



THE VOICE

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Minds We Meet

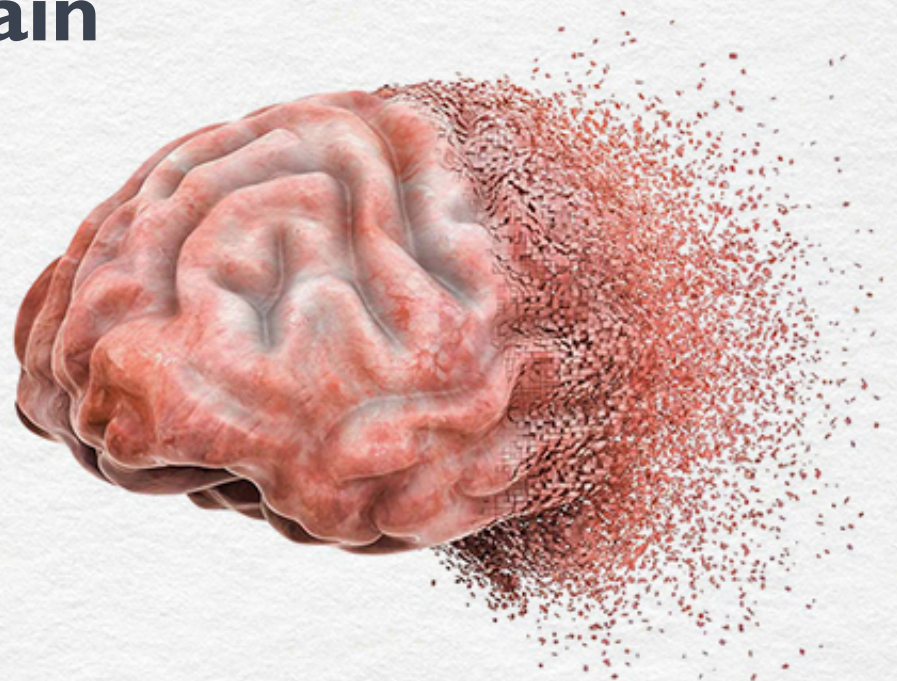
Interviewing Students Like You!

The Truth Behind the Tin Foil Hait

Believe Me, It's True!

A Pain in the Brain

Digital Dementia



Plus:

Candlelight Performance

Dear Barb: All in the Familyi

and muchmore!

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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 Consumed

Karl Low



Every once in a while, more often than I care to admit, I find myself going down a rabbit hole that's difficult to climb out of. This week, I found a music video called "[Hi Ren](#)", by a singer and rap-artist named, appropriately, Ren. I'm a few months late to this particular party apparently, but if you haven't already seen it, it's highly worth the almost ten minutes to watch it, especially if you have any experience with mental health issues, whether on the downside or the recovery, or just that of a loved one suffering through.

Kind of like when we purchased our first Jeep, it suddenly seemed that there were a lot more Jeeps on the road, as I attempt to deal more with the repercussions of ADHD, and much of that is simply in trying to figure out what exactly is the ADHD and what's just myself, I'm finding myself spotting more and more connections and people who are in some manner or another neurodivergent. And I want to be careful because it feels like though this may be a defining feature of who I am, I don't want it to become the defining feature of what I think and write about. That said, currently, it's still pretty new, so I'll beg

your indulgence this time.

One such example is this week's Minds We Meet interviewee, Wayne O'Toole. He tells us about how his own differences line up with his AU education and life in general, and I find myself thinking back on just how many of us the interviewees come from a background of being divergent in one fashion or another. United by distance? United by difference almost seems the appropriate slogan sometimes.

Also this week, however, the Fly on the Wall takes on technology driven dementia, with some interesting evidence of how all this technology we have, much of which is designed to make our lives easier, may be simply making things too easy for us overall, and how researchers are starting to see problems that might be directly connected to how we don't need to use our minds nearly as much for basic tasks any more.

The third article we're featuring is a look at why conspiracy theories are looming so large these days, are we getting dumber, or is there something more sinister behind it. Then again, maybe those answers aren't mutually exclusive.

On a different topic, as Alberta officially enters the campaign period, what the parties intend to do for the future of post-secondary education isn't very clear. The UCP party platform lists some of the things they've done (like capping tuition increases for 2024-2025 to 2%), while not listing most of what they've actually done (like cutting significant funding or tying future funding to economic indicators that universities have little control over) and the NDP platform promises to freeze tuition at 2022-2023 levels and cap any future increases to that of inflation. Unfortunately, neither party says that they'll actually increase the funding going to post-secondary to make up for losses that occur if costs go up more than what the restrictions on tuition. I'm sure we'll be having more on this later to help you decide who to vote for if you're in Alberta, but meanwhile, this week, we still have scholarships, events, advice, a look at obesity and an interesting choice for a date night, music reviews, inspirational articles, and more.

Enjoy the read!

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karl".

MINDS WE MEET



The Voice Magazine recently had a chance to chat with Wayne O'Toole (he/him), a brand new student just beginning his AU journey this May. Wayne is enrolled in the Bachelor of Arts, major in Sociology and a minor in Inclusive Education.

From Unam'ki/Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, Wayne stated, "I would like to begin by acknowledging that I am in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People. This territory is covered by the "Treaties of Peace and Friendship" which Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet) People first signed with the British Crown in 1725. The treaties did not deal with surrender of lands and resources but in fact recognized Mi'kmaq and Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet) title and established the rules for what was to be an ongoing relationship between nations."

On a personal note, Wayne described himself as "51 and Neurodivergent. ASD and ADD. And an advocate and volunteer with a head full of videos on food security, housing solutions and energy sovereignty."

When asked how he best studies, Wayne stated, "Non-linear, with little distraction: headphones with noise cancelling. Some hippie 60 and 70's tune low in the background. I am looking forward to using brain mapping and other software. I doodle

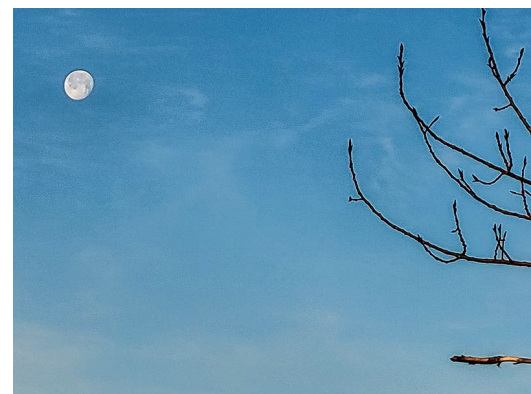
ideas and important associative parts with coloring pencils: shapes and lots of color."

He also had some great advice for new students and/or prospective students. "I have been a lifelong learner. Treat knowledge as a valuable tool. Be mindful when stressors occur, do it your way and always ask for help. Or accessibility if needed. There are many more options, sometimes we just don't know, connecting; very Druid thing."

When Wayne is not studying he has "a Facebook page where [he] writes what [he is] thinking." He continued, "Photography. I am always studying, life. And experimenting. Our permaculture, or 'Little Patches' I call them in writings. The Sable Strawberry are my wife's favorite. Advocacy. Efficiency we are just about to be Net Zero on a moderate income. Oh, I am a Druid. Celtic spirituality."

The Voice Magazine also asked Wayne about books and authors who have made an impact on his life. He stated, "Being Neurodivergent, I actually don't like books. But I did love Tom Sawyer, Huckleberry Finn, Indiana Jones I read while my Nana and I ate at Zellers restaurant. Lord of the Rings. I like books that feed my visual mind. With color, adventure, vibrancy. I see it play like a movie."

When asked who in his life had the greatest influence on his desire to learn, Wayne responded, "I grew up marginalized with a colorful ASD brain. I was afraid of university. The old way."





My self, my wife and this time my son. And for community. I cannot work, but there are volunteer groups I am involved with. I always had the desire to learn, and found ways. That is a hard question. I believe in 'We' and because of how my brain works, study is therapeutic. Fill the mind with data and not let it on its own."

Although Wayne had not yet started his courses at the time of this interview, he was positive that "funding should make the deadline for March 1 courses." He continued, "So far the site is very user friendly, and questions answered ... I have taken many online courses, I enjoy the accessibility and in using the ADD (H) moments to run through courses and then settle." However, Wayne mentioned that Accessibility Services and a contacting the Sociology department have been very helpful.

When asked what his first project would be if he were the new president of AU, he stated, "To work with the Student Union, and students on potential issues, and use the input and a diverse group to implement the changes, or at least have a look at cost/benefit, ROI including Student 'Happiness' level factors. Be a 3, 5, and 10-year plan."

When asked which famous person, past or present, he would like to have lunch with, and why, Wayne chose "Gandhi with a vegan array. But there are so many possibilities."

The Voice Magazine asked Wayne about his most valuable lesson learned in life. "I have c-PTSD. I was told I couldn't. And mental abused by an alcoholic dad. So it drove me to succeed. Until I burned out. There is rush, nor weighing of success. It is when you feel value from what you do within," he stated.

As for his proudest moment? "I won an award back when MS Access was new. We had a large photo, and name/info book. I develop a searchable database and input over 7,000 files. Innovation and Initiative I believe." Best of luck Wayne!



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.



Fly on the Wall

When the Panacea Becomes a Pain in the Brain

Jason Sullivan

Digital Dementia Discussed



Yip, yip, YOWL! In golf, trying too many practice putts can induce a case of the *yips* where a player will yelp in frustration as their motor skills cease to co-operate with the brain's signals to engage in a gentle, repetitive, swinging motion. Like a dog whose paw has momentarily been trod on, the howl can emanate across the land. True too is how we might exclaim in frustration when we've studied so hard that our noggin' feels fit to burst. But we live in technological times where a life of ease and leisure seemingly beckons. Presumably, playing the sedentary *Wii* video game golf can help us avoid the yips and provide a break from the rigours of academia?

Not so fast; if we use too much technology it's possible that we'll literally develop a malady called *digital dementia*. This new danger "German

neuroscientist Manfred Spitzer describes as a decline in cognitive abilities more commonly linked with brain injuries. Spitzer argues that relying on digital media is significantly detrimental to our brain health and its impacts severe enough to interfere with our daily lives." (Delgado, 2021). Type that in your tool bar and smoke it! Instead of learning and evolving through life, all the while strengthening our synaptic connections, technology can function like junk food for the brain.

It's common sense, but we're so used to thinking of technology as merely a series of tools to make life easier. Allowing speaking computer programs to answer our questions and cell phones to remember all phone numbers can leave our brains sluggish and emaciated. It's intellectual *couch lock*, so to speak. So while your brain might be so chock full of schoolwork that it feels like it's about to burst, that's better than just pressing the easy button of learning and allowing technology to do all the work for you (for instance by googling answers and summaries rather than doing our prescribed course readings) Plus, there's the added risk that even recreational technology can be harmful to the old noggin'! So much for a Jetsons-esque 21st century of leisure and play with flying cars and computers doing all the work for us. With comfort it seems we risk paralysis and mental freeze.

In all seriousness, dementia is an awful thing and we're a long way from seeing smartphone addiction as comparable to Alzheimer's. Anyone who's observed the mental decline of a loved one (or President) can sadly attest to the feeling of slow mourning as, piece by piece, a person's essence wicks away like so many water molecules out of a bathing suit on a sunny day. Names and years are forgotten, and personalities revert to something we'd never known the person could be. (Think here of how irritable a person can be when they're asked to participate in a conversation while their minds are endlessly embedded in their teensy cell phone news feed.) The unpredictable nature of dementia can be as though the cards of a lifetime were shuffled, and one day a beloved is a child and a newlywed, and another day, a belligerent co-worker. There's bright spots too; I recall my 99-year-old Great Grandma (stricken with dementia) being overjoyed to see me; one visit she thought I was my uncle, but that was fine. The pleasure in her face was as genuine as ever. But hey, if there be an avoidable form of dementia it behooves us to

avoid it at all costs. Maybe it's time to memorize a few phone numbers and read a magazine instead of scrolling mindlessly, lest we literally dull our brains.

Crucially, to remain sharp as students mean we need to press our minds to be their very best. It's a tough road to hoe as it is, being a distance student without (necessarily) having a broad academic support network is a challenge in itself. Mental sedentary lifestyles implied by an excessive use of digital media are core to Spitzer's digital dementia concept: we lose acuity by relying on Grandpa Google and we diminish our creative sparkle by surfing through too many TikTok channels. Plus, "concussion-like symptoms" are nothing to snarl about. Our brains are serious business. Perhaps we might think of Athabasca as a helmet in the contact sport of digital reality.

Time to Play Outside, But Beware the Tech!

Despite the classic phrase that not all who wander are lost, and the fact that many sites in nature lack cellphone service. Nevertheless, for some a woodland amble develops into a full-blown hike, complete with GPS unit or App. It turns out that even when in the outdoors with our backpack full of granola bars and doggie biscuits a reliance on GPS machinery (geo-caching, anyone?) can be harmful to our health. This, too, can weaken our precious brain. Researchers at McMaster University in Hamilton have done the digging, "Several studies have found relationships between long-term GPS use and poor performance in route learning tasks. Spatial memory relies heavily on the hippocampus for memory retrieval and integration. Hippocampal dysfunction is associated with high levels of anxiety and depression, as well as deficits in working memory" (Shedden, n.d). Literally if we avoid getting lost by using technology, we are actually more likely to get lost in daily life as our brains atrophy. Just think of the consequences of hippocampal retardation! We could inadvertently enter a room mate's bedroom while hurriedly seeking the bathroom, or we might wander down the wrong back alley in search of our parked car and get mugged. When the brain goes, we can't be sure of ourselves. Not an ideal learning life! So, let's save our fecklessness for more fun pursuits, like random picnics in the real world of a burgeoning Canadian spring. Besides, being glued to a GPS is a disorienting way to follow a trail in itself, to this, I can attest.

It might be fair to add a rejoinder that in our times we live in what social theorist Ulrich Beck famously termed a *risk society*. Everything seems dangerous as though culture is looking for problems to counteract our relative privilege and affluence. As Beck famously put it, society nowadays seems to exclaim "we've had the lobster, now where's the disaster?" Being moderate with our digital technology can allow us to proceed in our studies with a healthy dose of unplugged time – handwriting notes and outlines can be a stimulating change from the perpetual blue screen glow, for instance, and even playing an old-fashioned board game can be a welcome break from strapping into the ol' Playstation cockpit. Above all, being mindful of what we are doing with our time, rather than listlessly shifting between screens and websites can help us to minimize digital drift. A mind is a terrible thing to waste and too much stimulation can diminish our pleasure. In the end, come hell or high water, the fact is that one day the magic of our brains and the mystery of our minds will evaporate as we age. So let's protect those precious noodles, we and our studies are worth it!

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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.

The Truth Behind the Tinfoil Hat

“Believe me It’s True!”

Alek Golijanin



People’s appeal towards conspiracy theories starts with the tin foil hat. No, seriously, it does. Hear me out, the hat goes on your head, and your head encompasses your brain, and the brain is what is responsible for a person’s ability to figure things out.

At some point in our life, every one of us has considered the possibility of a conspiracy theory being “true”, whether it was as a kid or a tin foil hat-wearing adult. Although conspiracy theories can be fun and have made for some great TV series and movies, the problem with today’s conspiracy theories is that they seem to have people falling down a bottomless rabbit hole and losing touch with reality. Things that were once a given because of the fact that science could prove them now have people countering the science in favor of the conspiracy theory, and it does not matter that their logic, or lack thereof, can be easily debunked.

Much of the appeal that conspiracy theories possess results from the human brain being a processing machine that was designed to analyze information and to seek out patterns, and to try to connect the dots, even when there are none. Simply put, it was better for our ancestors to connect whatever dots they thought they might be seeing if it meant that they would live to see another day and not end up dinosaur dinner. However, a lot has changed since those days; our brains are overwhelmed with today’s fast-paced lifestyle and the monetization of conspiracy theories, connecting dots where there are none, has created problems for society, as people attempt to make sense of the world and this thing called life.

Most of us can acknowledge the complexities of life and how everyone is susceptible to being thrown out of loop when their lives hit turbulence. Subsequently, for most of us, we are able to cope our way through it, recognizing it as a transitional period, rationally, and we persist on with life. Yet, for some, their coping strategies may rely heavily on beliefs and superstitions, that often start small, but gradually build into something ‘greater’ as a result of coincidental outcomes that seem to align with their beliefs and superstitions. When that happens, combined with other health struggles that those people might be dealing with, it can have a compounding effect that leaves those people out of touch with reality. Although this may only impact a small number of people, when we consider that the earth has over 7 billion people on it, that small number can turn into a significant total.

When crises do hit, their impact may take vulnerable people out of touch from reality, which is when the shills swoop in and attempt to monetize conspiracy theories and irrational belief systems. Often times these nefarious actors will peddle in conspiracy theories and irrational belief systems that they themselves do not believe in or have any connection to, but from which they believe that they can profit from.

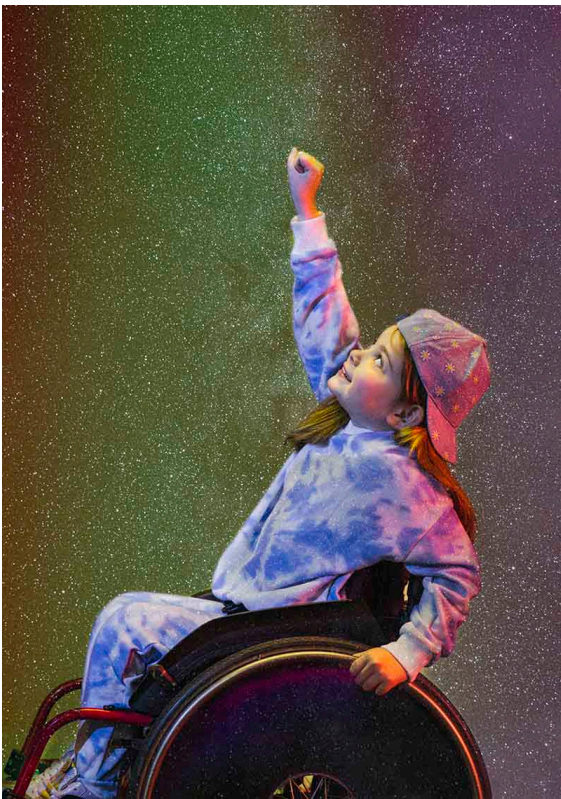
The problem with conspiracy theories and irrational belief systems is not the people who buy into them, but rather the shills that attempt to monetize another person’s vulnerability or even weaponize it. While some conspiracy theories may be wackier than others, others downright bat crazy, it is important to not let that overshadow the support and empathy that these vulnerable people are deserving of. For there is no bad thinking that can not be fixed with better thinking.

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



How to Fit All Our Dreams in One Day

Marie Well



Sir Thomas Carlyle said, "A loving heart is the beginning of all knowledge." Similarly, a loving heart is the beginning of all dreams. And we've got one day, each day, to come closer to realizing all our goals and dreams. So, how do we fit our hopes and aspirations into each passing day?

First, let me clarify. I dream we all have unstoppable success, happiness, and unconditional love. That dream is a crucial motivator for me. And we all have the potential to make anything a reality. The sky is the limit. In fact, I read in a stock trader psychology book that the highest achievers perceive no upper limits. Instead, they see endless opportunities everywhere. One of my goals is to train us to think similarly. So, I did some research, and here's what I discovered about fitting all our goals and dreams in one day, each day:

Cling to dreams that excite us. Maybe it's to do something noble for the community, be the best parent, get a Ph.D., earn a ridiculously high salary, write a best-selling book, gain celebrity status, and become a paragon of health and vitality. It's all fun we're meant to have, especially when it begins with a loving heart.

Stop surfing the web or social media sites. After all, social media sites often make us feel bad, according to research. Instead, spend that time doing tasks that better fulfill our dreams. If networking benefits our goals, strategies such as using LinkedIn Sales Navigator prevail to make the process efficient. But do give love to friends and dear ones—and strangers. After all, a loving heart is the dawn of every worthwhile dream.

Use the moments before we fall asleep to pray for (or dwell on) our dreams and goals. And do it with conviction. Remember, we've got all we need to realize any dream. If we don't have what we need already, then as long as we can imagine it (and it's ethical), we have the power to attain it.

Write down our dreams and goals and visit (or revise) them throughout the day. And do nothing but actions that further those dreams and goals. If an activity doesn't contribute to the plans or purpose, either revise the dreams or don't do that activity. That way, we stay focused on the goal.

Watch courses or read while walking to the store. Or listen to podcasts, audiobooks, or YouTube channels while driving. Eat and read. Do necessary mundane tasks while listening to audiobooks. Finally, fall asleep while reading a book. We stand to excel wherever we can do two activities instead of one, typically physical and intellectual combos.

Use two hands for physical tasks rather than one. We've got two hands for a reason—to do two jobs simultaneously. So, wipe the counter with two cloths at different regions. Eat with one hand while holding a book with the other. Wash the bathroom mirror with one hand while cleaning the sink. And best of all, be ambidextrous with boxing sports, should we go that route. In my opinion, every child should be taught to box and write with both hands.

Exercise smart. Use breaks between weightlifting sets to do cardio instead of resting. Walk the hallway back and forth while watching a course. Or do work at a computer while pedaling a desk cycle. Or sit on a medicine ball at work instead of a regular chair. Or bike to work instead of driving or taking transit. Moreover, push ourselves hard during exercise while ensuring high energy the next day. In other words, train as hard and efficiently as possible without overtraining.

Don't waste time getting jacked on coffee. In the morning, instead of sipping coffee, take an Acetyl L-Carnitine, B-Complex, and Vitamin D for boosted energy and vitality. And spend that morning coffee time (and subsequent crashes) achieving our dreams instead. A no-coffee day means a more tranquil, peace-loving mind, too. We're less likely to explode emotionally without four cups of coffee during the day.

Maximize quality of hygiene while minimizing grooming time. Spend fifteen to twenty minutes maximum on hygiene, but do it strategically so that we look terrific. All we need to do is have a quick fifteen-minute ice-cold shower (which is excellent for the hair), put on a tiny bit of makeup, brush our teeth, put on deodorant, and get dressed.

But here's the strategy for having a quick hygiene routine to make us look our best: First, take an inexpensive course on how to dress fashionably from Udemy. Once we know our body type (inverted triangle, rectangle, apple, pear, or hourglass), we can search for "shirts for inverted triangles" and know exactly what will look great on us with next to no shopping time. And then, once we determine our seasonal color palette (fall, winter, summer, or spring), we can look at a clothing item or makeup product and know what color looks best by comparing it to our seasonal color palette online. This skill saves valuable time, money, and effort.

And be sure to try L'Oréal's virtual hair color try-on app, where we can test hair colors until we find the best one. And then, if we don't like L'Oréal's products, we can buy a herbal hair dye of the same color or request the color from a salon. What may have taken us an hour and a half to look presentable will now take us twenty minutes tops to look fabulous. Spend that extra hour we'd otherwise

Authentic Events

Upcoming AU Related Events

Beyond "Not in My Backyard": A rural response to the toxic drug emergency

Tues, May 9, 10:00 to 11:30 am MDT

Online, Hosted by AU Communities in Transition

news.athabascau.ca/events/beyond-not-in-my-backyard-a-rural-response-to-the-toxic-drug-emergency/

Register through above link

Library Chat

Tues, May 9, 10:30 am to 2:30 pm MDT

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, May 10, 10:30 am to 2:30 pm MDT

Online, Hosted by AU Library

www.athabascau.ca/library/index.html

No pre-registration needed; access through chat box on home page

Exactly What You Need: Search Strategies and Accessing Sources

Wed, May 10, 12:00 to 12:30 pm MDT

Online, Hosted by AU Library

www.facebook.com/events/155955340752739

Register through above link

Moose Hide Campaign Day

Thur, May 11

Online and in-person

Hosted by Nukskahtowin and AU

news.athabascau.ca/events/the-moose-hide-campaign-day/

Learn more and register through above link

Library Chat

Thur, May 11, 10:30 am to 2:30 pm MDT

Online, Hosted by AU Library

www.athabascau.ca/library/index.html

No pre-registration needed; access through chat box on home page

Asian Heritage in Canada's Built Environment: Why It Matters

Thur, May 11, 5:00 to 6:00 pm MDT

Online via Zoom

Hosted by AUSU

www.ausu.org/event/identity-representation-and-architectural-design/

RSVP through above link

All events are free unless otherwise noted.

spend on our hygiene exercising instead. So, color and sculpt our physiques while saving at least an hour of prep time each day!

Try a no-cook diet. That's what I eat. I never turn on the stove or oven except when a loved one requests. The no-cook diet saves time. I feel the no-cook diet is healthier than most cooked ones and reversed my severe chronic disease. But the no-cook diet must involve many fruits and vegetables, healthy fats, flaxseeds, mixed beans, canned salmon, (and Safeway chickens). The closest thing I've come to this diet is from the book *How Not to Die*. And be sure to get our groceries home delivered for an extra \$9. The time saved is astounding!

As a final piece of advice, remember that a body in motion stays in motion. So, the more we focus on our dreams, the more our productivity and output exponentiates. That means if we study constantly, we're more likely to discover excellent study strategies, making us even more efficient. And the more likely we are to attain the highest educational goals we can imagine.

We can fit all our dreams in one day! So it's our birthright to achieve all of our dreams. We all have the power to do this and so much more. However, we all have "limiting factors" that may seem like barriers, whether autism, anxiety, ADHD, chronic disease, poverty, cancer, other disability, trauma, addiction, or social or cultural disadvantage. But that's what makes all this so beautiful! It's the overcoming that represents the layers of icing on the cake. We truly have no limitations except the ones we place on ourselves. And indeed, not even those can stop us.



Scholarship of the Week

Digging up scholarship treasure for AU students.

Scholarship name: Student Essay Contest

Sponsored by: Fraser Institute

Deadline: June 1, 2023

Potential payout: up to \$1500

Eligibility restriction: Applicants must be students studying in Canada or Canadian students studying abroad, and be either high-school, undergraduate, or graduate students in any discipline.

What's required: An online application including contact and academic info, along with an essay of 1000 to 1500 words on the topic "What would our Essential Scholars say about the world today?"

Tips: Read the Contest Rules and FAQs carefully.

Where to get info: www.fraserinstitute.org/education-programs/students/essay-contest



Music Review—Element

Jessica Young



Artist: Louise Burns

Album: *Element*

Vancouver producer-songwriter, Louise Burns, has released her fifth studio album, *Element*. The album is available for streaming anywhere you get your music.

Of the album, Burns says, “For me, there is nothing more radical than being joyful despite what you’re going through.” She adds that her new album is about “creating a world in which you can find peace when the real one ain’t deliverin’.”

Burns pieced *Element* together over a two-and-a-half-year span between home and Mexico. Through its earliest writing sessions in the spring of 2020, Burns—a professional traveling musician since the age of 15—found herself grounded in British Columbia for the longest stretch of time since the early ‘00s, and she was experiencing

anxiety and an artistic wanderlust because of it. “I had never in my adult life stayed at home for that long, and I’m just talking the first three months of the pandemic. That was a really interesting feeling,” Burns says. “Just by default, I started writing music to create a sense of escapism for myself, choosing a more atmospheric and airier sonic aesthetic to create a sense of movement, despite being stuck in one place.”

Element consists of nine tracks: I Don’t Feel it Like I Used To; Let it Die; Bloom; Kids; Industry Creeps (Interlude); Element; Play Pretend; Hot Girls; and See You. Music videos for “Bloom” and “I Don’t Feel it Like I Used To” are available on YouTube.

Louise Burns’ dreamy, ghostly electronic sound and vocals remind me of a variety of 80’s artists such as Kate Bush, Madonna, and Celine Dion. Her music videos also give serious 80’s vibes, with Louise looking like she is channeling an ethereal, mystical elf queen (think Galadriel from *Lord of the Rings*—absolutely stunning). Not to mention her vocals have a haunting, surreal quality that makes them super unique. According to Louise, she worked with a vocal coach and spent a ton of time working on fine-tuning her voice, as well as re-singing almost every song two or three times to make sure that the emotive performances she was trying to capture also complimented her tone.

As a whole, the album feels upbeat but incredibly chill—the track “Play Pretend” weaves the soothing sound of literal humpback whales into its digitized snare hits. Still, the song lyrics certainly pack an emotional punch. My favourite track on the album is definitely “Kids”, which is about reconnecting with a person from her past. Of the track, Louise says: “There’s a sadness about time wasted, but also an appreciation of what we currently have.”

I also love the song “Don’t Feel it Like I Used To”, which is hands down my new breakup anthem. Louise sings, “Something’s gonna happen and I don’t know when/Baby when it happens we’ll be strangers again”.

Overall, I really enjoyed *Element*, and you can check out Louise Burns on [TikTok](#).

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



Candlelight Performance

Xine Wang



The setup was beautiful to watch as it was to listen. The performance took place in an old community church adorned with over 2000 candles.

I recently attended a performance hosted by Candlelight, a live, multi-sensory musical concert that is hosted across the world. Local musicians showcase their interpretation of classical and contemporary pieces. For example, I attended a classical quartet featuring Bach, Tchaikovsky and Beethoven. If you're someone who hasn't been to a classical music quartet before, the idea of attending one can seem daunting at first. However, it can be an enriching and enlightening experience for the ears and the mind. The classical quartet I attended was comprised of professional musicians and gave a stellar performance. For busy AU students looking to relax and decompress, listening to a live performance can improve the mood and be good for our mental wellbeing. It also felt as if I had time-traveled to the baroque and classical eras when the music was composed and performed for family of royalty.

Classical music quartets typically consist of four musicians playing instruments such as the violin, viola, cello, and piano. The concert I attended had a phenomenal set up with over 2000 candles that illuminated the stage. This gave the illusion of a concert under the moonlight.

If you're looking to attend a local musical performance, here are some tips to help you enjoy your first experience at a

classical music performance:

Dress Appropriately

While there's no strict dress code for classical music concerts, it's recommended that you dress up a little bit for the occasion. Dressing appropriately shows respect for the performers and helps create a more formal atmosphere.

Arrive Early

Arriving early will give you enough time to find your seat and get settled in before the performance starts. You may also want to take some time to explore the venue and read any information about the quartet that's provided.

Familiarize Yourself with the Program

The program will list the pieces that the quartet will be playing during the performance. Take a few moments to read through the program and familiarize yourself with the pieces. This will help you appreciate the music more fully and follow along with the performance.

Be Respectful

During the performance, it's important to be respectful of the musicians and other audience members. Turn off your cell phone and avoid talking or making any unnecessary noise. If you need to cough or sneeze, try to do so quietly or during a break in the music.



Dressing up for the event makes the occasion special and shows your respect for the performers.



Let the Music Speak to You

This relates to the last point in that turning off our cellphones and fully immersing in the music. Classical music can be complex and challenging to understand, but it's also incredibly beautiful and moving. Let the music speak to you and allow yourself to get lost in the performance. You may find yourself experiencing a range of emotions, from joy and excitement to sadness and reflection.

Attending a classical music quartet for the first time can be a wonderful experience. By following these tips, you'll be able to fully appreciate the music and create a memorable experience for yourself.

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

Concerts make a great date night activity as it is a different sensory experience and also helps you connect with your loved ones through music.



[blue rare]

A Slice of Cake: In Praise of the Magic of Film

Oliver Moorcraft-Sykes



When I was in high school, there was a repertory movie house where you could see a double bill of classic or notable older films for just a couple of dollars. My friends and I would go there pretty often on Friday and Saturday nights, whenever we either weren't working dishwashing, waitering or busing dishes at the local Bino's Restaurant, or else too stoned to leave the basement. We didn't get invited to many of the cool parties, so a night of movies, followed by five-pin bowling, pinball and arcade games, rounded out with coffee and donuts, was a classic weekend entertainment.

The thing I loved most about this theater was that the owner or manager, or whoever curated the film selections, had fantastic taste (I don't recall ever seeing a bad film there). Also, the fact that the double bills were nearly always combinations of very divergent films. For instance, I remember seeing Stanley Kubrick's neo-noir masterpiece *Chinatown* paired with *Flesh Gordon*, a 1970s soft porn sci-fi flick. *Battleship Potemkin*, Sergei Eisenstein's Russian classic from the 1920s, was shown

alongside a Marx Brothers film; Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner* was coupled with Jean Luc Godard's *Jules et Jim*; Sergio Leone's spaghetti westerns cozied up beside silent era farces.

I enjoyed all the movies I saw there, but the ones that impacted me the most were not necessarily the most tasteful or intellectual films, but rather the ones that offered up something visceral, romantic, and extravagant. Unforgettable images, bucketloads of operatic excess, unique ways of envisioning heaven and hell on Earth: to this day, these are the things I hope for in films. To paraphrase Alfred Hitchcock, perhaps the greatest auteur of all, I wanted a "slice of cake" rather more than a "slice of life." The beautiful, brutal westerns of Sam Peckinpah, and the horrifying fever dream of Ken Russell's *The Witches of Loudon*, for instance, are burned into my memory banks.

I suppose we all have a special, indelible connection to those moments in our youth when we are exposed to ideas and viewpoints that widen our horizons and shift our perspectives in significant ways. Seeing such an idiosyncratic kaleidoscope of old movies gave me exposure to many vivid and vastly different depictions of the world. Art is one vital way that mankind attempts to explore and understand this strange existence we find ourselves in. For people such as myself, who have no religious convictions, the artistic vision, presented through words, music, visual images, is possibly the most significant way to approach the ineffable. Those high school weekend outings turned me into an ardent, lifelong cinephile. For one thing, they prompted me to dive, however erratically, sporadically, and unsystematically, into the history of film. To me, great filmmaking is one of the highest forms of human endeavour, encompassing at its best an excellence in so many crafts. For better or worse, films such as *The Cabinet of Doctor Caligari*, *The Exorcist*, *Beetlejuice*, *Annie Hall*, *Titanic*, *The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly*, *Cape Fear*, *Blue Velvet*, *Eyes Wide Shut*, and *Hereditary* have all had a significant impact on me, and enriched my knowledge and enjoyment beyond measure.

I also believe that, like milkshakes and sunsets, films are best when they're shared; streaming Netflix at home is a poor substitute for a night at the movies. There are many soul-satisfying ways for human beings to enjoy each other's company. I think one of my favourites is to gather together in a darkened theatre with one or two friends and room full of strangers, and watch a feat of luminous magic unfold before our eyes.



Student Sizzle — AU's Hot Social Media Topics

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

AthaU Facebook Group

Worth the wait. When course textbooks for three courses didn't show up by the first day of study, a student wondered how long they usually take. After a number of responses were posted, including a few mini-rants about etexts, the original poster commented that the parcel with the textbooks arrived later that same day.

Discord

Taking note(s). A student asks for tips on writing effective notes for a course, and others weigh in with their methods.

reddit

The ChatGPT revolution. The busiest conversation thread this week follows an observation that using GPT could "totally redefine AU learning." The initial post is so well structured that a commenter wonders if it was written by ChatGPT.

Twitter

@aulibarchives tweets: "Are you finding your search results are not focused enough? Learn how to use field codes to narrow your search: <https://athabascau.libanswers.com/faq/210935> #AULibrary #distanceEd."

[Hey, you! Yes, you! Do you have your finger on the pulse of the AU communities? Do you know what's hot and what's not? Do you think you could compile some of those things each week into the latest Student Sizzle and pick up some pocket change at the same time? If so, contact karl@voicemagazine.org and let him know!]



Beyond Literary Landscapes

Natalia Iwanek

A Brief Overview of Fables, Folk Tales, Fairy Tales, and Everything In-Between



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

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

Who

This week’s column focuses on providing readers with a brief overview of fables, folk tales, fairy tales, and everything in-between in this expansive genre.

What

Some notable fables, folk tales, fairy tales, and critiques include *Disfigured: On Fairy Tales, Disability, and Making Space* by Amanda Leduc, Aesop’s *Fables*, the works of The Brothers Grimm, the works of Hans Christian Andersen, *Arabian Nights and Days* by Egyptian writer Naguib Mahfouz, and the collected works of *One Thousand and One Nights*.

In particular, some notable works of The Brothers Grimm include “Cinderella,” “Snow White,” “Little Red Riding Hood,” “Rapunzel” and “Hansel and Gretel.”

For those who would like to learn more about Aesop, famed works include “The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse,” “The Boy Who Cried Wolf,” “The Wolf and the Crane,” and “The Tortoise and the Hare.”

In the case of Hans Christian Andersen, readers may enjoy “The Little Mermaid,” “The Ugly Duckling,” “The Snow Queen,” and “The Princess and the Pea.”

As for *One Thousand and One Nights*, [some famous tales include](#) “Aladdin and The Magic Lamp,” “The Merchant and the Jinnee,” “Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves,” and “The Seven Voyages of Sinbad the Sailor.”

Where

These works are set throughout North Africa, East, West, and South Asia, Egypt, ancient Greece, Canada, the United States, and Denmark.

When

These works take place from the 5 century BCE all the way to the 17 and 21-centuries.

Why

These works may be of interest to AU students who would like to learn more about the historical evolution of fairy tales, fables, and folk tales, as well as those who would like to understand their prevalence and influence in modern culture. In addition, the lessons of these tales remain

applicable to today's challenges. Finally, students may also be interested in deconstructing this topic, and examining the problematic aspects of this genre, especially as it relates to disability.

How

AU's wide range of diverse courses make it easy to study this topic in depth. Courses related to fables, folk tales, fairy tales, and everything in-between 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 this topic may consider enrolling in ENGL 305: Literature for Children, a senior-level, six-credit course, which "introduces the student to children's literature, its history and development, and its rich variety of forms and techniques." (Students should note that this course requires ENGL 211: Prose Forms and ENGL 212: Poetry and Plays as prerequisites.) Happy reading!

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



A Look into Obesity Adverse Childhood Experiences

Alek Golijanin



Over the past few years, some prominent voices have chosen to take the pop culture route and shame 'fatness', but also to speak about people who they know nothing about except for the fact that they may be "fat". One would expect such comments to come from individuals that are trying to become "influencers" and who tend to include "free thinker" in their social media bios, but it becomes troubling when scholars also join in on the shaming, especially when they are licensed psychologists.

When it comes to licensed psychologists, if they are focused on critiquing more than they are focused on explaining the complexities of obesity, then perhaps they should change their career path, transitioning from a psychologist to becoming a Next Top Model judge. Otherwise, the focal point of every conversation around obesity needs to start with the

impact that adverse childhood experiences have on people and go from there.

The foundational ACE Study – Adverse Childhood Experiences

The foundational ACE Study was conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Kaiser Permanente in the mid-1990s with a group of patients that were insured through Kaiser Permanente, a study that focused on adverse childhood experiences, and it resulted in major breakthroughs on better understanding illness, including obesity. This study started out by exploring traumatic experiences during childhood including maltreatment and family

dysfunction, and the current health status and behaviors were affecting the health outcomes of adults.

There were a total of 10 adverse childhood experiences that were identified, five were directly related to the child while the other five were directly related to the child's family. The experiences that affected the child directly were experiencing physical abuse, sexual abuse, psychological abuse, physical neglect, and psychological neglect. The five experiences related to the child's family were the child witnessing domestic abuse, having family that misused substances, family with mental health struggles, family that served time in prison, or parents who would divorce.

When it came to being overweight or gaining a large amount of weight in a short period of time, the researching team discovered that the experience that seemed more common amongst children, and eventually adults, was the experience of physical and sexual abuse.

In cases of physical abuse, it was often found that children would overeat to get "bigger" and with the thought of being more likely to defend themselves against bullies. The impact of sexual abuse was also significant, and whether it occurred while a person was an infant, or as they were entering into adulthood, it was not uncommon for patients to overeat as a coping mechanism and to continue putting on weight. One patient described how their sibling, who they described as being 'fat', did not seem to be getting sexually abused because being obese seemed to protect her. However, it is just as likely that this patient's older sister was also sexually abused, and the weight she put on was a result of her adverse experiences, but that the abuse was occurring in private.

A lot has changed since the 1990s, when one of the lead researchers behind the ACE Study, Dr. Vincent Felitti, flew to give a presentation on the findings to his peers, and for which he was subsequently ridiculed. Over time, Dr. Felitti proved to be right, and the ACE factors would get expanded to include outcomes like community violence, neighborhood safety, racism, and living in foster care. Thankfully for all of us, modern-day scholars seem to realize the complexities of the human experience and how science is constantly growing and helping us learn more about ourselves.

People are the product of the environment and the sum of their experiences.

Our 'opinionated psychologist' friends never meet the "fat" people that they choose to shame, shaming them only after society chooses to celebrate them for being themselves. So, is the issue obesity or is it celebrating people that might not be "perfect"? In the end, mature adults can tell the difference between comments that go wrong, but which start with good intentions, and comments that someone makes when they are jealous of another person's success and when they have unresolved issues with their own sense of self. The comments made about the plus-size Illustrated Sports Swimsuit cover and other individuals who may be overweight are the latter, and any comments that come from a place that is without empathy and understanding of another person's life also fall into that category.

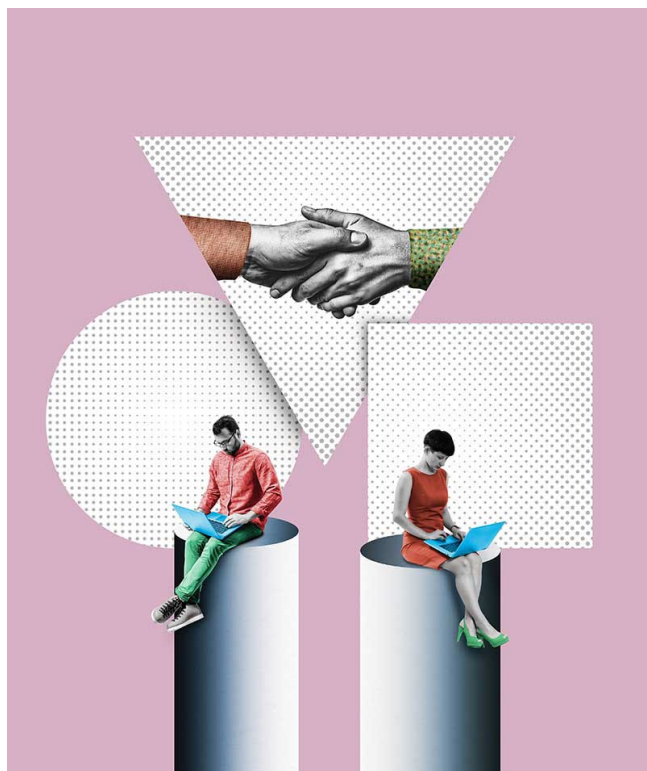
Simply put, there is so much more to obesity than a person being "lazy". People who struggle with their weight, with obesity, are not weak in any form nor are they flawed for looking the way they do. Much like bulimia and anorexia, overeating and obesity are eating disorders that many people struggle with, and there are many reasons why someone might be overweight. Some of those reasons can include organ function and hormone regulation, two extra factors that can affect a person's physical appearance and body weight. There is far more to people than first glance.

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



Getting the Memo: AU's Foray Into Academic Research Forums Content and Medium in Distance Education

Jason Sullivan



Technical glitches have a fateful feel to them: it's like Murphy's Law (where anything that *can* go wrong *will* go wrong) meets the original *Jurassic Park* (where a chaos principle ensures that a teensy bugaboo leads to an infinite regress of larger and larger foul-ups). So it was that when AU last month conducted an online research forum the early going was met with technical difficulties. A traffic snarl or weather event could have colluded to make an in-person meeting difficult too but there was a certain sense of predictability when things didn't start off smoothly. But you know what? That's fine, natural, and AU is always progressing in its delivery of education and educational methods.

Jacques Derrida might have nodded in appreciation of the trickiness of an online event. Maybe he'd point us to his book *Paper Machines* where he ponders how archives and events can seem vanishingly distant in a computer era: the book's syllabus states that he asks "whether there can be a virtual event or a virtual archive" (online). This begs a timeless

question: what does it mean when something *happens* and why are we sure we understand technology's utilitarian role in how things get that way?

Eventually, without even adjusting our sets, the research forum proceeded apace. By this time the *Fly on the Wall* had departed the virtual sphere to attend his day job in agriculture, where irrigation season commences, and technical issues involve coyotes chewing polyurethane hosing and deer stepping on PVC pipes. More tactile but no less frustrating; like life itself, technical glitches happen but how often do we question technology's attendant assumption that it composes merely a set of tools? Leafing through a reprint of a social science journal article is different than scrolling down a page but speaking on the phone isn't so far removed from a Zoom conversation or lecture – or is it?

Properly assessing what technology is best for a given goal allows us to maximize any given medium. And here AU did a great job so that we could all view some videos of presenters and their upcoming content (link below). There's something powerful about seeing a person as they'd appear in a classroom setting, delivering a lecture in a way that'd be basically familiar all the way back to ancient Alexandria, Lesbos or Hippo. In fact, minus the invariable snafu, it'd be great for AU to produce more research presentations and interactive events for students, alumni and, as they say at Summerland, BC's Agriculture Research Station: *Joe Public* (gender pronoun s/he).

Locally, Okanagan College has outstanding in-person speaker series' that, in my experience, are well-attended and stimulating events. The more AU reaches out (maybe by involving some Canadian celebrities and/or CFL football players to go along with their excellent Athabasca U ad campaign at stadiums) the more the excellence of our school will be felt. Unlike regional schools or colleges with certain focuses, AU truly represents a cross section of the intellectual and scholastic community. Students can study (and give Zoom presentations) from an igloo or a treehouse or a yacht or a forest and, in this at times maddening age of viral videos and would-be

pundits, an expansion of authentic university research forums that are more in-depth than your average TED talk might just hit the spot.

While Derrida in his own words stated: “I believe in the value of the book, which keeps something irreplaceable, and in the necessity of fighting to secure its respect” his outstanding career as a public lecturer shows that he also valued forums for expression and discussion (online). While nothing beats eye contact in a room with a speaker, the disembodied realm of online forums certainly *adds* a new shade of meaning to our sense of ourselves and our concepts. Derrida suggested that all that seems unified, such as meanings, can be deconstructed and then reassembled into something different, true, and new. Maybe we’re all merely facets of our personal enigma even if we’re in a room with one another.

In fact, Derrida’s concept of *deconstruction* aptly fits with our times where communication and education are being transformed by new technologies; that is, new ways of being human in relation to one another and even with ourselves. “This is what deconstruction is made of: not the mixture but the tension between memory, fidelity, the preservation of something that has been given to us, and, at the same time heterogeneity, something absolutely new and a break” (Derrida, 6). Wherever education is going within technology, we must never forget that the contradictions of learning from others while still being ourselves has a third component: *mediation* by the tools of learning, be they stone writing tablets in ancient times or laptop computers at present. We become, in a sense, the process of our learning. As distance students the hope is that we can become more humanly connected with our cohort and instructors with the aid of more visual contact through the somewhat mystical orb (akin to the Ancient Greek’s oracles who people visited to receive prophesies) of the blue glow of a computer screen.

Finally, it’s worth recalling that, just as we are what we eat, we are also at once ourselves and an Other to ourself – each thought we think is an inner dialogue, or dispute or lecture, through which our narrative of being unfolds. Derrida adds that to really be aware of ourselves and our roles in life we must “take into account this impossibility of being one with oneself. It is because I am not one with myself that I can speak with the other and address the other” (14). In other words, to communicate in any manner implies that we are somewhat disembodied within ourselves as we taste and consider new ideas. By this token, our online presence, though only part of our whole, merely reflects a larger state of being where we are each, in any instance, not one but many, never giving or receiving all of a person in any given moment. Just ask yourself “what do I think of that” and you see how we are never all there, *per se*, even if we were in a room with a given lecturer.

Kudos to our beloved institution for broadening its digital scope. After all, if any university needs to maximize its digital footprint it’s a school formerly categorized under the snail mail term: correspondence education. With research forums we can achieve a deeper correspondence with our learning as well as with others who would be distant geographically, if not intellectually.

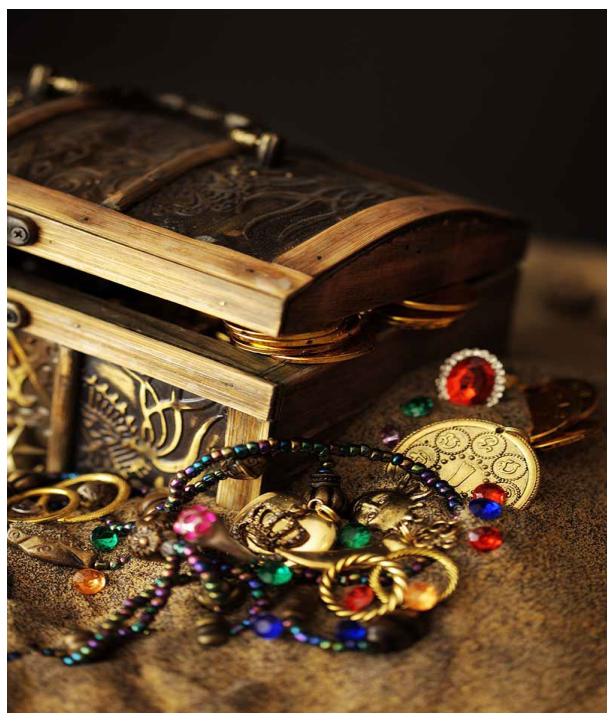
Without further ado, here’s the link to those [aforementioned summary videos](#) of just some of the presenters from the research forum. Let’s hope there’s many more such events to come!

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Hidden Secrets and Gems to Finding Hyper-Efficiency

Marie Well



I have Gopi Krishna syndrome. It's a great thing to have. Gopi Krishna was a Hindu who had a life-transformative experience: he underwent enlightenment through a physical bolt of energy that erupted throughout his spine during a Kundalini moment in meditation. As a result of the unwieldy power, he started going crazy and sought others who had similar experiences. But very few people in this world have had an actual Kundalini moment. He finally discovered how to hone the experience. Afterward, he saw the world differently: the sky and the mountains became living, breathing entities, overwhelmingly beautiful. He labeled his experience the next phase of "human evolution."

But that's not the point of this story. Before the Kundalini experience, Gopi spent much of his education not studying but reading library books unrelated to his academics. So, he failed academically, although his life was profoundly successful. In other words, Gopi's academics were fraught with inefficient

study habits. As Gopi learned how to tame his Kundalini experience, similarly, we must tame our inefficiencies with studies.

I'm writing this article because I need more efficiency in studying for a professional sales designation exam. I decided to do additional research to create a sales course I'd sell to a private college and write a sales book. These are grand ambitions. However, I'm doing massive research but hardly making a dent studying for the sales designation.

We all have moments where we could be more efficient. That is unless we've mastered the art of efficiency. So, I took the liberty to learn what it means to be hyper-efficient to maximize our productivity and excel at our studies. Here is what I found:

Schedule. When we get a project or assignment, we benefit from scheduling it thoughtfully with a calendar. That means indicating tasks with start and finish dates. Without scheduling, we might float and miss deadlines. And the planned end date must leave ample time before the actual deadline. That way, we can relax knowing that we'll inevitably "nail it" while pushing hard to get the results.

Time and record every goal-oriented task so we can better schedule. If you're like me, you have no concept of time: a half hour can float by and we think five hours have just passed. But some people are so intimately tied to time that they can tell the time within five minutes of accuracy without ever wearing a watch. However, we can train ourselves to be masters of knowing how much time our tasks take. Simply record and time each chunk of tasks. Run a stopwatch or mark the start and end times. But it's essential to document the time to gain inevitable mastery of scheduling.

Set high expectations. This is essential for success. Whose more likely to get the A+: the student gunning for a C- or the student gunning for a 100%? I can't stress this enough: whatever we think we can do, we can do so much more! Are we like the students who set out to accomplish ten tasks, and all ten tasks are completed just minutes before bedtime? Or are we the student who designates

twenty tasks, and just minutes before bedtime, all twenty instead of ten are accomplished? Yes, that's the power of setting goals with high expectations plus hard work: we're destined to achieve big, plentiful dreams.

Journal a playbook. After each significant task during the day, open a journal, and write "What I did well," "What I could have done better," and "How I will improve my performance next time." Also, whenever a thought, idea, or concern comes to mind, write it down immediately. These spur-of-the-moment thoughts are all relevant and can hold the key to unimaginable success. And take the critical thinking and problem-solving courses from ViAGO. I took the first level, which has helped me enormously with rapid problem-solving techniques for strictly win-win solutions.

Set SMART goals. They are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound. Smart goals are instrumental. For our studies, we might set a SMART goal that says, "Download thirty academic papers and sign out ten books that discuss 'Maximizing efficiency' within three days." It's also essential, for instance, to break down our essay writing into stages, starting with acquiring papers and books to reading and highlighting potential quotes in them, to creating an outline with these quotes (which can take the most time if done right), to writing the paper, to proofreading the document (at least three times two days or more apart), and so on. It's important to quantify these steps with deadlines. And it's essential to place these goals on a calendar, referencing the calendar daily to mentally mark our sure-fire progress.

Keep a neat space. I'm developing a hobby with janitorial skills. I bought a cleaning apron, two dozen microfiber cloths, nontoxic window and all-purpose solutions, bleach spray cleaner, and clothing organizers. I can't begin to describe how many hours of cleaning these microfiber cloths alone save me. Thanks to these microfiber cloths, the whole bathroom now sparkles in a matter of fifteen minutes. In contrast, I would previously scrub for two hours with J-cloths, and the bathroom would look grungy. If we can, read a janitorial book on speed cleaning. The time and energy we save with proper cleaning knowledge and supplies are massive.

Focus our thoughts and actions on the most relevant tasks. For example, my most urgent and important goals this year are to clean, exercise, work, take and make courses, and get my sales designation. So, it's important to focus my thoughts on these tasks. But whenever I have idle thoughts, I focus on giving unconditional love to everyone who comes to mind. And that, of course, includes terrific thoughts of us and our future of unstoppable success.

Be motivated, not deterred, by failure and success. When we fail, we should see it as a fun challenge to turn into a dynamo. I went from pathetically cleaning the house to cleaning it with the same joy and efficiency we'd give a loved hobby. In junior high school, I was the worst at every sport. Still, I would stay after school doing volley after volley and ended up with the bronze medal for top female athlete. And I know people who barely passed high school if they passed at all, who found themselves in a PhD program. There's nothing we can't do amazingly well if we "nerd out" or, in other words, become enthusiasts.

We may not have Kundalini experiences like Gopi Krishna, where we enter the next stage of evolution based on heightened spirituality. But we can grow highly efficient. With excellent efficiency comes the pleasure of hoisting our flags on the peaks of the highest mountains—although the journey and not the arrival is the most fun.





Dear
Barb

Barbara Godin

All in the Family

Dear Barb:

My parents just separated because my dad was having an affair with my aunt (mom's sister)! I am devastated! I thought my aunt and my dad got along well, but I never figured this would happen. My mom is heartbroken and barely able to function. Meanwhile my dad wants me to be happy for him, as he says my aunt is the person he should have married in the first place.

I love my aunt and we were always close, but I can't even look at her now. My cousin is as shocked as I am (aunt's son). How can people do things like this? I don't know how to process this; my whole world is upside down. How can I ever trust my dad again? Right now, I don't want to see my dad or my aunt and I don't know if I will ever want to see them again. I think I need some help to get through this, do you have any suggestions on what I can do?

Looking forward to your reply.

Thanks, Jodie.

Hello Jodie:

Thank you for your email. I am so sorry this has happened to your family. Everything you believed to be true has come into question. Your dad betrayed not only your mother but you as well. Your aunt also betrayed her family. Life is not always black and white. People do stupid and hurtful things. However, remember that your

father is still your father, and he will always be your father. My advice would be to give yourself some time to heal. Spend time with your mom. It might be best not to discuss your feelings with her, as she is still trying to process what happened as well. She was not only betrayed by your dad but also by her sister. You both must find a way to manage your feelings of grief, anger, and loss. Do not rush; take your time. Time will help you to process and manage the pain.

However, if you are still feeling this way after a year, you may need to get some professional help, as would your mother. All marriages are unique. Your perspective of your parents' marriage was from a daughter's point of view. What really went on in the marriage is only known by the two people involved, therefore you must let judgment go. No doubt what your dad and your aunt did was cruel and hurtful, but their reasons may be complicated. Although your view of your dad has undoubtedly changed, I hope in time you will be able to find some forgiveness for your dad, as forgiveness will also be healing for you. Best of luck Jodie.

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
Food and Diapers


Wanda Waterman



AT THE MEETIN'
TONIGHT
KIN YOU ASK
TOWN COUNCIL
TO GRANT A CHILD
CARE ALLOWANCE
TO NEW MOTHERS?




MY MAYBELLE ANNE
AIN'T GUT ENOUGH
TO BUY
FOOD AN' DIAPERS.




I CAN'T ASK
THE TOWN COUNCIL
FOR THAT!
THE YOUNG ONES'LL THINK
THEY ONLY HAVE TO
GET PREGNANT
TO GET A FREE MEAL TICKET!



SHE GOT HERSELF
PREGNANT—
SHE CAN BUY HER OWN
FOOD AND DIAPERS!



GUT 'ERSELF
PREGNANT?
SHER HOPE
TOWN COUNCIL
DON'T UNDERSTAND
BIOLOGY
LIKE YOU DOES.



OF COURSE THEY DO!
THE TOWN COUNCIL
IS PRO-LIFE!



UPDATE

COMMUNITY. RESOURCES . SERVICES



Apr. 13, 2023
5 p.m. MT
on Zoom

Building Momentum

Networking 101

Looking for to build a professional network?
Want to learn how to network more effectively
with others in your field?

Join us on April 13, 2023, at 5:00 p.m. MT for a
Hot Topic session on networking in any
profession. Host Trishtina Godoy-Contois, VP
External at AUSU, will kick off the hour with a
presentation on **Building Momentum:
Networking 101**. Afterwards, attendees can
participate in an informal, collaborative
discussion on tips that students can use to build
a professional network. [RSVP on Eventbrite!](#)

Spring Awards & Bursaries Cycle Coming Soon!

The AUSU spring awards cycle will be open and accepting
applications from **April 15-May 31, 2023**.

AUSU's Awards & Bursaries Program promotes and
celebrates academic achievement and community spirit
among AU undergrads, and provides aid to students
encountering financial hardship. You're eligible to apply if
you are an undergrad student taking any AU course at
the time of the application period. Please [visit our
website](#) for more on AUSU awards and bursaries.

Just starting out? Check out the [New Student Bursary](#).
Not sure you'll meet specific criteria? The [#lgo2AU Award](#)
is open to all undergrads who—yup—go to AU.



**Spring
Awards
Cycle**

**Coming
Soon**
April 15-May 31

We are CLOSED for the stat holiday April 7 & 10,
RETURNING to regular business hours April 11, 2023.

Provided by

ausu@ausu.org



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

CLASSIFIEDS

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

THE VOICE

Ph: 855.497.7003

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www.voicemagazine.org

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