to understand the purpose of the notes so that they can achieve their desired purpose.

To write the best possible brief, it is important to know your audience, as well as the issue and purpose behind it. The standard layout for briefs includes a summary of the issue, the current status of the issue, the strategic considerations of the issue, an overview of available recommendations and the implications of each outcome, and a conclusion that also includes any next steps. Often times, what makes for great briefs is the featured information and data from different sources—statistics that can help emphasize key ideas. That information and data can also be the difference between someone making the right decision and not the wrong decision, so getting it right is really important.

Although professional workshops that focus on writing briefs can often cost in excess of \$1,000, there are ways to become better at writing briefs without dishing out large sums of money. In my opinion, post-secondary institutions are one of the best places to turn to when it comes to accessing publicly available resources, including on how to write briefs. The University of Waterloo published a guide titled *Practical Guide To Writing Briefing Notes In The Government Of Canada* in the summer of 2020 with the purpose of helping facilitate collaboration and mobilizing knowledge between various stakeholders and across different sectors. The twenty-page guide is designed to familiarize individuals with writing briefs in the public sector and everything it takes to put together a quality brief. The best part about briefs is that, even when their format changes, the core ideas of a brief always remain the same, and becoming familiar with these core ideas is how an individual becomes a desired commodity.

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



[blue rare]**Nights in Lisbon: On the Beauty of the Imperfect****Oliver Moorcraft-Sykes**

I have been spending some time now, soaking up the incomparable charms of the Alfama district of Lisbon—the venerable, magnetic soul of this city: labyrinthine streets, with delightful surprises around every corner, music and golden light pouring out of doorways onto ancient cobblestoned alleyways.

Last night, I was at a series of fado bars. For those of you who might not know, fado is a musical genre with obscure origins, dating back to at least the early 19th century, and perhaps much earlier. The music's emotional resonance is best captured by the Portuguese word *saudade*, which is apparently difficult to accurately express in English, but essentially evokes a sense of melancholy and longing. So, there I was, listening to a succession of male and female singers, accompanied by accordion, violin, cello, and especially the sublimely melodic twelve-stringed *guitarra*, vocalising poetic odes to lost loves, drowned sailors, distant heaths, broken dreams, abandoned hopes.

What struck me most singularly was the intensely emotional, imperfect beauty of these singers and their songs. The way the very imperfection of their warm voices, straining and cracking with emotion, seemed to capture some ineffable human truth.

This sense that a thing can be made all the more magnificent by its flaws seems to me to reverberate throughout Lisbon, a haggard but still-vital city that was once the beating heart of a thriving empire. A hub of commerce, tyranny, exploitation, creativity, and exploration, the whole city is a fabulously multi-layered, disheveled collage of haphazard streets, ornate tile, crumbling plaster, colorful buildings, inspired art, peeling posters, explosions of graffiti, poetry, music, delicious food, and laughter. The whole mess bound together by passion and trolley car lines. I don't think I've felt more at home or more alive in any other place.

The lure of imperfection has been much on my mind of late. For a while now, I have been putting together a big album of my favourite glitchy photographs. Blurred faces, out-of-focus nighttime shots, drunken compositions with cut-off heads, features made ghostly pale by camera flash. They are like postcards from the heart.

Is there a patron saint of imperfection? I do hope so. I imagine she has runs in her stockings, wears a faux fur dress, sports wings made from the feathers of peacocks and crows, and has a tinfoil crown, worn askew, embellished with lost trinkets and costume jewels. On Judgement Day, she will blow a saucy, out-of-tune air upon a battered and tarnished trumpet, and we will all dance in the streets as the moon and stars tumble from the sky.

Late in life, I have realized that true beauty arises only from what is flawed. I have no interest in the pristine, the perfect, the sterile. No time for it.

I once bought a Chinese lucky cat that had been dropped and smashed into a couple of dozen fragments, then meticulously repaired, glued back together by the love I gifted it to. It seems to me there is a metaphor in that.

I desire only what has been broken and redeemed by love, by hope, by force of will, by letting go. As Saint Leonard once wrote, "there is a crack in everything/ that's how the light gets in". Whoever and wherever you are, dear reader, I do hope it shines long and brightly for you.



Fly on the Wall Is Education a Training for Herd Compliance?

Jason Sullivan



Study Body Left, Student Body Right!

Like Arctic Caribou shifting *en masse* from the Northwest Territories to their Alaskan calving grounds, universities, from a bird's eye view, can seem to be merely training paddocks for herds of *sheeple*. Critics' stereotypical assumptions are that pupils, shorn of individual thoughts, emerge trained in a series of right answers and proper methods. Willing and able to jump through hoops of busywork, these graduates become cogs and minions in the grand scheme of the status quo. And all this while parting young people and their families from hard earned income in the real world. It's a vicious cycle of cynicism and pragmatism; high priced salaries require expensive tuition, it seems. In

contrast, the Arctic Caribou end their migration loop on a vast plateau drenched in amniotic fluid; calves emerge wobbly but shortly are ready for a semblance of adult life. So, why not let the laws of natural learning take its course instead of institutionalizing we students of life?

To be an AU student requires a certain justification of our existence and its costs; this issue is not new. In our internet era, anyone can theoretically become a self-educated polymath, brimming with knowledge and ideas gleaned for free from the wonders of Wi-Fi. Such a motivated learner might send a diplomaed lamb whimpering back to its brick and mortar ewe for a suckle. You can't put a price on having a passionate mind, right. By contrast, I've known people who, pondering their university years, claimed that they don't remember a thing. When we're deeply interested in something we'll grow in leaps and bounds and be first to the intellectual calving grounds, ready to give birth to revolutionary new ideas.

Rochdale College: A Free For All of Good Intentions

In the 1960s era of free love and free thinking, the Ontario provincial government actually funded a free school called Rochdale College. Along with about 300 other free universities across

the continuity, Rochdale attracted 840 pupils from 1968 to 1975 and “was popular among those who argued that modern universities served the establishment, stifled innovation, and had dictatorial governing bodies” (online). However, motivations may not be merely altruistic and intellectually curious, as college campuses were tax exempt. “Some viewed educational programs as a dishonest means of avoiding tax while the dedicated ones believed it was a noble idea” (online). Like today, critics suspected that education was a means of either hiding out from the real world or avoiding spending one’s fair share of time in life’s rat race, or that some institutions were surviving merely to exist for their own sake, in some pedagogical tautology known as an ivory tower. Rochdale seemed to embrace stereotypes of laxity: “With no formal tutors or classes, students developed their learning system by posting work on notice boards and forming discussion groups to learn and evaluate themselves. Rochdale did not offer degrees based on performance, but anyone could purchase a degree through a donation if they so wished” (Sawe, online). These latter were “a tongue in cheek attempt at humor” given the stereotype that a diploma is sometimes cynically seen as the outcome of a marketplace transaction.

Like any haven for inquiring minds, Rochdale must have seemed too good to be true. “Students will live and study without the usual formalities of classes and grades” crowed a 1968 Toronto Star article. Education for its own sake must have never seemed so attainable as it did for a brief few years there on Bloor Street in downtown Toronto. The results for Rochdale, even for those adverse to culturally-conditioned cynicism, were hardly surprising. Rochdale College became controversial as both a druggie hangout of dopehead dropouts and a cockroach palace of criminal activity (Bradbeer, online). Nevertheless, in our internet era where all knowledge is theoretically available to anyone with an inquisitive mind, the question remains as to whether tuition-charging academic institutions are not somewhat of an anachronism. Being caught in the clickbait plague of the World Wide Web may not be so different than being embroiled in the party culture of a college campus or simply treating school as a place to find a wealthy or attractive mate. As generations develop, patterns emerge and, after all, we’re none of us so far removed from those Arctic Caribou whose annual fate is to be giving birth on an Alaskan plateau. Yet, like a free university, AU allows one unique aspect of our minds to flourish: our self-motivated ability to succeed on our own terms and on our own time. No synchronized intellectual estrus for us as we give birth to weighty new ideas and combinations of learning objectives, course themes, and essay topics! There’s something to be said, though, for paying to play pupil and for being graded by an authority figure. Virtue may be its own reward but, not to mix aphorisms, the road to hell is paved with good intentions.

Free Learning as a Concept

Given the unwieldy nature of fitting AU studies into the rest of our life’s work, the temptation to embark on uncredited solo studies with no external reward could cut both ways. On the one hand, no more stress about deadlines and invigilated exams. On the other hand, how would we know if we’ve done a good job? Idealists would claim that anyone worth her academic salt knows darn well when she’s written a stellar essay. Yet, the temptation to become slovenly lives within us all. Where costs are zero and grades are absent I suspect that the best among us would revert to surfing the web and laughing at mindless videos of doggies chasing snowflakes and dolphins doing dolphin things. Even sincere research can lead us merely to anecdotal facts worthy of late-night television rather than the concatenation of obscure information into a working thesis. Learning about animal communication might, for instance, lead to a rediscovery of the famous NASA research where a lady literally DID copulate with a dophin named Peter. A great story to share with friends but shocked guffaws do not a research project make (Kelly, online).

One thing's for certain—given the high costs of tuition—and it's that we'd be wise to take every ounce of effort seriously as we try not to disappoint our future selves and our loved ones who count on us to be some sort of a beacon toward a more learned future. After all, while herds in the wild are shepherded only by instinct, we domesticated bipeds, by nature, follow intellectual trendsetters. Having a BA or an MA after our name, combined with the ability to elucidate our learning into a few choice morsels of insight, goes a long way to rising above herd groupthink. Critical thinking, after all, is valuable not when it's an instinctual, knee-jerk, and easy: critical thinking matters most when we're challenged by material that prevents us from going with the social and intellectual flow.

Often it takes a whole course syllabus to teach us that there are many views on a single matter. Likewise, books and lectures have their limits when, say, you wish to really test a hypothesis or see some examples that illustrate social theories. Practically applying social science or business management skills means first to understand the theory on offer; interdisciplinary schooling (AU's MAIS program for graduate students) is wonderful for illustrating how every topic or issue has a history, a sociology, a psychology, a literature, and a science. To truly take the broad view, not unlike a satellite view of the perambulations of those Cariboo, is to become duly educated.

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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.

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**WE WANT
YOUR
FEEDBACK**

Upcoming Public Consultation for Matters Related to Ontario's OMVIC

Alek Golijanin



The province of Ontario organizing public consultations to create a consumer information package for the car buying process and, in cooperation with the Ontario Motor Vehicle Industry Council (OMVIC) at some point in 2023. It will be a unique chance for consumers to provide feedback to decision makers at Queen's Park.

I learned about the province's plan for the public consultations during a recent conversation I had with OMVIC's CEO Maureen Harquail. I inquired about the possibility of improving processes involved with the car-buying experience by introducing standardized documentation for things like the issuance of quotes and bettering the language used in bills of sale so that there was a clear separation between mandatory and non-mandatory costs. Harquail explained that OMVIC would first require regulatory changes to be brought about at the province to create a more standardized process as those types of changes were not within their current powers. Additionally, Harquail discussed how OMVIC had revamped its inspection division so that there were more resources allocated toward ensuring dealers are in compliance with provincial standards. The final part of our chat touched on the Auditor General's 2021 report titled "Value-for Money Audit: Ontario Motor Vehicle Industry Council", and how the province was looking to schedule public consultations on these matters.

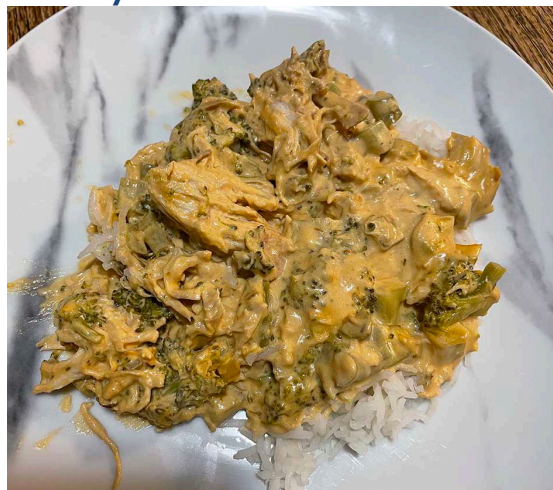
The best way to stay up to date on the public consultation process is to follow OMVIC or the Ministry of Public and Business Services.

Why should you attend this public consultation?

The summary of the Auditor General's 2021 report notes that OMVIC has lacked the processes to consistently protect the public in their transactions with motor vehicle dealers and salespeople, and that The Ministry of Public and Business Services has not sufficiently overseen OMVIC to confirm that it is effectively fulfilling its mandate. With how big an investment buying a car can be, a more transparent car-buying process should be on all our minds.

Homemade is Better Creamy Broccoli Chicken

Chef Corey



I have not put much stock in the "fad diets" circulating for decades. Atkins, keto, The Zone, diabetic, low carb, high protein, the juice cleanse, etc., etc. I typically see these diets as someone's attempt to make a lot of money with little or questionable science to back it up. So, when I recently listened to a podcast my brother-in-law encouraged me to try, I was skeptical.

Dr. Chris Palmer, M.D., was the guest on this show. Dr. Palmer is a graduate of Harvard Medical School. He is currently the Dean of Postgraduate and Continuing Education at McLean Hospital and an Assistant Professor of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School (Dr. Chris Palmer M.D., 2023). My understanding is that he has been making

the rounds of interviews with multiple podcasts or T.V. shows. He discussed the ketogenic diet on the podcast I was listening to.

For those that are not aware of what “keto” is, in more simple terms, it focuses on reducing carbs and increasing fats (Harvard Health Publishing, 2020). Doing this correctly is supposed to cause your body to start burning ketones. Ketones are a natural chemical reaction our bodies make when our liver breaks down fat (Diabetes U.K., 2023). So, by burning more ketones, we are supposed to burn more fat and lead a healthier life.

So, am I all in on a diet? Well, no. But I do think there is something about keto diets that makes for a decent argument. According to experts, keto diets have been used on epileptic children when other forms of intervention did not work (Harvard Health Publishing, 2020). That would be medication and surgery. The keto diet is known to reduce episodes in pediatric patients, but only as a last resort. I take away from this that we need to check in with a medical professional and a trained dietician to plan and utilize this diet efficiently.

Another con to this diet is people with diabetes. Type 1 is more at risk, but even type 2 can suffer from ketoacidosis (Diabetes U.K., 2023). Ketoacidosis is a buildup of acid in a diabetic’s bloodstream. This can be fatal if not appropriately managed. Being the spouse of such a person, I would be devastated if my partner and I tried a diet that landed her in the hospital.

After listening to this podcast and Dr. Palmer’s arguments for these types of diets, I felt that, at the very least, a severe reduction in carbs would be a good solution for us. Not a drop to the point where we eat zero carbs, but maybe 30 or 60. I would like to try and stay under 75g of carbs a day. We’ll see how I do.

I was looking up a keto recipe I could attempt when I discovered a broccoli recipe with shredded chicken. I didn’t like the recipe, so I created this one while keeping the idea of broccoli with shredded chicken. You’ll notice I use half a pound of cream cheese and two cups of heavy cream. I also try to steam the broccoli before adding the cream and cheese. If you like your broccoli crunchier, I suggest skipping the steaming and adding the cheese and cream. The broccoli will still cook with the sauce; you should have some al dente broccoli. I also used my pre-shredded chicken; I had leftovers from my enchilada recipe. The enchilada sauce on the chicken gave the cream sauce an excellent little addition.

“Keto” Creamy Broccoli Chicken

Ingredients:

- 4 cups shredded chicken
- 1 pound of broccoli fleurettes
- ½ onion – diced
- 3 cloves of garlic minced
- 8oz of plain cream cheese – cut into 1” cubes
- 2 cups of heavy cream
- ¼ cup of chicken broth
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 4 cups shredded cheddar
- Salt and Pepper



Directions:

- 1) Preheat your oven to 350F.
- 2) Season the chicken breasts with salt and pepper and bake in the oven for 20-25 minutes until they reach 165F.
- 3) Once fully cooked, allow the chicken to rest for five minutes before shredding it with a fork.
- 4) Place a large skillet over medium-high heat.
- 5) Pour the oil, onions and garlic into the pan and bring up to heat.
- 6) Sweat the onions and garlic for 2 minutes, then add the broccoli and chicken stock
- 7) Cover the pan and allow the broccoli to steam for 2 minutes.
- 8) Add the cream cheese and the heavy cream. Cook until the cream cheese is melted into the cream.
- 9) Add the shredded chicken and stir to coat.
- 10) Add the cheese and allow it to melt.
- 11) Serve over rice or noodles.

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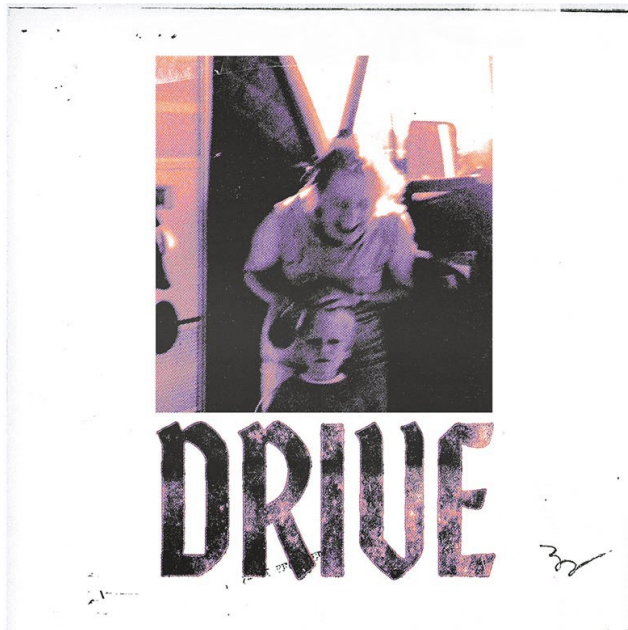
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Corey Wren is a student at AU's school of business management and a stay-at-home-parent of three who graduated from NAIT's culinary arts program in 2007.



Music Review—Drive

Jessica Young



Artist: Captain Kaiser

Album: *Rhyme & Reason*

Single: "Drive"

Belgian alternative/punk band, Captain Kaiser, has released the new single, "Drive", from their forthcoming album. The album, titled *Rhyme & Reason*, is set to be released later this year. In the meantime, "Drive" is available for streaming anywhere you get your music, and has an accompanying music video on [YouTube](#).

Captain Kaiser consists of Sascha Vansant on vocals, Pieter De Krock on guitar, Baptiste Navarro on bass, Sebastiaan Schillebeeckx on drums, and Maarten Van Dam on guitar.

After recently signing on with a new record label, "Drive" marks the start of a new year for Captain

Kaiser. According to the band, "Captain Kaiser's music still celebrates life, only they know better than ever that life sometimes can kick you in the guts. One day you throw a party with friends, while the next there's only the grim reaper on the dancefloor. Captain Kaiser gives them all their statues, only to break them down and throw them in the mosh pit."

Sascha Vansant wrote "Drive" after the passing of his mother. It's a song about pain, loss, and the feeling of driving into nothingness. With lyrics like, "Well wrong I'm wrong let's face the fact/I'm all alone now stop reacting/Like a child now be the man/Wipe those tears, be strong again," you can feel Vansant struggling with his grief and how that relates to his masculinity. Meanwhile, the short, simple chorus highlights his desperation to escape his emotions: "And I drive without knowing, without showing my own mess/And I drive to escape, to forget until I drive into that crash."

The single begins with Vansant's singing voice—stripped and alone, without background music, you can feel his sadness. Piano and guitar build slowly until it hits like a brick wall. Vansant is now screaming over the powerful music. It's raw, pure emotion, and a great representation of the tornado of mixed feelings that come with grieving process.

The band kept it simple with the music video for "Drive." The video begins with a shirtless Vansant, a shadowed silhouette against a bright orange background. Eventually, when the music becomes heavy, the video moves to quick-cuts of Vansant and the other band members in the same visual format. The video reminds me of those old iPod commercials with silhouettes of people dancing with their iPods.

Overall, I enjoyed "Drive." Vansant really put himself out there for the world to see with this song, and I hope it was able to bring him some peace and healing. My only complaint is that it is too short, in my opinion—clocking in at only 1:58 seconds.

I can't wait to hear more of Captain Kaiser's new sound on *Rhyme & Reason*.

Check out Captain Kaiser on [their website](#), [Facebook](#), and [Instagram](#).

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



Beyond Literary Landscapes

Latin American Modernismo Literature

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

Following up from last week’s column on Modernist Literature in the United States and Great Britain, this week’s column focuses on the Modernismo period in Latin America.

Although Modernismo as a movement began in the late 19 century and ended in 1920, it continued to be influential in following years throughout the region.

At times, the movement can be difficult to define. Indeed, “the movement had no manifesto or organized principles, [instead] it stemmed from a reaction against the literary naturalism of Émile Zola and against the wider bourgeois conformity and materialism of Western society.”

However, it is possible to say that several defining characteristics include cultural affinity and awareness, the rejection of formal traditional styles in favour of experimentation with rhythm, metre, and symbolism, as well as the attempt to perfect poetry.

Some examples of Modernismo authors include Rubén Darío and Juan Ramón Jiménez.

Poet, journalist, and diplomat Rubén Darío was born on January 18, 1867, in Metapa, Nicaragua and died on February 6, 1916, León, Nicaragua. He is known as the leader of the Modernismo movement, who experimented with “with rhythm, metre, and imagery.”

Poet Juan Ramón Jiménez was born on December 24, 1881 in Moguer, Spain and died May 29, 1958 in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

What

Some examples of Modernismo works include *Azul (Blue)* by Rubén Darío and *Almas de violeta (Souls of Violet)* by Juan Ramón Jiménez.

Where

These works are set throughout Latin America.

When

Many of these works take place during the 19 and 20-centiries.

Why

This poetry may be of interest to AU students who would like to learn more about a well-known period in Latin American literature, and perhaps use it as a starting point to other notable periods, such as the Latin American Boom years.

How

AU's wide range of diverse courses make it easy to study this topic in depth. Courses related to Latin American Modernismo 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 458: The Latin American Novel, a three-credit, senior-level course, which focuses on "the nature of Latin American literature, the questions of politics and history [and,] major themes or literary styles." (Note several prerequisites are required, including ENGL 211: Prose Forms and ENGL 212: Poetry and Plays or a first year English course. Students are also encouraged to have completed ENGL 345: American Literature II, ENGL 361: Literature of the Harlem Renaissance, or another intermediate English course.) Happy reading!

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



Scholarship of the Week

Digging up scholarship treasure for AU students.

Scholarship name: John Evans Engineering Entrance Award

Sponsored by: Canadian Engineering Memorial Foundation (CEMF)

Deadline: March 17, 2023, 11:59 pm ET

Potential payout: \$5000

Eligibility restriction: Each applicant must self-identify as a woman, possess Canadian Citizenship or Permanent Residency Status, and be a high-school graduate, entering into an accredited Canadian Engineering program.

What's required: A completed application form, proof of citizenship, info on extracurricular and community activities, one community reference and one academic letter of support, a letter explaining why you would be a good ambassador to promote engineering as a career for women, a 2-minute voice sound clip, along with a 15-minute power-point or Prezi presentation, and speaking notes. See the [application form](#) for full details on requirements.

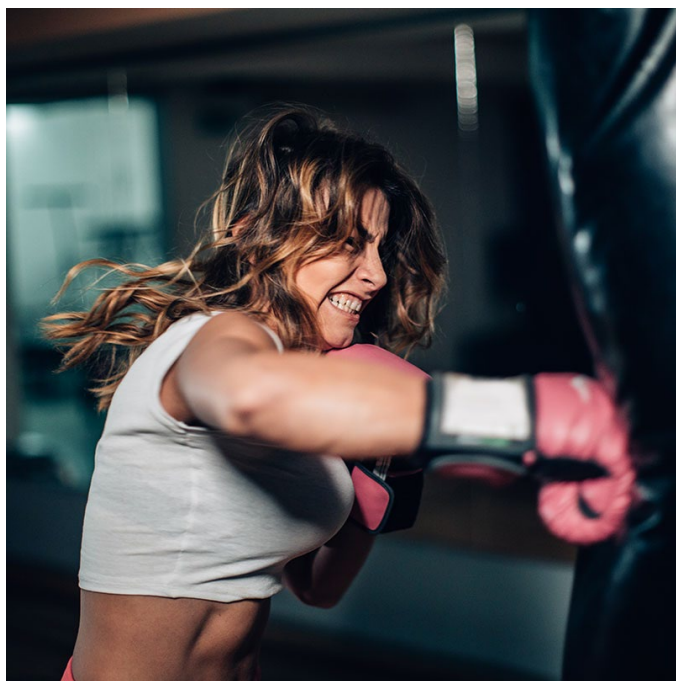
Tips: Check out [previous winners](#) for inspiration.

Where to get info: www.cemf.ca/en/john-evans-engineering-entrance-award



Entrepreneurial or Hardworking Women Who Inspire Me

Marie Well



I love talking to entrepreneurial or hardworking women. They inspire me to dream bigger. They draw out of me that part of the spirit that is unstoppable. And you are that spirit, whether you know it or not. I've had the tremendous fortune of encountering the triumphs of three incredible women. And they instilled in me a passion I feel compelled to share with you.

I have a lovely friend whom I met over twenty years ago. She's always into crafts and had a Christmas tree decorated with handmade embellishments. She'd often make me gifts from scratch, like poems or a beautiful frame containing a dried flower. And her Halloweens are more compelling than anything you'd see in a costume shop.

Not long ago, she began making birdhouses and bird food. Her handcrafted birdhouses were

more beautiful than anything I'd ever seen. But what hit home the most was her news today that her bird food was being retailed in stores. She is truly an inspiration.

And I know a young merchant who is forced to close shop. But instead of waiting for opportunities, she's actively seeking them. She just told me that she is bartering rent for a location that is one of the finest in the city. In other words, she's going from an F grade location to an A grade. She is taking advantage of low rental rates due to post-Covid. And she's negotiating the ideal rent at the best site in the city. She has a vision and a positive can-do attitude. She is a role model.

My mom isn't an entrepreneur but consistently demonstrated an exceptional work ethic. It's partly due to her Swiss-German heritage, as they are known to be more stoic. Mom taught us to make beds without creases—truly military style. Our clothes were always freshly pressed and smelled like the outdoors as she hung them outside to dry. And she made five-course meals, complete with dessert, for almost every dinner, despite working a career. But what strikes me most about Mom are her words: "Pa pushed me hard. When I felt I had no energy to keep working, he'd push me, and I'd get it done." She, too, truly inspires me.

So, now I'm working full-time and taking three courses. I work from 8 AM to 11:15 PM daily to stay caught up. And today I'm going swimming to work off the stress.

You, like me, might be overwhelmed with work, school, and other responsibilities. But you, too, have a spirit that can manifest any positive outcome you desire. I sincerely believe in your every dream!

The key for me is to stay positive when overloaded with work. I often think of those hardworking females and entrepreneurs. They have incredible spirits that can help me grow. You, too, have that tremendous spirit. Your soul is infinite and unstoppable, especially in its most authentic essence. And that's one of many reasons I feel inspired by—why I adore—all of you.





Dear
Barb

Barbara Godin

Losing Mother

Dear Barb:

I have been trying to work through this on my own, but I think I need some advice. I am in my early forties and have a great husband and two teenage kids. I have been fortunate in my life, as my husband and I have been able to work through difficult times and stay together. Also, my teenagers are doing well in school and haven't gotten into any trouble. However, my mother recently died (six months ago) after suffering for 2 years from breast cancer. At the time I felt overwhelmed with caring for her, as I am an only child and my dad died 5 years earlier, but the grief I am feeling now is something I can't seem to make peace with.

My mom was my best friend and my life feels so empty without her. It was difficult losing my dad, but nowhere near the grief I am experiencing now. I don't know if this is normal or if it is just me. I don't know where to turn and my entire life has been impacted. My children and husband seem to think I should just get over it. I can't! Do you have any advice for me? Thanks so much, Diane.

Hello Diane:

So sorry for your loss. The death of a mother is one of the most traumatic experiences of your life, no matter if you had a good relationship with her or a difficult one. You end up grieving the bond you had or the bond you never had. Typical feelings of grief include sadness, anger, numbness, and shock, not so typical feelings include digestive problems, nervousness, and trouble

sleeping. Complex grief is grief that significantly impacts your daily life and goes on beyond one year. Some of the signs of prolonged grief include a lack of feelings or emotions, having a tough time moving on with your life, and feeling that your life is meaningless. A suicidal tendency could also be a part of complex grief. Since you said in your email that your mother passed away six months ago, it does not appear that you are experiencing complex grief, but rather the normal process of grieving someone you love. According to Liz Schmitz-Binnall a counselor for the LMHCA, PsyD grieving takes time. You need to take the time to grieve and allow yourself to experience intense feelings during the first few months. These feelings will lessen over time. If you still feel the same intensity of loss after one year, then you may need to seek help from a counselor or a support group. Another option for support is the Facebook Group called the Motherless Daughters Community.

Thank you for your email, Diane, you are at a place where most of us will find ourselves one day.

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.



Poet Maeve
Dictators versus A-holes

Wanda Waterman





"In the end we will remember not the words
of our enemies but the silence of our friends"

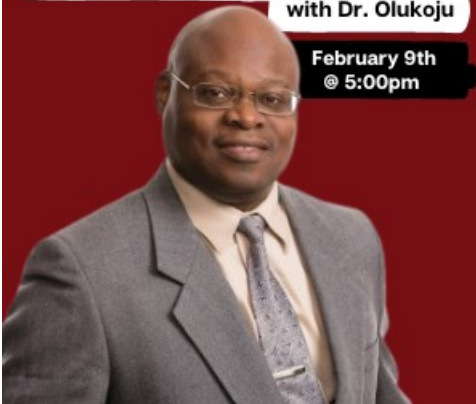
- Dr. Martin Luther King Jr

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Politics, Voting, and Inclusion of the Black
Community in Canadian Governance
with Dr. Olukaju

February 9th
@ 5:00pm



Join us on Feb. 9 at 5 p.m. MT
on Zoom and celebrate Black
History Month with Dr. Olukaju
from AU as he discusses [Politics,
Voting, and the Inclusion of the
Black Community in Canadian
Governance](#). Dr. Olukaju holds a
Ph.D. in Public Policy and
Administration and a second in
Theology.

[RSVP on Eventbrite!](#)

**AU
SU** Athabasca University
Students' Union

**2023 By-Election
BECOME A
LEADER
ON STUDENT COUNCIL**

Nominations Open February 13

**Council By-Election Nominations
Open Feb. 13**

Feb. 13 is the start of
the 2023 Student Council By-
Election with nominations opening
for all AU undergrads like
you. Voting will take place March
16-21 to fill two (2) available seats
on AU Student Council. More
details to come! Questions?
Email us at ausu@ausu.org.

Velma Morgan on
OPERATION 

February 15
@ 5:00pm



Then return Feb. 15 at 5 p.m.
MT to celebrate with Velma
Morgan during [An Introduction
to Operation Black Vote
Canada](#). OBVC works to ensure
that equity is activated in our
democratic institutions in order
to create opportunities for
Black Canadians to fully engage
civically at all levels in Canada.

[RSVP on Eventbrite!](#)

Provided by

ausu@ausu.org

CLASSIFIEDS

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

THE VOICE

Ph: 855.497.7003

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