



THE VOICE

Vol 31 Issue 35 - 2023-09-15

Are You Happy?

Fiction Feature

Discomfort Helps us Grow

Always a Silver Lining

Organized Crime Finale

Safety & Security in Canada

Plus:

*Call for Research Participants
Neurodivergent & Distance Learning
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**Strike While the Iron is Hot****Karl Low**

There are a number of high-profile strikes going on in the United States right now. From the United Auto Worker's Strike to that of the Writer's and Actor's Guilds. Of them, it's that of the Writer's Guild that most interests me because of how they're attempting to head off with legislation and negotiation what technology is bringing.

I've long held that the development of AI and automation are going to lead to massive upheaval in how our world will work. Far more disruptive than industrial age, or even the development of the internet, because it's a change that will be able to completely replace workers.

Many people, when I suggest this, like to point out the Luddites, people who also assumed at the start of the industrial revolution that the power of the steam engine would also put them all out of work, but what it did instead was enable the labour to produce products quickly and more efficiently.

This, in my opinion, is a bad argument because while technology was able to supplement the worker, it was unable to replace a worker entirely. This is where new robotics technologies and AI differs. Being able to produce more products more cheaply with the labour you have helps everybody because it allows prices to come down because of increased supply so more people can benefit.

Being able to produce products without any labourers at all, however, is an entirely different matter since it eliminates the people entirely. It doesn't matter how cheap the products get if people don't have any job at all, at least not under our current consumer-capitalist system. "But wait," comes the rejoinder, "people will still have jobs repairing the machines, right?"

But why would that be when producing a whole new machine can be done entirely through automation. Never mind the idea of machines being designed to repair the other machines.

"What about creative work?"

That's where the AI comes in. AI, as we currently have it, is not really creative, but it is great for analysing patterns and adjusting those based on feedback, such as purchasing decisions. And as we can see by modern TV and movies, real creativity is not prerequisite to make a profit, just a slight modification on a previous formula (such as the various Marvel Movies, or any reboot or remake we see) can be enough.

The combination of AI with robotics and animation will end our society as we know it. Not because of any sort of Terminator SkyNet scenario, but because our society is based on the idea of what you produce determines what you can have. That collapses when there is no reason or ability for you to produce anything, since the machines are already doing it better, faster, and cheaper.

This could, of course, lead to a utopic situation. One where we could eliminate most material wants for almost all the population, so long as we're willing to sacrifice the idea of some people doing far better than others.

But then we look back at the strikes, and the management's reaction.

We're probably in for a bumpy ride. Enjoy the read.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karl". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail on the letter 'l'.

Are you Happy? Give me a Sign

Lucy Djorno



Roland walked the same route to the supermarket every Friday. The same streets, the same storefronts he'd walked past for decades. What was different now is that he walked alone.

Sabrina had loved this walk. She'd peer in all the shop windows and sometimes pause to have a lingering look. Roland often had to tug her along, otherwise they'd never get their food shopping done.

In the months since Sabrina died, Roland walked alone. He seldom glanced at the shop windows now. Window-shopping reminded him too much of Sabrina, and that reminded him of how morose he felt without her.

He had tried to pull himself out of his grief-fueled listlessness. He worried that Sabrina would feel sad if she could see how unhappy he was. What he had always wanted most was for Sabrina to be happy. But he couldn't seem to shake himself out of his low spirits, even for the sake of his dead wife's post-life

contentment.

Today, when he walked past the flower shop, he almost collided with a woman rushing out. She was cradling a bouquet of cut tulips in her arms.

Sabrina had loved tulips. Roland's late mother-in-law used to run a florist's shop and Sabrina had grown up in a house full of blooms. For their wedding, Sabrina's mother donated the flowers. Sabrina's bridal bouquet was a simple arrangement with bright-pink tulips.

All through their marriage, Sabrina had fresh flowers in the house. She loved early spring, when the tulips were available, and she would fill a vase in every room with them. Roland had not seen a cut tulip since Sabrina died.

At the supermarket, Roland filled a basket with the few items he needed for the week. Just before he reached the checkout, he passed the store's small floral display—and came to a halt. Among the roses and the carnations and the mixed bouquets stood a single bunch of bright-pink tulips.

Roland stared at the tulips. They reminded him so forcefully of Sabrina. It's foolish, he thought to himself. A waste of money. But he felt strongly he was meant to take them home. Almost like a message from Sabrina.

He heard her voice behind him now. "Are you happy? The only thing that matters to me is that you are happy."

Roland whirled around. A woman he didn't recognize shuffled by, pushing her cart and speaking earnestly into her mobile phone. He stood staring after her, then turned back to the flowers.

Roland lifted the bunch of tulips, cradling them in one arm. He gave the surprised checkout girl one of the tulips before she wrapped them in paper. Then he carried the blooms home.

That evening he ate supper at his kitchen table, gazing at the bright-pink tulips. And, for the first time since Sabrina died, he smiled. And felt almost happy.



Organized Crime Conclusion Safety and Security in Canada

Alek Golijanin



The interconnectedness of our world today all but guarantees that if one country is dealing with a crime epidemic, those problems are bound to cross international borders and seep into other countries, thus turning it into somewhat of a pandemic. And that seems to be the problem that troubles Canada: South America's cocaine manufacturing problem has been our problem for many decades, the United States' gun problem has been our problem for well over a decade, China's fentanyl manufacturing problem has been our problem for close to a decade, and India's human trafficking problem almost made its way into Canada by the way of our student visa program before our institutions and policing agencies caught on to it. What all of these challenges highlight is that each of them requires a multifaceted response, one that can be especially difficult if all policing stakeholders are not on the same page.

Analyzing any sort of response to a high threat challenge might require connecting with various public safety stakeholders, filing countless freedom of information requests, and extrapolating as much of that information as possible while making assumptions about the blacked-out parts. Ultimately, it can be next to impossible to assess the response to a high threat challenge unless you are on the inside and working in the public safety space. However, the Trucker Convoy of 2022 is the perfect high threat challenge that allows for external assessment because it resulted in a public inquiry involving all three levels of government, as well as public safety stakeholders. As someone who lives in Ottawa and who is familiar with everything that transpired, as well as the public inquiry proceedings, the coordination between public safety stakeholders and some of their responses should be cause for concern.

Policing meets policy. Policy meets protocols.

When it comes to national security and major operations and investigations, trust between stakeholders is paramount, and equally important is the integrity and character of the policing personnel involved with those operations and investigations. Things like personal feelings, personal relationships, past disputes, and who gets recognition should never be allowed to interfere when it comes to matters of public safety, given how much time and effort goes into major operations and investigations. The number of years required to complete a Federal Policing project-based investigation is 2.4 years for transnational and serious organized crime, 2 years for cybercrime, and 1.9 years for national security matters.

These investigations take so long because of how resource-intensive they tend to be and because operations like these often involve international cooperation. It is precisely the reason that it is important to only have the highest standard of individuals in the world of policing matters. The most serious police investigations take multiple years and improper behavior can ruin a multi-year investigation. So, imagine the frustration if individuals within Canada's policing system fail to live up to the standard required, the high character and high integrity, and if all of the time

and effort that went into an investigation ended up being for nothing. How would other stakeholders feel about that, but more importantly, how should Canadians feel about that?

During the Trucker Convoy of 2022, Ottawa had arguably the most accomplished police chief in Canada's policing history leading our city's police service, Chief Peter Sloly, but even he was no match against the leaking of classified police operation strategies to the protestors, which is why they were able to stay one step ahead. As skilled, experienced, and accomplished as Chief Sloly was—serving as a peacekeeper in Kosovo, being the youngest deputy chief in Toronto Police Service history and even working as a consultant in cyber security, while having an educational background that included a BA in Sociology, an MBA, a criminal justice certificate, a major city chief's police executive education, a police executive leadership executive education, and a graduate of the FBI National Academy—he was outmatched because of leaks that originated from somewhere within the police service. Ultimately, when a police chief of Chief Sloly's caliber is sabotaged from within, then ousted because of shameful bureaucratic politicking, public safety stakeholders at the highest levels take notice, and the message that sends to them is that perhaps they might not be able to trust lower levels of police personnel and shameless bureaucrats as much as they would like to and need to.

The biggest barrier to the CISA and CISO approach to policing is ensuring that every policing agency is in alignment when it comes to cooperation and the flow of intelligence sharing. However, the hesitancy of some stakeholders to share information with other stakeholders ultimately comes down to trust, and there is precedent for higher levels of policing authorities to be hesitant about sharing highly sensitive information down the ladder. After what transpired within the Ottawa Police Service during the Trucker Convoy of 2022, the only thing that makes sense is having a designated team or designated personnel that are exclusively responsible for connecting at every level of policing. Ones that are outside of the police brass circle and who can be counted on at all times.

The Trucker Convoy of 2022 provides the perfect case study on how public safety stakeholders should be operating in times of crisis. Policing personnel at the highest levels echoed the importance and effectiveness of cooperation between policing stakeholders, but the Trucker Convoy proved that policing personnel at the lowest levels struggled with this concept and their actions had real-life implications for people across Ottawa.

AU-thentic Events Upcoming AU Related Events

Library Chat

Tues, Sep 19, 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

What's age got to do with it?

Writing as a mature student

Tues, Sep 19, 12:30 to 1:30 pm MDT

Online via Microsoft Teams

Hosted by AU's Write Site

news.athabascau.ca/events/whats-age-got-to-do-with-it-writing-as-a-mature-learner/

Register through above link

MBA Application Webinar

Wed, Sep 20, 10:00 to 11:00 am MDT

Online

Hosted by AU Faculty of Business

news.athabascau.ca/events/online-mba-application-webinar-20230920/

RSVP through above link

Faculty of Business Undergrad Program Orientation for New Students

Wed, Sep 20, 12:00 to 1:00 pm MDT

Online

Hosted by AU Faculty of Business

news.athabascau.ca/events/faculty-of-business-undergraduate-program-orientation-for-new-students-20230920/

RSVP through above link

All events are free unless otherwise noted.

No response from municipal policing stakeholders.

The Ottawa Police Service (OPS) might be the Canada's municipal police service that struggles the most when it comes to its image, and it was evident prior to the arrival of Chief Sloly. There were so many issues internally that Chief Sloly decided to make a major change in how the internal discipline process was handled, enacting new policies that would result in outcomes related to the disciplinary process to remain confidential and that all "human resources" matters were to stay in-house and not be made public unless it was of significance to the public. Things were that bad and the perception of the OPS was reported as being at an all-time low.

More AU-Thentic Events

FGS Developing Your Research Series An Intro to Citation Management

Wed, Sep 20, 1:00 to 2:00 pm MDT

Online

Hosted by AU Library, Write Site, and AU
Faculty of Graduate Studies

www.facebook.com/events/1421570348634823/1421571695301355

Register through above link

Career and education planning conversation with AU Counselling Services

Wed, Sep 20, 3:00 to 4:00 pm MDT

Online via Microsoft Teams

Hosted by AU Counselling Services
news.athabascau.ca/events/career-and-education-planning-conversation-with-au-counselling-services/

Register through above link

Library Chat

Thur, Sep 21, 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

Write Site's Writing Forum Writing to apply for scholarships.

Thur, Sep 21, 12:30 to 1:30 pm MDT

Online via Microsoft Teams

Hosted by AU's Write Site

www.athabascau.ca/write-site/writing-forum.html

No pre-registration necessary; use sign-in
sheet on above link before joining meeting

All events are free unless otherwise noted.

What I felt made Chief Sloly the perfect police chief for Ottawa was his no nonsense approach and the fact that he demanded excellence out of the police service. When he told community residents at a town hall that there were internal investigations taking place and he had a strategy in place for more serious elements of crime, or that when issues of public interest came to the attention of the police that they would be pursued, he meant it and delivered on it. However, Chief Sloly struggled with leaks that came by the way of the Ottawa Police Services Board (the Board), a City Councillor that was leaking confidential information to a local newspaper revealed only as a result of a judge's order, in addition to the sabotage that came by the way of some members of the OPS.

When the City of Ottawa abruptly parted ways with Chief Sloly, there were so many questions that journalists, lawyers, academics, and other policy junkies failed to ask. Instead, the televised public inquiry saw many of those same experts place the blame on Chief Sloly's shoulders, seeming to blatantly ignore the most important components of what transpired. To fairly assess the role that shameless bureaucrats played and how leaks from within the OPS allowed the Trucker Convoy to last as long as it did would have been difficult. It was easy to blame Chief Sloly, so that is what they did. All of it reflective of how we live in a time where people always seem to choose to do things because they are easy and never if they are hard.

This series on organized crime and national security provided the perfect opportunity to follow up on those hard questions, the ones that required understanding the core of the challenge and utilizing the hard thinking required to address the operational failings during the Trucker Convoy, which had little to do with Chief Sloly and everything to do with policing personnel at the lowest level and shameless bureaucrats.

I submitted a number of questions to them covering everything from dealing with links, the current or planned checks and balances on police operations and investigations, and how the OPS would deal with matters of national security in the future. Initially, the OPS media department informed me that the questions made their way to the chief, but the response was stretched out over seven weeks. Although the OPS media department did provide a resource that briefly outlined a geographical assessment of Ottawa and the different policing agencies that worked to create Operation INTERSECT, it was heavily edited-down version with 12 slides. What was weird about it was that there was a publicly available slide deck focused on providing an introduction on Operation INTERSECT, which was 20 slides, none of which looked like what I had received from the OPS' media department. What was even weirder was after mixed responses over the span of seven weeks and being told that the questions had made their way to the chief's circle, I was abruptly told that the chief would not be responding to the questions and to proceed without them. And the scenario precisely illustrates why the OPS might be Canada's municipal police service with the most troubled public image.

Time for a reality check.

Perhaps the fact that police personnel and members of the police services board were leaking confidential information is something that all of us should turn a blind eye to. Perhaps the fact that none of this was focused on during the public inquiry is something that all of us should forget. Perhaps all of the public safety shortcomings that transpired during the crisis that was brought about as a result of the Trucker Convoy should be ignored because things are better now. But that is precisely the rabbit hole thinking that people should never allow themselves to fall into..

When it comes to answering hard questions about the actions of police personnel, police organization will often stay silent or answer as little as possible. But asking these hard questions does not make a person anti-police, despite it being the label that often gets attached to those that ask them, and that might be part of the reason why nobody wanted to ask those hard questions during the Trucker Convoy public inquiry hearings.

It seems Canada's institution of policing is on a collision course primarily because of the actions of police personnel that make up the lowest level of policing, but also thanks to the "in-house" culture that arrived by the way of policing agencies promoting a culture that tolerated behaviors and actions that ran counter to the idea of policing. The majority of challenges that police services face are not the result of activism, as some voices would lead people to believe, they are the result of police personnel letting policing powers get to their head and then acting in ways that are unbecoming of a police officer. Ontario's *Police Services Act*, for example, has blanket protections for police officers, which ultimately enables outlaw behavior. Combine that with the "cover up" culture that it seems police services have been forced to embrace to prevent their public images from completely cratering.

In essence, police culture has become so muddled that I believe decision-makers will do anything to avoid mudslinging between members and the subsequent airing of dirty laundry that might cause public approval for police to crater. None of the issues around policing change by taking money away from police agencies, it would only make things worse, and it would only complicate matters related to organized crime and national security. In the end, there should be no place for police personnel that engage in the activities some did during the Trucker Convoy while Chief Sloly was in charge of Ottawa, because their presence endangers everyone.

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

Discomfort Helps us Grow

Marie Well



Stoics are philosophers who believe discomfort helps us grow. And I firmly believe it's the case. But I take that further by saying that we can grow to love discomfort. Stoics say, "A gem can't be polished without friction, nor a man without trials." So, let's see how we can begin the process of discomfort. After all, discomfort can take us to radical triumphs, extreme success, and great wealth.

Ice-cold showers: The stoics subjected themselves to ice-cold showers and cold-water immersion. I take cold showers every morning, too. At first, I was reluctant. But cold showers are healthier for hair and autoimmune conditions. Cold showers give us more energy in the day, unlike hot showers. And cold showers economize the usage of water, as we're in and out in a short time. I love cold showers and can't imagine a world without them. If you dare to try them out, I bet you'll come to love them, too.

Sleep deprivation: If seven to nine hours of sleep is in the healthy range for longevity, why not sleep seven hours a night? I once thought nine to ten hours was optimal for me, and I even slept eleven hours. But seven hours is revitalizing, and I never get sick with chronic fatigue anymore due to less sleep, weirdly. Plus, seven

hours of sleep gives us an academic and work edge. I now have two more hours in a day to study and work. Two hours a day works out to 14 hours a week. We could take an extra course with that time savings—and graduate sooner. Or geek out on our current courses to earn higher grades. Or pursue a dream. Or run a side business. Time is money. So, let's get richer with seven hours of sleep.

Frugality: Minimizing possessions and expenditures for oneself is a great idea. The Stoics think we should minimize our material wants and desires. The only thing I buy outside of food and fitness sessions these days are educational courses. But I spend a lot on education. And that's non-negotiable for me. But if we also spend on other people rather than ourselves, we gain karma and joy.

Hard exercise. This is the world's best-kept secret. While starting exercise can be a struggle, we are in for the high of our lives once we commit to strenuous exercise at least four days a week. We feel better, look better, are more potent, and can do more work and studies. We live longer, too. Our memory and focus are sharpened. Our senses and taste buds are heightened. It's like stepping into a fantasy world. Our dreams become more realistic, too, given all the above. And exercise strengthens our discipline, transferring that intense motivation to all areas of our lives. Strenuous exercise often leads to overwhelming achievements in all aspects of our lives. That's why Olympians are often paid to give motivational speeches to corporations.

Hard work and studies: There is something to be said about hard work. It develops resilience. And hard work and studies make our lives richer—literally. After all, hard effort yields more incredible growth and better opportunities. People with master's degrees tend to earn more than people with undergraduate degrees, for instance. And people who've earned an undergraduate degree or certificate tend to make more than those with a high school diploma. Better still, the harder we work or study, the more joyful the effort becomes. The joy of persistent learning is

analogous to learning to ride a bike. We start repeatedly falling, even failing. But with persistence, we develop the skill to speed cycle across a continent. With hard work, anything is possible.

When I did martial arts, I was shocked that I loved getting kicked in the stomach. When we reach a certain level of abdominal strength, a kick in the belly can shoot off endorphins. And cold showers shoot off endorphins. And hard work and learning can excite us. And waking up after seven hours of sleep means more joy during the day and more activities at night. And did we know that the Japanese often sleep on the floor? They love the benefits sleeping on the floor has for back health.

So, forget the hedonistic lifestyle. That's not where the fun is. The fun is pushing the limits of discomfort--and reaping the benefits. It's pushing ourselves so hard that we skyrocket to success, overcoming all limitations and all odds. After all, we deserve to launch our dreams to the stars. And a clear path to the heavens is an intense desire for discomfort. And we've all got it in us.



Beyond Literary Landscapes

Tragic Love Stories

Natalia Iwanek



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

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

Who

This week, we continue with our unlucky-in-love theme, this time, focusing on well-known tragic love stories throughout the history of literature. In particular, many of these works focus on the tragedy that uncontrolled human emotions can beget.

What

Some examples of tragic love in literature include *Anna Karenina* by Leo Tolstoy, *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame* by Victor Hugo, and *Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare.

Additional examples include *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Brontë and *The Idiot* by Fyodor Dostoevsky.

Where

These novels are set in England, France, and Imperial Russia.

When

Many of these works take place in 15th, as well as late 18th and early 19th centuries.

Why

These works may be of interest to AU students who would like to familiarize themselves with some famous authors of the Western literary canon—and their tragic stories, which may continue to serve as cautionary tales for readers to this day.

How

AU's wide range of diverse courses make it easy to study this topic in depth. Courses related to tragic love stories 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 393: The Early Twentieth-Century English Novel, a senior-level, three-credit course, which “focuses on the first four decades of the twentieth-century British novel, its history and development, its rich variety of forms and techniques, and the ideas and events that influenced it.” (Please note that this course requires several prerequisites, including ENGL 211: Prose Forms, ENGL 212: Poetry and Plays, or a first-year ENGL course).

AU students can also consider ENGL 395: The Nineteenth-Century English Novel, a senior-level, six-credit course, which “introduces the student to some of the major English novels of the nineteenth century.” (Similarly, this this course also requires several prerequisites, including ENGL 211: Prose Forms, ENGL 212: Poetry and Plays, or a first-year ENGL 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.



Fly on the Wall Fallout and Fallings-Out

Jason Sullivan

A Brief Inquiry Into Disagreements



An Aussie had been adrift at sea because he'd lost his wife and his boat's electrical capacities; he survived with a dog for months before some helpful Mexican fishers spotted him (Stavely, 2023). Then, before returning home to the land down under, he said goodbye to the dog in Mexico where they'd found each other! Despite all they'd been through, like we with our cherished beliefs and ideas, the guy was able to say goodbye, like an argument with a friend on a hot Saturday night, and leave the past in the past. So instead of clinging to an idea, let's remember the Aussie with his dog and return to pleasantness from the isolation of strident certainty! If he can let go of his dog, we can let go of our pet beliefs.

Being left adrift due to a blackout from social media, or even the mortifying temporary state of

having one's smartphone battery run dry, can stir us, shaken to the core, to reevaluate the value of our ongoing internet debates. Why does it seem that we as a species seek stress and strain, conflict and anguish, as part of our essential humanity? We'd have to be exercising some self deception or have our tongue in our cheek to assume conflict to be the baseline of humanity; our whole planet's currently in harness to suit what those in power define as our collective needs, often at the expense of nature, and usually at the expense of free play. It's a planned planet, not one where no one works together (even if the outcomes can be toxic.) Sometimes collective labours actually include conflict; it takes two to tango, after all. Hereby, instead of private projects, art studios in a basement or AU course material diligently occupying our leisure time, many of us find our excess unlocked moments spent in assorted activism and disputation. To conclude that humans seem organically incapable of getting along belies the collective success of our species; the question so becomes, why do we get so emotionally involved in disputes?

Just as in marriage, where two adults are said to become one, an equal and opposite fracturing seems to abide in culture whereby assorted topics push people apart. Far from aspiring to change the world, or ourselves, it comes to seem that egos seek only to change minds other than their own. Conveniently, this process allows us to combine and invest all of our negative energy onto an external person or concept, thereby preserving our heightened sense of self-worth. Maybe this is why some folks seem perpetually to be on the outs with persons or people who'd previously been their best friends. To avoid self-analysis it's easy to just fire all of our guns at a nearby, but to us sufficiently emotionally distant, target.

Gunfire is after all, conversation by other means. And real war, not wars of words, provide a blistering perspective on our social disagreements: conflict hurts all parties, in the end. Illustrating this raw fact is that in 1961 the US nearly nuked itself. In January 1961 a B52 bomber plane broke apart mid-air and literally released two nuclear bombs. While falling headlong to Earth, one of them went through 6 of its 7 arming sequences and was about to, like an enraged babysitter, *go off*. Fortunately, as Defence Secretary Robert McNamara explained, a mere loose wire prevented that seventh sequential step from engaging – and by that miracle a farmer's field, not to mention countless lives, were saved. “By the slightest margin of chance, literally the failure of two wires to cross, a nuclear explosion was averted” (Usborne, 2019).

That sort of calamity is not so far fetched as it may seem. So next time we tell ourselves that someone who disagrees with us on one or more culture war topics of the day seems oblivious to the facts at hand while we inhabit an omniscient bird's eye view, let's remember that we all have a few screws and wires loose. If we don't realize that here in 2023, we do indeed face the real possibility of a nuclear bomb going off so long as countries with nukes are having a dispute. To *go nuclear* means so much more than to throw a tantrum, a hissy fit, or a man spat. So next time we feel ourselves drawn into an argument let's remember to keep our eyes on a higher personal prize – an AU diploma!

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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.



How to Make Hong Kong Style Hot Dog Buns

Xine Wang



One of the classic breakfast items of my childhood is Hong Kong style hot dog buns. They're essentially the Asian equivalent of pigs in a blanket. While cocktail wieners are wrapped in a flaky pastry, similar to a sausage roll, the Hong Kong style hot dog buns are in a soft, egg-coated pastry that gives a fragrant smell when it comes out of the oven. Our family used to drive halfway across the city to purchase these from select Hong Kong bakeries. Nowadays, with greater immigration and the globalization of our palates, it is much easier to find these at many Asian grocers. However, in 2001 these were rare finds.

This week I decided to try my own hand at these baked goodies. I needed breakfast items that I could prepare in advance such that in my rushed mornings, I would run out of the house not starving. It is not as complex as it may seem and homemade buns are always fresher, more doughy, and delicious.

If you're hosting guests, these also make for a great appetizer and you can shrink the size of the portions down further, with less bun per hot dog.

Hong Kong Style Hot Dogs

Ingredients:

For the pastry dough:

- 1 sheet of store-bought puff pastry (thawed, if frozen)

For the hot dog filling:

- 4-6 hot dogs (use your preferred type)
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon hoisin sauce
- 1 teaspoon sesame oil
- 1 teaspoon grated ginger
- 1 garlic clove, minced



- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- For the egg wash:
- 1 egg, beaten
- For garnish (optional):
- Sesame seeds
- Sliced green onions
- Sriracha or chili sauce

Instructions:

1. Prepare the hot dog filling:
2. In a bowl, mix soy sauce, hoisin sauce, sesame oil, grated ginger, and minced garlic.
3. Slice the hot dogs diagonally into halves or thirds.

4. Heat vegetable oil in a pan over medium heat and add the hot dog slices.
5. Pour the sauce mixture over the hot dogs and cook until they are nicely coated and heated through. Remove from heat and set aside.
6. Preheat the oven and prepare the puff pastry:
7. Preheat your oven according to the puff pastry package instructions.
8. Unroll the thawed puff pastry sheet on a lightly floured surface.
9. Cut and assemble the hot dog pastry buns:
10. Cut the puff pastry sheet into rectangles, each large enough to wrap around one hot dog slice.
11. Place a hot dog slice on each pastry rectangle and fold the pastry over to cover the hot dog. Press the edges to seal, ensuring the hot dog is fully enclosed.
12. Brush with egg wash:
13. Brush the top of each pastry bun with the beaten egg. This will give the buns a shiny golden finish after baking.
14. Bake the hot dog pastry buns:
15. Place the assembled buns on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper.
16. Bake in the preheated oven according to the puff pastry package instructions or until the buns turn golden brown and puff up.
17. Garnish and serve:
18. Once the hot dog pastry buns are baked, you can optionally sprinkle them with sesame seeds and sliced green onions for added flavor and visual appeal.
19. If desired, drizzle some Sriracha or your favorite chili sauce on top for a spicy kick.

Enjoy your Asian-inspired hot dog pastry buns as a delightful and unique snack, breakfast item or appetizer!



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

Benefits of Distance Learning For Neurodivergent Students with ADHD

Ana Sabo



Education is constantly evolving, and one of the most exciting developments in recent years is the rise of online learning. While it benefits students of all backgrounds, it has proven to be a game-changer for neurodivergent students, especially those with ADHD.

I do want to start by saying that while I personally prefer distance learning, I still see incredible value in traditional in-person education. There is something to be said about being (physically) a part of your learning community, interacting in real time, and exchanging ideas in engaging conversations with like-minded individuals. However, I must admit that I have never enjoyed being a student as much as I enjoy it now, as an adult, taking classes through Athabasca University.

One of the standout advantages of online learning I've noticed is its flexibility. We all know that traditional school structures can be fairly rigid, most notably in demanding that everyone follow the same schedule. Looking back, I remember spending a lot of time at my school desk lost in daydreams. In contrast, most of my real learning happened at home, where I could absorb information at my own pace and create my own environment.

Since I started my online learning journey, I've found that there is no longer a need for me to "learn outside of my learning". Because online learning adjusts more easily to individual learning styles and preferences, it has allowed me to personalize my learning environment and choose how and when to focus. One of the techniques that I've always found helpful has been to make numerous notes and highlight my textbooks in various colors. This was not something that was encouraged in traditional classrooms when I was younger. While neatness was the norm in school, my way of staying organized was (and still is) a bit different. The freedom to fully embrace this approach within online learning has been a breath of fresh air.

While I do believe there is an indisputable value to social interactions in physical classrooms, for some neurodivergent students this can be a double-edged sword. Being put on the spot or facing unexpected social situations can be anxiety-inducing and hinder one's engagement with learning. I've been there – having ideas but struggling with shyness and anxiety. Online learning makes this communication easier by allowing students to share their ideas through means like email and discussion boards, taking the pressure off having to perform right there and then.

Furthermore, the sheer volume of stimuli present in traditional classrooms, encompassing not only social interactions but also visual and auditory elements, can lead to overwhelming experiences for students with ADHD. This sensory barrage often results in cognitive overload, making it challenging for neurodivergent individuals to focus and engage effectively. This, in turn, serves as yet another compelling argument in favour of the benefits of online learning and the opportunities it creates for individuals who work better in alternative environments.

Of course, I'm not trying to say online learning will solve all your problems if you're struggling with your focus, anxiety, motivation, or facing any other challenge. There is no such thing as perfection, and every educational avenue has its pros and cons. However, the flexibility, reduced

sensory overload, and accommodation of individualized learning needs that online learning offers does seem to make it a more inclusive and accessible educational option for neurodivergent learners.

So, if you've ever faced challenges in your learning journey and felt that the traditional educational framework doesn't quite align with your needs, I strongly encourage you to explore the possibilities of online learning!

Ana Sabo likes chasing dreams, exploring careers, and cuddling pugs.

Imposter Syndrome versus Mastery

Marie Well



There is a reason why imposter syndrome is a phenomenon. That's because people in the most outstanding positions of power or success are no more intelligent than us. In other words, no matter our circumstances, we can achieve just as great or even greater material or socioeconomic status than those we admire. And this holds true even if we have severe disabilities or the most challenging life stories.

The older I get, the more I realize I have just as much to contribute as the senior people in my company and our wealthy clients. In other words, we all have more going for us than we realize. And the more I observe people, the more I see how much we are alike. Whether we have severe disabilities or run a global enterprise, we are all quite similar in foibles and strengths—and, I'd argue, even in potential. There's no black magic to achieving success, for instance. It just takes hard work, skill acquisition, persistence, and a firm belief that we have what it takes. And yes, we all have what it takes.

I worked in a disability employment shelter, so I felt like an extreme imposter attending the university. Even though I was the top student in my discipline and won a silver medal for academic performance, I still felt like I didn't meet the measure. But I don't feel that way now. That's because I realize that anything is possible for anyone. The sky is the limit if we genuinely wish to fly. And whatever circumstance or self-limiting factor we may face, we can achieve beyond our wildest aims.

With that said, here are three ways to overcome imposter syndrome, according to Ask AI:

Set impossible goals, complete with milestones. Okay, so Ask AI said to set realistic goals. I'm not a big fan of "realistic." I saw a stocks and options trader book outlining the psychology of trader success. According to the book, the state of mind for success requires we believe anything is possible and perceive all limitations as challenges readily overcome. So, the book permits us to set impossible goals. After all, impossible goals are exciting to strive for, especially when we make great progress. Nothing is truly impossible.

Continually invest in self-development and education. Take nonstop education. Start learning at night, in the morning—throughout the day. I can't stress this enough. Continuous learning is the magic elixir to success. So, push ourselves to learn at every opportunity. And we'll gain magnificently. Learning is like watering a plant: a single day without water, the plant starts to

die. But water it every day, and it'll bloom into a lush, leafy green plant with vibrant flowers. And I'm banking on lifelong learning flourishing all of us. There are no imposters here.

See failures as learning opportunities. Record our wins and successes. This record is our playbook. And view our failures as learning opportunities. Extract the lessons. And watch us thrive with future accomplishments. If I saw my failures as dead ends, I'd likely be living in a group home. And although I bombed as a TA, I believe I can still succeed as an instructor or a professor. So, never let failure stop us from pursuing our dreams. Failures are just the friction that occurs when we polish ourselves, according to Stoic philosophy. After all, every diamond had to be dug from the dirt.

So, that's how to beat imposter syndrome. We aren't imposters. We are all capable of achieving our dreams. And there are no exceptions. So, reach higher than the stars. We are capable of achieving it all.



Unearthing classic articles from previous issues of *The Voice Magazine*

Last week's devastating earthquake in Morocco got us digging around to see what *Voice* writers had to say about that area.

The Fourth R. Jason Sullivan examines the structure Morocco's education system developed after its 1956 independence from France. "Education in Morocco was always about more than just learning the three R's or learning about morality; it was about learning how to be a good Muslim, a definition that changed depending on each Moroccan's point of view." Eras in Education – Post-Colonial Morocco, January 29, 2010.

In the Steps of the English Patient. In the first of a series of articles, Wanda Waterman recounts her travels through the Atlas Mountains on her way to the abandoned village of Mides in Tunisia. "The village itself looks a lot like the abandoned Pueblo dwellings of the American Southwest, and had a similar history of lush beginnings that eventually turned to arid inhabitability. Mides was once part of a lush area that eventually desertified, reducing the village to an oasis." Maghreb Voices – The Smiling Ghosts of Mides, Part 1, January 16, 2015.



STUDENT WELLNESS

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT FOR AU STUDENTS



Pride Community Resources

FOR 2SLGBTQIA+ PEOPLE
AT ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY



Hoax of the Century

Exclusive Collector Cards and Other Nostalgia Items from the Past

Alek Golijanin



There has always been a collector's market for exclusive collector cards and other mint condition items from the past, but the start of COVID-19 really elevated this niche community, and helped propel the world of collecting to a whole new level. For instance, the most expensive card ever sold was a 1952 Mickey Mantle card that was sold in August of 2022 for an alleged amount of 12.6 million dollars. Whereas the most expensive video game ever sold was a 1985 never-opened copy of Super Mario Bros that was sold in August of 2021 for an alleged amount of 2 million dollars.

Both of these record-breaking transactions allegedly occurred around the COVID-19 window, a period that also saw the rise of Reddit's "Wall Street Bettors" who helped the stock market hit record highs as well as the re-emergence of crypto-scammy, such as NFTs, but the reason that these two transactions and others like are referred to as "alleged" has to do with the sketchiness around the sales. The way the sales occur is a near-copy of the sketchiness around the sales of one-of-a-kind art pieces. Simply put, the gimmick around unique art pieces can be described as a process that attempts to inflate the value of art to manipulate a grey area within tax laws through the act of "charitable giving". As a result, anonymity often cloaks the identity of the buyers and sellers. This elaborate scheme has repurposed benevolent rules and regulations into ways that can easily cheat the taxman. And to understand the hoax of the century that is exclusive collector cards and other nostalgic items from the past, it is important to understand how the tricks of the art market have come to more niche collector markets.

How to cheat the taxman people through art donations?

Donating art is one of the simplest ways for anyone to pay less tax, but taking advantage of this loophole requires that a person have a high net worth. It also requires the involvement of a few other stakeholders as well. Once a piece of art is purchased, it never gets donated right away, typically being stored for some time, perhaps being taken out of storage to be loaned out for display at a world-class museum or premium art gallery. Otherwise, they tend to stay locked up in locations known as "freeports".

Freeports are zones that a country will designate with a special status related to regulations, customs, and taxes, and tend to be in close proximity to shipping ports and airports. While supporters of freeports argue that they can help create jobs and stimulate the local economy, the loopholes it that an item at a freeport is considered to be "in transit". And they can stay "in transit" for unlimited amounts of time, thus acting as an anonymous storage service, exempt from duties and taxation, perhaps until the owner of a very expensive painting is ready to take the painting out of storage and prepare it for donation.

Once the painting is taken out of freeport, it is reappraised, and it is during the re-appraising process that the value of the painting gets inflated. And whether legitimately or through conspiracy is difficult to tell, because the price of art is purely subjective. If certain appraisers get a reputation for being generous with their appraisals, then they are more likely to get repeat business, but it is also not uncommon for the art owners to tip the appraiser for their service. After the art piece has been reappraised, perhaps to ten times the value paid for the art piece, the

owner has a decision to make regarding what happens next; either put it up for auction or donate to a museum or gallery.

If the owner decides to have the art piece put up for auction, they will pay a small fee, depending on the sale price of the piece, while the bigger portion of the fee is paid by the buyer. The issue with auction houses, however, is that the entire buying and selling process can be anonymous—to the point that even the auction house might not know who the seller of an extremely expensive painting might be. And the buyer can also stay anonymous by using a purchasing agent. So, even after millions of dollars have exchanged hands, it is entirely possible for both the buyer and seller to remain completely anonymous. With this anonymity, it makes it possible for an art owner to conspire to illegitimately inflate their art piece's value in a variety of ways including by buying it back or donating it with an over-inflated value. Of course, at the end of the auction process, the previous owner would be expected to pay capital gains tax on the money earned from the sale, but that is a rate far lower than the income tax rate.

But if the owner instead decides to have the art piece donated to a museum or gallery with a charitable status, they are able to deduct the entirety of the appraised value from their income tax. And although there are limits to how much a person can deduct from their annual income, the deductible amount can be spread out over multiple years to be deducted against future annual income earnings.

As great as it is for extremely rare pieces of art to be made available on display at museums and galleries, the anonymity involved with the art market is so secretive that, beyond the tax implications, the art market becomes the perfect tool for money laundering, and nobody truly knows how many items are stored in freeports, thanks to tax loopholes and secrecy laws. As an example, the Mexican government recognized just how easy it was for someone to move a piece of art worth tens of millions of dollars as opposed to hard currency, so they passed a law in 2012 that limited the use of cash and required transparency, not only about purchasers in the art market, but also for casinos, jewelry stores, pawnshops, and even armoured-car dealerships. After the introduction of these laws, the art auction houses reported a loss in business of approximately 30 percent, which has persisted over the years.

The fix behind nostalgic items from the past.

The fix behind nostalgic items from the past, like collector cards, goes back many decades, but what most people do not know is that the starting point was never an even playing field. Today's scamming around collecting cards is nothing new apart from being more large scale. The easiest way that collector cards and other nostalgic items are able to have their prices illegitimately inflated is if the cards are exclusive and there is a very limited number of that card, like rare pieces of art. It is also not uncommon for people to use straw buyers to inflate the actual value of those exclusive nostalgic items, both in-person or by self-bidding on their own EBay item.

Also, back when many of the small hobby and game shops sold individual collector cards, some would utilize a hairdryer to heat up and weaken the glue seal of collector card packs to open them and take a look at the cards, keeping those packs with rarer cards and returning the rest for sale. It is probably not just coincidence that the story behind many of these mega collectors who were super lucky with the cards they pulled is that they also happened to be in the hobby and game shop business.

What often gets ignored in this saga is that the chase for finding those rare items can lead people to overleverage their finances due to a misbelief that there is a market for them, but there often is not. An item is only worth what someone is willing to pay for it, which often, for niche items, isn't much. But that type of video is not going to go viral on social media.

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



Student Sizzle — AU's Hot Social Media Topics

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

AU Facebook

AI teaches interpersonal communications?! A student jokes that her Interpersonal Communications class involves interacting with AI. Another student asks if it's COM 329. Yet another student jokes that she preferred the class as an introvert and mentions that the final essay is about AI.

Reddit

Plan your major with Degree Works. A student is unsure which classes to take for a Bachelor of Science degree. Another student suggests checking out AU's Degree Works, which provides an overview of all the requirements for completing a degree or major. The student also recommends adding courses to Degree Works to see how they

fit the requirements.

Twitter

Learn APA Citation. @AthabascaU posts, "New to APA formatting? Perhaps you need a refresher? Check out this extensive APA Citation webinar, presented by the Athabasca University Write Site and the Faculty of Graduate Studies. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hoxxhd-vlbk>."

Access the Nursing Research Guide! @aulibarchives posts, "Did you know that we have a Nursing Research Guide to help you with every part of your research at AU Library? Check it out: <https://twitter.com/aulibarchives/status/1699799944486674849/photo/1>."

Scholarship of the Week

Digging up scholarship treasure for AU students.

Scholarship name: Pretty Actions Scholarship

Sponsored by: Pretty Photoshop Actions

Deadline: October 15, 2023

Potential payout: \$500 USD

Eligibility restriction: Applicants must be either high school seniors, students transitioning to university or college, or already enrolled at a university or college in Canada or the U.S.

What's required: An email with contact and academic info, along with an essay-style Adobe Photoshop tutorial of at least 800 words (and including screenshots and photo illustrations) on one of five given topics, and a headshot photo of the applicant.

Tips: Scroll down to the Previous Scholarship Winners section to see what winning entries look like.

Where to get info: www.lightroompresets.com/pages/pretty-photoshop-actions-scholarship-program



**PARTICIPANTS NEEDED FOR
RESEARCH ON INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE SURVIVORS' EXPERIENCES**

**Have you ever been subjected to violence by an intimate partner? Did a law enforcement officer respond to an incident of abuse?
Are you 18 years of age or older?**

We are looking for volunteers to take part in a study of intimate partner violence survivors' perceptions of law enforcement responses.

As a participant in this study, you would be asked to complete an anonymous open-ended survey on your experience. Your participation is **entirely voluntary** and would take approximately 20-minutes of your time.

Please note that some people may experience psychological or emotional stress due to the sensitive nature of this topic. Contact information for Athabasca University Wellness Resources will be provided.

In appreciation for your time, you will receive a \$10 eGift Card to your choice of Tim Hortons or Starbucks.

To learn more about this study, or to participate in this study,
please contact:

Principal Investigator:

*Sarah Spicer Reid, Master of Counselling student, Athabasca University
sreid1@learn.athabascau.ca*

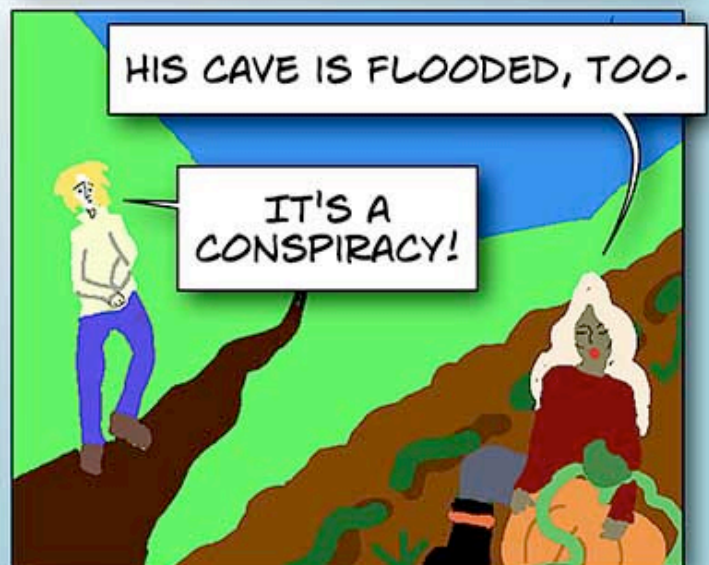
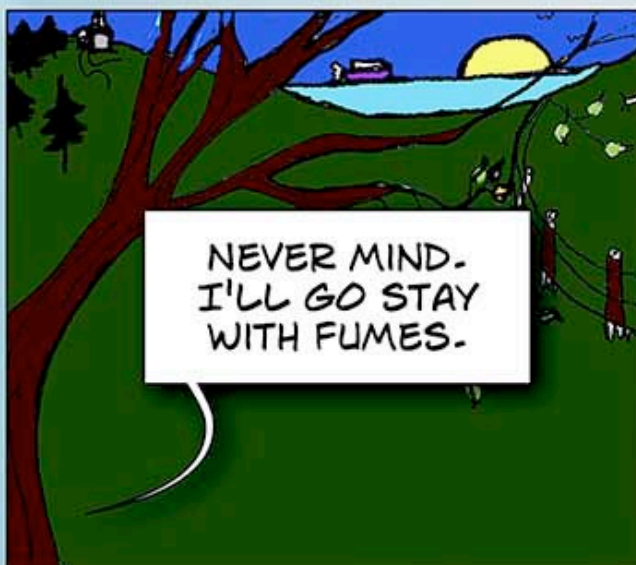
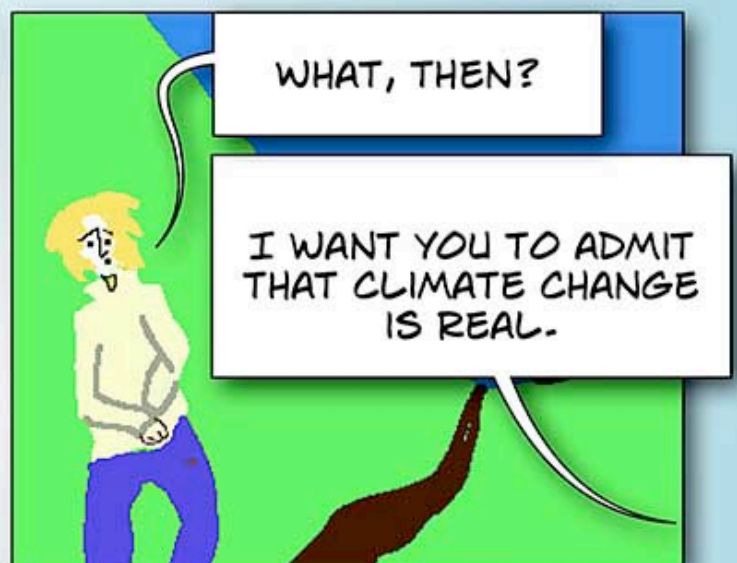
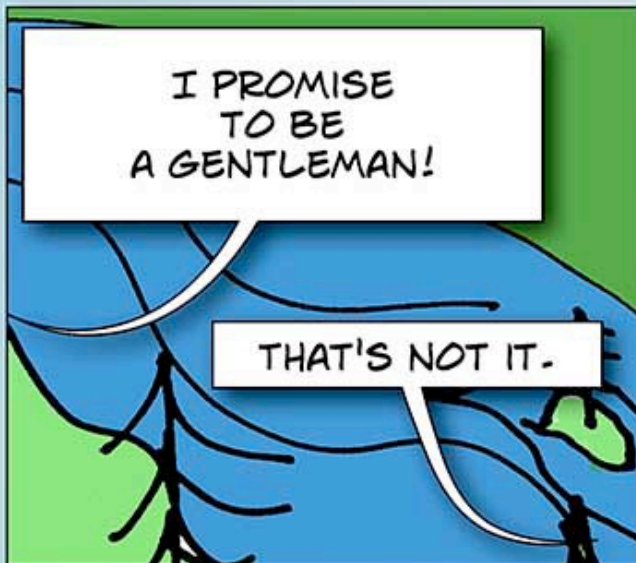
This study is supervised by: Dr. Lynn Corcoran, lynnc@athabascau.ca

Dr. Jeff Chang, jeffc@athabascau.ca

This study has been reviewed by the Athabasca University Research Ethics Board. Should you have any comments or concerns about your treatment as a participant, the research, or ethical review processes, contact the Research Ethics Officer at 1.780.213.2033 or by e-mail to rebsec@athabascau.ca

Poet Maeve
After the Flood

Wanda Waterman



**AUSU**

ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY

STUDENTS' UNION

Changes to AU Course Materials

In the fall of 2013 AU began the process of replacing hard-copy textbooks for all undergraduate courses with e-text versions. Implementation has been staged in

The results will be shared with members in an upcoming newsletter.

A New Era at AU - A New AU president

After two terms in the Office of President, Dr. Frits Pannekoek is retiring. Last week, in recognition of his contributions to distance education, the University of South Africa (Unisa) granted him an honorary Doctor of Literature and Philosophy award. AUSU congratulates Dr. Pannekoek on this great honour, and the recognition it brings to AU as a world leader in distance and open learning. We wish him all the best over his final weeks in the role of president, and in all his future endeavours!



We had hoped by now to be able to announce the selection of the presidential search committee for a new, full-term president; however, as a suitable candidate has not yet been found, AU has instead appointed an interim president: Dr. Peter MacKinnon, formerly of the University of Saskatchewan. Dr. MacKinnon has also served as chair of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) and on the Science, Technology and Innovation Council of Canada. We look forward to working with him over the coming year!

Convocation travel information

AUSU wants to make sure this year's graduating class has a fantastic convocation. To make this happen, we're providing free transportation via bus or limo service to take people from Edmonton to the Athabasca Multiplex each day of convocation 2014. This applies to those graduating from AU undergraduate programs, and their guests (some limits may apply).

We've also arranged hotel discounts in Edmonton.

Consent Awareness Week



The Athabasca University Students' Union (AUSU) is proud to support the Possibility Seeds' [Courage to Act project](#), a national [Consent Awareness Week](#) with community partners across Canada, running annually during the third week of September.

Consent education and preventing sexual violence are every bit as important for online as for in-person campuses. At Athabasca University, that might

look like ensuring a course outline or assignment is respectful and inclusive, or that a Discord server or Facebook group does not marginalize or overly sexualize someone without their consent.

[Read AUSU's latest executive blog](#) by Chantel Bradley, VPFA, to learn more about Consent Awareness Week and the steps your Student Council has taken to help prevent sexual violence on post-secondary campuses.

CLASSIFIEDS

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

THE VOICE

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Jason Sullivan, Wanda Waterman, Xine Wang and others!

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