

THE

# VOICE

MAGAZINE

Vol 11 Issue 11  
March 12, 2003

## **The Popstar Experience**

A behind the scenes look at the Canadian TV hit, *Popstars: The One*

## **Over Extended**

What the proposed AU extension policy may mean to you.

## **International Women's Day**

Middle East perspectives

## **FICTION SPECIAL**

Part 4 of our Original Romantic Novel *Forgotten Promise*

Plus: Canadian FedWatch!, Dear Sandra, Flicks and Folios, and news, announcements and opportunities from your university and beyond.

# THE VOICE

March 12, 2003

Volume 11, Issue 11

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### Are you an artist?

### AUSU supports the arts!

AUSU is interested in purchasing original works of art from students for promotional purposes. These promotions may include: gifts from AUSU to graduates at convocation, tokens of appreciation for volunteers, special presentations, etc.

The works of art must:

- be created by an AU student
- have a value range \$0-\$500
- be accessible or easily transportable to Alberta.

If you are an artist of any kind who creates a product you feel we would be able to use for such a purpose, contact: Debbie Jabbour [<mailto:djabbour@ausu.org>].

Supply a description of the object, a picture if you have it, and its market value.



**We love to hear from you!**

**Please continue providing your opinions, comments and ideas; any submissions can be sent to [voice@ausu.org](mailto:voice@ausu.org).**

**Please indicate if we may publish your letter.**

### **Quote of the Week:**

**In order to rally people, governments need enemies. They want us to be afraid, to hate, so we will rally behind them. And if they do not have a real enemy, they will invent one in order to mobilize us.**

**Thich Nhat Hanh.  
Buddhist monk; author.**

## **THE VOICE**

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***THE VOICE ONLINE:***  
**[WWW.AUSU.ORG/VOICE](http://WWW.AUSU.ORG/VOICE)**

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# EDITORIAL PAGES

**This week:** The first edition of Sounding Off  
**Pets and Peeves:** Tell us what you love; Tell us what drives you bananas

## SOUNDING OFF

Last week I announced a new column, **Sounding Off**. The idea is simple – I introduce a topic, and readers send in their comments to be printed in the next issue.

This column was created in response to feedback from several readers, indicating that you would like to know more about your fellow students, and that you want a place to voice your own opinions. Given that the name of the paper is **The Voice**, it was a perfect idea!

Council members then suggested that I provide a forum where students could comment on current events and hot topics, and the idea of **Sounding Off** was born.

I'm delighted with the response [see below]. Not only did many of you choose to comment on our first topic, the US war on Iraq, but you also chose to express yourselves in a variety of ways, including poetry, and photography. This is a trend that I'd love to see continue, because we are all individuals and many of us are better able to express our feelings in mediums other than prose. Again, this column represents the diversity of AU students, and our creativity as well.

I realize, however, that many of you have things you would like to say but that you are not interested in such a topical forum. So, again based on the suggestions of readers and members of the student's council, **I'm also launching a second student comment column, Pets and Peeves**, where you can make brief comments on things you like and things you hate.

Send us your pet peeves – you've posted so many of them in the AU forums already – and the things that lift your spirits. They can be related to school, distance study, or just life in general.

**The Voice** is also currently seeking articles on some new topics. Suggestions have included more political commentary, more education-related stories, study advice, a food column, home and garden news, and a comic.

## WORKING AT HOME; SCHOOLING AT HOME

Few resources exist to help the home student. Not only is distance education a relatively new phenomenon [actually, it's been around a long time, but at the post secondary level it is still rather innovative] it is not yet a universally accepted mode of study.

Distance ed students attest to the value and quality of home study at AU. Nevertheless, these students face a number of special challenges, and they may find that there is nowhere to turn for advice on how to best succeed with this unique study method.

In the future there will probably be an entire shelf in the library devoted to books for distance learners, just as today there are reams of materials for home office workers and traditional university students. Until then, we must adapt information from other sources to help us develop good home-study habits. The aforementioned books for home office users are one good source of

information on setting up a home work environment, and maintaining a consistent but flexible schedule.

If, like many other distance students, you find it hard to remain motivated or you have trouble fitting schoolwork into your schedule, try some of the following tips to get back on track.

## **CONVINCE YOURSELF THAT SCHOOL IS WORK!**

We've all been there – you set aside time to study, and someone calls. Not only do they call, but when you mention that you are reading your course materials or working on a paper, they assume that means that you are not very busy and therefore available to talk.

Now suppose that you are attending a traditional university, and your friend calls while you're in the middle of a lecture. If you happen to answer your cell phone and tell them where you are, in all likelihood they will apologize for disturbing you and offer to call back later. If you work at a full time job, it is unlikely that friends will call you during the day, or if they do, they will be brief.

It can be difficult to convince people that home study is work. However, it can be more difficult to convince yourself. If you find that people are consistently disrespecting your study time, then your own attitude toward your schoolwork may be part of the problem.

Often distance ed students do not feel comfortable telling people that they are too busy to talk when they're working on their courses. You may feel as though home study is not a legitimate reason to hang up the phone, or shut your door and tell your children to give you some quiet time. After all, you make your own schedule so you're responsible for being busy when people need you, right? I may be wrong, But I suspect that women are particularly susceptible to the latter misconception.

Get it in to your head that school is work. Important work. Valid work. Work that may alter the course of your life. If nothing else, the amount of time and money you're putting into courses is a very good reason to approach them seriously, and to demand that others do the same. The next time someone interrupts you in the middle of your studies, don't be afraid to say "can I get back to you later? I'm studying now." Make sure that your family members, especially children and spouses, understand that you will be studying for the next few hours - or even the next few minutes if that's all you can fit in - and that you are not to be disturbed except in case of emergency. Your schoolwork should command as much respect as a paying job; after all, you're working for your future, self improvement, and possibly a better paying career.

If you are beginning a particularly time consuming project, make sure that you tell people that you are going to be busy and they will have to fend for themselves. If you were to work overtime at the office and only come home at 8:00 pm, your family would probably understand if you didn't have time to make dinner or pick up the cleaning. However, when doing home study we often feel guilty if we haven't completed all of our household tasks. Clarifying ahead of time that you have a lot of work to do will help others adapt to your new student schedule.

Planning ahead can also help. Sometimes when I'm working on a really big project, I'll put in twelve, fourteen, or even sixteen hours in a day, and then feel bad because I did not get supper ready. I also may feel guilty for being so tired. After all I didn't leave the house or do anything physical! It is important to remember that brain-work is exhausting. Thinking, planning, and writing all day long is as taxing as any job outside the home. Keep this in mind, and let those around you know that you are working hard. Don't feel bad about being wiped out after putting in a lot of study time and allow yourself to relax.

## MAKE A PLACE TO STUDY, AND MAKE IT YOUR OWN

One way to help emphasize that your course work is work, is to make a home office for yourself where you can study in private. If you do not have room for an office, at least define one small section of the house – even if it's just a desk or a table – as your workspace. Approach this like you would a home business, and make sure that your family members respect your workspace and don't disturb your books and papers.

It is important that you have somewhere that you can leave your work open and available, so that you are not having to constantly put things away and take them out again. Having to do this can make you daunted about sitting down to study for just a few minutes. Also, when you are constantly shoving your course materials under beds, in drawers, or in other out of the way places, you are indicating that your schoolwork is not important enough to take up space in the home.

A full course load worth of materials can take up a lot of room. Between your workspace, course books, library books, papers, magazines, and drafts of assignments – not to mention a computer – you may find that AU materials begin to take over every part of the house. Find a place for your materials, and take pride in that space. If you have no choice but to put a desk in the living room, don't feel that you have to hide your work away when company comes over – this is your space, and a significant part of your life – it is not clutter. It is important to your success that your materials be available at all times so that you can read for a few minutes whenever you can, or so you can jot down a quick idea when it occurs to you.

Make sure you that if have to share your computer with other household members, that your studies are a top priority. Don't wait to use the computer if others are playing games or surfing the web for fun. You have invested a lot in your courses – kick them off and get to work! If your spouse uses the computer for work, then make sure your studies get equal time, or try to get your own computer. The same goes for office space. Don't share a home office if your school work won't be given the same space and time considerations as the other home business.

Make it clear also that when you are in your study space people are not to disturb you. Put a hanger on the door that says "Student at Work," or schedule times that you will be in there studying so everyone knows. If you tend to get distracted during the time you have set out to study, make a resolution that you will only use your study area for schoolwork, and nothing else.

## DISTRACTIONS

Speaking of distractions, they can be your worst enemy. It is hard enough setting aside time to study, but many students may find that even though they spend one or two hours in their study space intending to work, very little gets done. You may become distracted on the computer and end up surfing the internet or playing games, or you may end up planning what you're going to do the next day or the next week. Perhaps you so seldom get time for yourself that you spend your study time just thinking, resting, or reading for pleasure.

These things are all important, but when they infringe on your studies too often, they can prevent you from completing your courses. They can also lead you to feel very guilty for spending so much time and money on courses that you are unable to complete.

As mentioned above, one of the best ways to ensure that you will get work done in your study space is to decide to never use that space for anything but studying. This advice is very similar to the common advice for insomniacs: never get into bed unless you are prepared to sleep. If you want to read, sit up in a chair so that you don't associate your bed with sitting awake. The same advice can be applied to your office.

Another way to get things done, is to set very specific goals. If there's still time left in your course schedule it's very easy to put things off because you feel that you're not ready, or because you don't have enough information yet. Nevertheless, when your deadline arrives you manage to cram 3 weeks worth of work into a single marathon session. Clearly, you are able to just sit down and write without a lot of preparation. Often, you just don't do it until you have to. The problem with that is, you then do not have time to let your paper sit so you can go over it with fresh eyes. If you are someone who can't get anything done until the last minute, set some firm goals. Tell yourself that when you sit down tomorrow you will get your outline done, or you will write the first four pages of your paper. What if you are not prepared? Write them anyway. It's what you'll end up doing in the long run, but at least this way you will have time to rework it later. It can be helpful to approach your paper like a final exam. What do you do when you enter the exam room, with a three hour deadline and a topic? You just write, and hope for the best. If you never seem to be able to get going, try setting aside three hours and writing your paper as though you were in an exam. Rush it if you have to. Then you can go over it later, and use what you have as a starting point.

Think of the part of your brain that you use to write papers as a muscle. It needs exercise. The more you write, the easier it is to begin next time. Exercise this muscle and writing will get easier and easier.

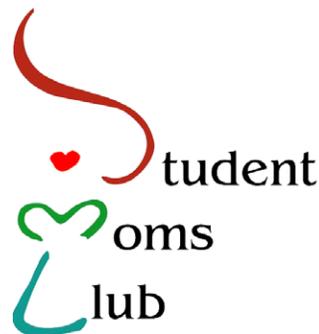
**Tamra Ross Low**  
Editor in Chief

# Voice Contest

The Voice is going through some changes. Soon the website will be updated and more new content will be introduced. In order to make the new Voice everything that you want it to be, we need your input.

As a thank you for taking the time to comment, we'll enter everyone who fills out our entry before the end of March into a draw for an AUSU T-shirt. Only AU students are eligible for this prize.

THE ENTRY FORM CAN BE FOUND HERE:  
[http://www.ausu.org/voice/contest\\_form.html](http://www.ausu.org/voice/contest_form.html)



## AU STUDENT MOMS CLUB

The Student Mom's Club of Athabasca University is now online and ready for new members.

As the SMC front page welcome message attests, this club is:

**LESS ACADEMIC ! MORE FANTASTIC !!**

SMC is dedicated to bringing together student moms across Canada to share study and parenting tips, easy quick recipes, articles and essays about childrearing and education, and much more.

SMC has a forum on the AUSU server, and a website at:  
<http://www.ausu.org/clubs/index.php>

You must log in to access the list of groups and clubs, but any AU student with an account on the AUSU website can access and club page.

*For more information on the SMC, contact Momo @ [smc@ausu.org](mailto:smc@ausu.org) or visit their website. Everyone is welcome.*



Last week we asked readers to send us their feelings on the US war against Iraq. You responded honestly, and eloquently. Our topic for next week is: The proposed new course extension policy at AU [see Over Extended by Karl Low in this issue].

#### DEBASED

Small meaningless men  
Egos of a king  
Worlds turn thou remain the same  
Delusions of equality  
Wars fought on holy ground  
For posturing and things  
We look to them as leaders  
All they are, are fiends  
Continues through the ages  
Resolution an elusive thing

**Kim Anderson, 2003**

I'm still sitting on the fence on this one. Wars are never good, thousands of innocent people die, families are separated, violence is witnessed. Mind you though, tyrannical dictators who do harm to their own people are never good either. Either way, people will die. It's horrendous to believe that thousands of people can support Saddam, out of respect or fear, probably more of the latter. Wouldn't it be best to just get rid of Saddam and his regime? With all the technology the US military has can't they just point a missile to his house and shoot? With only American news stories to go on, how can I honestly make an informed decision about what I believe would be the best thing to do?

**Sandra Moore**

Comedian Jay Leno recently said that Bush may be the smartest military guy in history - waiting until he destroys all of Iraq's weapons, then he declares war. I'd argue that this is not military smarts, this is bullying at its finest. And I have a lot of questions...

Who or what has given George W. Bush the right to dictate a regime change in Iraq? I've heard that he believes he has god behind him in this fight. According to the Dan Rather interview with Saddam Hussein - Saddam too, believes that Allah is with him. Terrorists flying jets into buildings also think they are doing the will of god. What makes Bush's god superior?

Democracy? My understanding of democracy is that it represents the will of the people - not the will of a foreign government. How can you impose or force democracy on people? Is this not a paradox? I wonder who will be next on Bush's list of countries requiring a change of government? Has Bush asked the Iraqi people what they want?

Does Bush really think that launching war against Iraq without the support of the U.N. (or much of the world) will reduce the hostility the Middle East already feels for the U.S.? Won't this increased hostility escalate terrorism?

Check out: <http://www.rootinguoutevil.org/>, an organization that is challenging dangerous nations by "sending a weapons inspection team to the United States to inspect the chemical, biological and nuclear weapons produced and concealed by the Bush regime."

**Debbie Jabbour**

While in the long run it may be necessary to do something to keep Saddam Hussein and his sons contained, the way the United States is going about it seems completely wrong to me. A unilateral attack will only serve to increase hostility to the United States and expose its citizens (and through them, us) to a larger threat of terrorist retaliation.

I would feel a lot more comfortable about the entire thing if the United States government was not so obviously trying to spin its own people into believing in the necessity of the invasion. What are the real reasons that the White House is afraid of telling its own people?

**Karl Low**

**Student Trevor Siwak chose to respond in photo, with these images from an anti-war rally in Ottawa this past weekend:**





Above photos by Trevor Siwak

The USA economy is a war-based economy. It has been proven that the growth is tremendous when they are in some conflict with some other country. After a conflict, USA helps rebuild the country, increasing their productivity and in turn helping their own economy. Also, it is a fact that USA gets over 70% of their oil from the Middle East. Therefore, it is very important that USA gets the oil at a lower price. Can you visualize a \$50.00/barrel price? Can you see the rate of inflation in the USA? Look at what we are paying with a \$32.00/barrel price. Look at the increase in the rate of inflation in Canada after an increase of a few dollars.

Finally, who trained Saddam! Who was instrumental in putting Saddam as a dictator in Iraq? We all know what dictators do when left alone. Look at Africa, South America, etc. and see what happens.

They say that 50% of the population in Iraq are 14 & under. What % are women? What % is left to defend their country? I am not defending Saddam, but there must be a more diplomacy and humane way of dealing with this situation.

Bush keeps saying God Bless America, but about the defenceless and innocent people in Iraq.

One more question – Why cannot Bush and Saddam have dual instead?

**Nick**

I rarely believe politicians and always look for hidden agendas. But, I don't automatically disbelieve either, or I figure I'm no better than someone who swallows everything without question. Now, though, I've lost all faith in the US government. It was never established that Bush was fairly elected, yet he accepted his office as though it was his divine right; By popular vote, he was far from popular. His lack of knowledge and understanding on most issues is frightening, and his drive to divert attention from his failure to deliver Osama Bin Laden [a foolhardy and childish promise] is clear. Perhaps Saddam is a threat, but without question Bush will benefit enormously from this war. It chills me that the most popular Presidents in US history have been the ones who have led wars, and that Dubya's approval ratings skyrocketed the moment the Trade Center went down. I also sense that Bush is driven to 'put down the varmint that his Daddy couldn't.'

That US citizens are denouncing countries that do not back their war only reinforces the importance of not bowing to US pressure. They guarantee their citizens free speech, but won't abide countries that hold different views. How can they promise intellectual freedom to individuals when they can't permit it in independent nations?

**Editor**

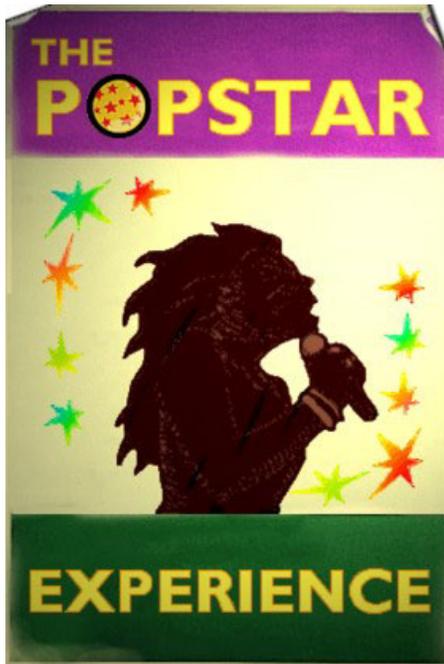
**Thanks, everyone, for making this first column such a success! I'm delighted with the number of responses, and the variety of formats in which you chose to express yourselves. I look forward to more great student input in Sounding Off.**

**For next week, send me your feelings on the following topic:**

**The proposed new course extension policy at AU [see Over Extended by Karl Low in this issue]. Will it effect you? Is it reasonable? Do you have any better ideas?**

## FROM MY PERSPECTIVE THE POPSTAR EXPERIENCE: PART SEVEN

By Debbie Jabbour



Part 7 in a continuing series about the Canadian Television talent competition, *Popstars: The One*.

For part one of this series, see: *The Voice*, January 29, 2003 [11-04]

Friday morning I woke up, eager to have Amaya home and glad she would be here soon. Amaya was to be on the plane at 1 PM Toronto time (11 AM our time), so I decided to run some errands and fill my gas tank in order to be ready to head for the airport to pick her up at 3:30 PM. I had spent the previous evening cleaning and airing out her room so that her space would be fresh and welcoming, and I wanted to pick up a few of her favourite foods for supper.

My first inkling that something was amiss was when I arrived home from running my errands to discover a phone message had been left at about 10 AM (12 PM Toronto time). The associate producer of Popstars, Rachel Horvath, left a message, simply asking for Amaya to call her. I thought it rather odd, but couldn't figure out what it meant.

I tried calling the cell phone (I had given Amaya my phone for the duration of the trip), but there was no answer. Worried, I decided to check the cell phone messages. There were several. Another message from Rachel Horvath left several hours earlier, as well as a message from Amaya's Toronto friend left on Wednesday evening making arrangements to meet her (which is when I found out she had gone out that night). I kept trying the cell phone unsuccessfully, but received no further calls from the Popstars people, so I figured things must have been solved, whatever they were.

At about 2 PM Edmonton time, I was at my computer double-checking the flight arrival time in preparation to leave for the airport when the phone rang. It was Amaya. Hysterical and sobbing. "Where are you?" I asked, frantic.

"In Toorooontoo!!!" she wailed. "I missed my plane!!!" She was crying so hard I could hardly make out what she was saying. I tried to calm her down, but she kept sobbing. "What am I going to do?" she cried. "I just want to come HOME!...please, Mom, please help me and get me home!"

I finally managed to drag some of the story out in between sobs. The Popstars people were apparently scheduled to come to pick her up at 12 PM from the hotel to take her to the airport. Upset at being cut, she had gone out with her friend again the night before. After returning to the hotel; emotionally, mentally and physically exhausted; she had fallen into a deep sleep. She had not heard the knock on the door, and she had not heard the phone ring. She had woken up, seen the clock reading 3:00 PM, and realized that her plane had left without her. I asked if she had called the Popstars people, but she said she didn't know where to call,

who to call. She dissolved in tears and became hysterical again as she begged me to find the number and help her come home.

I promised her that I would get her home, and told her that I would call her back in a few minutes. I finally located the original paperwork Popstars and Lone Eagle had sent her, and found a telephone number. I called Amaya back and gave her the number. I told her to call them and tell them what had happened, and ask them to get her on another flight home. I told her to call me back as soon as she had information. By now it was Friday afternoon in Toronto, past 3:30, and I was worried that she might not even get hold of anyone.

In the meantime I phoned Air Canada to find out if there was any way to change her ticket. I explained her plight to a very helpful and understanding reservation agent, but he could find no record of her reservation on the Air Canada flight I had been expecting, nor any other flight back that day. He did locate her original flight out of Edmonton, but nothing returning. He suggested it might be another airline, so I tried several others. No one had a record of Amaya's reservation, or any information on a flight leaving Toronto at the time Amaya had been scheduled to leave. Now I was really concerned. What airline had they booked this flight on?

A few minutes later an even more hysterical Amaya called me back. The person she had spoken with at Lone Eagle had been cold and unsympathetic and told her that it was her fault she had missed the flight, and she was on her own now. I was appalled. They would actually abandon my daughter in Toronto because she had missed her flight?

I reassured Amaya that there was no way I was leaving her in Toronto, and told her I would contact the Popstars people immediately. I called the main number, and spoke with the same cold, unsympathetic receptionist. She advised that the Popstars driver had been at the hotel, had knocked at the door and since Amaya had not answered, it was her own fault that she missed the plane. They considered themselves absolved of all further responsibility. I asked if anyone had bothered to enter the room and wake her, and she stated that a knock on the door was enough. I asked why they had not called me, her mother (since she is considered a minor in Ontario). She just reiterated that they had provided the flight and a driver and that was the end of their responsibility.

By now I was seeing red. I demanded to speak to Rachel Horvath, associate producer. "Sorry, she's at the bootcamp rehearsal" was the response. I asked who else I could speak with, and the answer was "they are all at bootcamp, sorry". I was trying to stay polite, well aware that my daughter's fate in Toronto depended on the whim of these people, and I insisted that something had to be done. I told her that I had a hysterical youngster in a hotel room, desperate to come home. I pointed out that \*I\* had not sent her to Toronto, Lone Eagle had. Therefore they were responsible to do everything within their power to make sure she made it back home safely. She insisted that it was Amaya's fault for not waking up. I pointed out that the whole premise of their show was to bring young people to Toronto to crush their dreams and play with their emotions and desires for success. What did they expect after cutting them? That these kids would be happy and smile and wait for the plane to take them home? Amaya was upset, and in her emotional turmoil had overslept. So that justified Lone Eagle abandoning her to her fate in Toronto?

Finally she agreed to try to contact someone at bootcamp and said she would call back. I called Amaya, who had calmed down somewhat. I reassured her that I was doing everything I could and that there was no way she would be left in Toronto, even if she had to stay another day. At this she started crying again, pleading with me to just get her out of there... she just could not bear being there another moment. She didn't say it but I think she was dreading when all the other contestants arrived back at the hotel from bootcamp to find her still there.

Minutes ticked by. It was getting close to 4:30 Toronto time and I had not yet heard back from Popstars. So I picked up the phone and called again. This time the receptionist advised that she had spoken with the producers and they would agree to arrange a flight for Amaya if I paid \$200 for it.

At this point I had had enough. Lone Eagle Entertainment was making hundreds of thousands of dollars off the back of the young hopefuls they were exploiting as free actors on their “reality” TV show. And they were going to demand money from me to bring my daughter back home after they had “crushed her dreams”? I was doing a slow burn...really wanting to take a strip off this girl, yet trying to remain calm. My daughter was thousands of miles away, after all, and I was depending on the Popstars people to get her home. I firmly told her that I had no money, and stated in no uncertain terms, that it was Lone Eagle’s responsibility to return my daughter safely back to Edmonton. She finally said she would go and talk to the producers again.

I called Amaya back to let her know what had transpired. I asked if she was packed and ready to go and she assured me she was. I told her to just sit tight and wait, that I would make sure they sent her home that evening.

When I told others this story afterwards, they suggested that I should have threatened to involve the media. I did not think of it at the time, but certainly Lone Eagle would not have been eager to have any bad publicity - a media release that revealed their callous willingness to abandon a young girl they had cut from Popstars in Toronto would have certainly had the desired effect.

Finally, at around 5 PM Toronto time, Lone Eagle called me back. The producers had booked another flight and would pick Amaya up at the hotel and take her to the airport within the hour. I thanked them and advised that I would call Amaya and make sure she remained waiting in the lobby.

An hour later Amaya called me from the airport. Her flight was due to leave two hours later, to arrive in Edmonton shortly before midnight. However, a year earlier when coming home, Amaya had missed a plane by minutes, watching it take off from the loading gate...so I knew we were not out of the woods yet.

**Next week:**

## **Conclusion & Reflections on the Popstar Experience**

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*Debbie is a native Edmontonian, and a single parent with four daughters. She has worked as a professional musician for most of her life, and has enjoyed a rich variety of life experiences - with many more to come! Debbie is working towards an eventual doctorate in psychology, and currently serves as the president of the Athabasca University Students Union.*

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# OVER EXTENDED?

By Karl Low

## *The proposed new AU course extension policy, and what it means to you.*



The Athabasca University Academic Council will soon be voting on a motion to require students to give 30 days advance notice for an extension. Naturally, this notice will have to be accompanied by the cheque for the extension fee.

What this means for students is that if you thought you were able to finish your course on time and toward the end of your contract realized that you happened to be wrong for any reason, be it a family emergency or simply an increased workload at your regular job, you can be left with nothing at all to show for your course fees.

On the other hand, if a month before your contract end date you still happen to be unsure whether you'll need the extension or not, you'll have to pay for it, just in case, even if you find that you don't need it.

The reasoning that is being given for this is that most students only extend their courses in the last four days of the month, and this places a huge workload on the administrative staff trying to get all of the extensions processed and the tutors notified. This means that, tutors are finding themselves in what is called "overload", where they are handling more students than they are contracted to. Naturally, faculty and tutors are concerned about this, and worried that Athabasca University may be using the overload provisions to simply avoid contracting (and paying) the tutors for the number of students that they are actually expected to be handling at any one time.

Of course, the reason most students extend their courses in the last few days of the month is that they are trying like hell to finish their course on time and not have to pay the extra \$127 that it costs to extend. Students often don't know if they'll need an extension until just before the end of the month – especially in those courses that do not have final exams.

This policy will actually go directly against Athabasca University's stated mission, which reads, "Athabasca University, Canada's Open University, is dedicated to the removal of barriers that restrict access to, and success in, university-level studies and to increasing equality of educational opportunity for adult learners worldwide." When compared to any traditional university student population, a large ratio of Athabasca University's students are mothers. The flexibility AU offers is a boon to these women. The new policy aims to take some of that flexibility away.

Since AU has no policy about rescheduling an exam after your contract date, if something happens on your exam day, be it a child is sick, or even the weather simply makes it impossible to get in (and with as many regions as AU students are in, the weather is bound to be bad somewhere) then extensions can be a student's only option. While the folks at Athabasca University are often reasonable about this sort of thing, not having a formal policy means that students are not guaranteed the ability to reschedule exams beyond the end date even in emergency situations. Extensions serve as a (costly) safety net for these types of occasions.

No longer though. Should this motion go through, if an extension wasn't purchased early, the unfortunate are just plain out of luck. Thanks for the cheque, please try again.

AUSU, in cooperation with the CUPE (the union that represents the tutors and faculty) are working to address this issue. They have come up with a number of alternative plans that the university could use to enable them to deal with the difficulties extensions are causing while not taking away the ability for distance education students to deal with changing circumstances.

The best option, from AUSU's point of view, is for the administration of AU to recognize that extensions tend to be requested late in the month and rework their systems to deal with it internally. This would mean automating notices to tutors and ensuring that tutor blocks are not completely full on the tenth of the month (the last day in which new course registrations are possible) so that there is room for students that extend.

In addition, ideas that will also be presented to AU include creating a formal policy of allowing a student to pay a fee and then reschedule an exam past the normal contract date, and of providing students a discount if they extend their course before the tenth of the month in order to encourage spreading out the workload.

At the very least, students should not be made to schedule an extension before they would even have scheduled a final exam. Thirty days is a significant chunk of a six-month course. To assume that all students would know by then whether an extension will be required is unfair.

As students, we need to let AU administration know that this proposed change simply isn't acceptable. Call your tutors to let them know how you feel about AU taking away an important safety net, and ask them to talk to their supervisors about it. You can also call the registrar's office and express your feelings about this directly with the administration. If we do not speak up, they will assume that nothing is wrong.

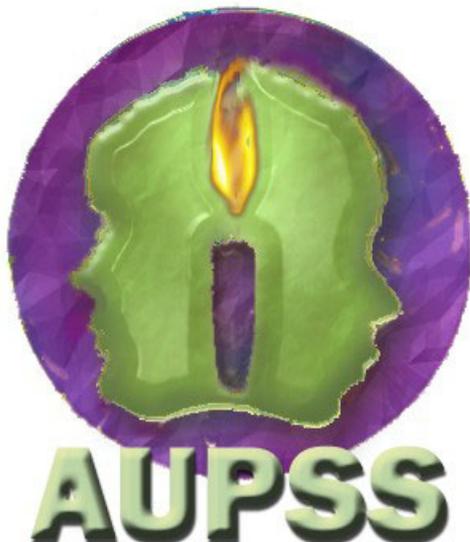
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*A native Calgarian, Karl is perpetually nearing the completion of his Bachelor of Arts with a Major in Information Studies. He also works for the Computer Sciences Virtual Helpdesk for Athabasca University and plans to eventually go on to tutor and obtain his Master's Degree.*

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## ATTENTION PSYCHOLOGY STUDENTS



Every Monday from 9:30 - 10:30 AM MST and Wednesday from 7-8 PM MST the Athabasca University Psychology Students' Society gets together to chat about issues pertaining to the world of psychology at AU.

To Join the chat, go to the AUPSS website, accessible through: <http://www.ausu.org/clubs/index.php> [you must be logged in to AUSU] and select the discussion forum link, from there click on Psychology at the top written in blue and choose the General Psychology Chat. NOTE: You need to be registered in a psychology course to access the AU psych discussions.

Hope to see you there!

**Sandra Moore**  
**Athabasca University Psychology Students' Society**

# INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

BY SANDRA MOORE



Saturday March 8<sup>th</sup> was International Women's Day. Formed in 1977 by the United Nations, International Women's Day provides an opportunity to ponder on the progress made to expand women's equality, to gauge the challenges facing women in modern society, to contemplate future steps to improve the status of women, and of course, to commemorate the gains made in these areas. The theme for 2003 was Women and Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). World-Wide Women (WWW): Surfing the Digital Revolution. This theme encourages us to take a closer look at the impact of ICTs and, in particular, the Internet applications on women, and their uses as a tool for the empowerment of women and the promotion of women's equality.<sup>1</sup>

As Athabasca University Students, we know first hand how important ICTs have become. Distance and the demands of a family are no longer issues for women wishing to return to school. With the click of a mouse an assignment can be submitted anytime day or night. The same thing goes when we are looking for a job. Companies now advertise on-line and accept applications by email. But how do ICTs fit in with International Women's Day?

For starters, ICTs have helped women gain access to a wide range of up-to-date information that may not be available locally. Surfing the net can lead women to women's services and organizations, as well as increase their awareness of women's issues and educate a wide variety of people across the world about these issues. ICTs also break the isolation many women are faced with. Whether their isolation stems from living in a remote community or just from being a harried mother, virtual communities and on-line support groups provide a whole new world of information and comfort. Most importantly though, ICTs are helping women to mobilize and take action for social equality throughout the world.

North American women have come a long way since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century days of fighting for the vote and the right to enter male-dominated careers, yet the fight for the women of Iran is just beginning. Parvin Camphor remembers the days before the 1979 Iranian Revolution, when women were free to attend university, hold high-level jobs and choose their dress. Since the Revolution women have been second-class citizens ruled with an iron fist by conservative males. The intensity of the Revolution and the suddenness with which it appeared "out of the blue" surprised many people both in Iran itself and in the rest of the world.

Before the revolution Shah, who to some was ruining Iran by trying to westernize it, ruled the country. When Khomeini overthrew Shah in 1979 and became supreme spiritual leader (Valy-e-Faqih) of Iran his views of women, which were in opposition to the Shah's family laws of the 1960s, now came to affect millions of Iranian women. One of his first announcements as the leader of Iran was to call for all Iranian women to veil. Iranian women took to the streets in objection and his position was modified, calling for Iranian women to wear modest Islamic clothing in public; the full-length black veil was not the only expression of modest Islamic dress for women. Many women chose instead to wear a scarf and long overcoat. The punishments for not wearing proper dress are severe. Parvin tells of guards in the streets whose only purpose is to watch for improperly dressed women; even a hair showing can land a woman in jail.

As the Islamic Republic established itself in Iran in the late 1970s and early 1980s, gender relations took center stage. Numerous public spaces were segregated. Women were to use different areas at the beach, and sit in different areas of the university lecture hall. Women were prohibited from being judges and other professional areas were closed to them. The legal age of marriage for women was lowered to 13; their rights to divorce were drastically limited. An Iranian woman must receive written permission from her father (if

single) or husband (if married) in order to leave the country. Parvin, a Canadian since 1977, also tells of having to obtain written permission from her Canadian husband when she returned to Iran to visit relatives a few years ago. She also needed to obtain written permission from him in order to return to Canada.

If the Shah regime had expressed a vision of Iranian women as being modern and Western, then the Islamic Republic wanted desperately to undo that process. In the 1997 Presidential elections, women played a big role in bringing President Khatami into power. He ran on a platform calling for a more liberal stance on women's issues.<sup>11</sup> Unfortunately, the power system in Iran is established in such a way that the President has only limited power. The head of the legislative branch and the head of the judiciary do not share President Khatami's views on social reforms. Nevertheless, Iranian women will continue to fight for equality with their male counterparts. It remains to be seen how the status of women will finally be settled in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

This oppression of women is prevalent in other middle-east countries as well; the plight of the Afghanistan women under the Taliban is one of the more heard about stories. Their oppression is double that of Iranian women. Since the Taliban has taken over women are forced to wear burquas, full-body coverings with a slit for the eyes. Beating, amputations and executions are common punishments for swaying from the strict Islamic rule of the Taliban. Girls are only sent to school long enough to learn to read the Qu'ran. Women are permitted from going to the well to obtain water for fear that they may have the opportunity to talk to other women and "conspire" against the Taliban. And without a male accompaniment women are also prohibited from being in public. To learn more about the plight of the Afghani women visit the Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan at [www.rawa.org](http://www.rawa.org).

The cause of these middle-eastern women's misery lies in their cultural practices, not Islam. In some Muslim societies, women are oppressed by backward ethnic customs, which are often justified in terms of Islam. For example, while Islam undeniably goes against female circumcision, this brutality is practiced in Sudan, Algeria, and Egypt in the name of Islam. This rite is actually an African tribal custom. While Islam demands that women must choose their own husbands, forced marriages are commonplace amongst the Muslims in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. It is important to remember that the ancestors of Indians, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis were Hindus. These people mix bits of Hinduism with Islam and label it Islam. Governments are doing the same things, rewriting or reinterpreting the laws of Islam to coincide with their political agendas.

For Canadians, International Women's Day should serve as a reminder to all that the fight to end the oppression of the world's women is far from over. Though the majority of the world is rapidly coming to accept women as equals to men, the status of equality between men and women in middle-eastern countries still has a long way to go. The dinners, rallies, and events held in honour of International Women's Day across the world all strove to show that women are human beings, and as such should demand freedom of thought, dress, marriage, education, and employment. ICTs are enabling women to reach out, tell their stories, gain support and learn of a different way of life. Equality and basic human rights should not need to be fought for.

<sup>1</sup> Taken from the Government of Canada Status on Women of Canada Fact Sheet 2003.

<sup>11</sup> <http://tehran.stanford.edu/khatami/biography.html>



**Dear Sandra,**

**Are there any ways to tell if someone is lying or not? I think my boyfriend may be lying to me about his past, but I have no way to prove it.**

**Doubtful in Moncton**

Dear Doubtful,

If you feel that he's lying, he probably is. Gut feelings are usually right.

Physically, liars generally maintain more eye contact than truth-tellers. Don't believe the shifty-eye theory we've all come to associate with liars. They do blink frequently and may have dilated pupils, which may be the body's unconscious response to fear or anxiety. Watch their lips too. Tightly pressed together lips indicated that the person is holding something back. The hands can also signal a liar. Liars tend to use their hands less than those who are more sincere, unless it's to cover their mouth. Fibbers also tip up their chins and hold their bodies tensely.

When your lover is spouting a story to you if it's in chronological order and sentiment-free the liar alert light in your brain should start flashing. True stories tend to be sprinkled with spontaneous emotional details.

**LIAR** version: I had supper and went to bed. **TRUTHFUL** version: I had spaghetti for supper, which I haven't had in a while, and was so relaxed afterward that I drifted off to sleep early. I needed that extra sleep after the stressful week I had.

If you truly believe he's lying, confront him. Ask for proof if the lying is important to you or about something major, like the number of children he has. If it's just little white lies about his past, like him telling you he was an all-star basketball player in school, I wouldn't worry too much about it.

*Sandra*

**I WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!  
TELL ME YOUR TROUBLES.  
YOUR CONFIDENTIALITY IS ASSURED.**

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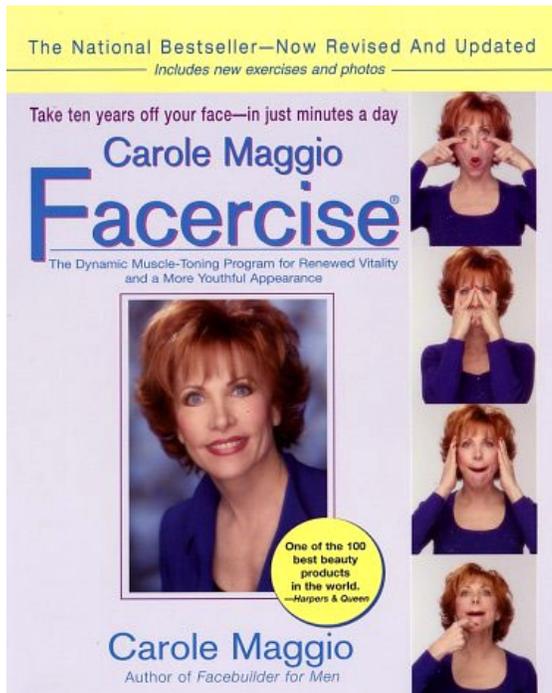
*This column is for entertainment only. Sandra is not a professional counsellor, but is an AU student who would like to give personal advice about school and life to her peers. Please forward your questions to Sandra care of [smoore@ausu.org](mailto:smoore@ausu.org)*

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## BOOK REVIEW: FACERCISE

BY LAURA SEYMOUR



Looking in the mirror has been quite a feat lately. I don't know exactly when this happened but my face suddenly seemed to drop! It apparently happened one day when I wasn't looking. This is embarrassing and frustrating as most of us think the only "fix" for the problem is to head to an expensive cosmetic surgeon and get the "dog head out the car window" job! I don't want to look that tight and phony, and I don't happen to have the funds for the surgery. I admit, however, I am getting heartily annoyed at the haggard, old broad who keeps appearing in my mirror every morning! When I stopped looking at the mirror at all, I decided it was time to do something about this.

I bought Carole Maggio's book *Facercise* (1995, Penguin/Putnam books) a couple of years ago in my local bookstore. I admit I used the exercises twice and promptly stuck the book in a closet.

I got the slim, 83 page, tome out again recently and reread it. At first glance the book appears to be too tiny to be anything but a breezy read, but I was impressed by the concrete work Carole did on the subject of the 57 facial muscles. Her book includes some before and after photos of subjects who used her exercises. As impressive as the pictures are in the book, her website (<http://www.facercise.com>) has *far* better illustrations of the effects her exercises can have. I recommend you look at the site under "Results" just to be impressed. The number one change in the photos I liked was the effect on people's eyes. WOW! I am very impressed that both men and women went from hooded, tired looking, or just plain small eyes and then their eyes appear to be magically larger in the after photos. Since I have ALWAYS had a real problem with being "full faced" and "deep set eyed" I got cracking on the exercises again and decided to take Voice readers along for the ride.

This meant I had to knuckle down and actually *do* the exercises... and my husband came along as well. At first he didn't do all of them although because he has no finger use I have to say he has a very good excuse!

Admittedly, when I started the book I was busy trying to read instructions and it slowed me down, but with time my speed picked up. Soon I was knocking off the prescribed amount of repetitions in a matter of moments. And I can feel changes happening.

When I first began...and this is SO embarrassing, I noticed if my head was leaned forward I could feel my cheek and jowl area hanging down the side of my face. Worse...I could SEE it! I wanted to change that immediately. So I worked on that exercise or two very hard! So hard indeed, my face and neck hurt and kept me from sleeping. I recommend if you do these exercises you give yourself a nice neck and shoulder rub after!

So what did I notice after one week of use? Well, I have to admit to a couple of “oopsy daisies” here. I did the exercises 5 out of 7 days for the article. Lately, I’ve been plagued with serious trouble sleeping and it’s turned my brain to oatmeal and my energy to mush. My face went along for the ride and looked droopy even more. Thanks! That was such a help!



Before and after pictures of Larry and Laura after a week of Facercise.

The back of Carole’s book states you can, “diminish puffiness around the eyes, shorten and narrow the nose, smooth the chin, neck and jawline, improve skin color and tone, lift eyebrows, recontour the cheeks, make lips fuller...and more.”

Quotes from *Harpers and Queen* magazine and Beverly Hills plastic surgeon, Lawrence Birnbaum, M.D. insist that the exercises work.

The only problem with all this wonderful information is that so many of us rush around “doing things” all the time. We don’t stop to apply some of the marvelous things available to us... like those body exercisers we buy, use once and stuff into a closet or dry our clothes on.

I’ll include our photos for you to see and – keep in mind it’s only been a week – you can decide yourself. I hope you’ll consider the exercises and get some fabulous results. Hey, if you do, write the Voice and have them forward the photos to me. I’d love to see your results. Now, I have to go do some more neck and eye repetitions. I need bigger Betty Boop eyes for a cruise coming up!!

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Laura Seymour first published herself, at age 8. She has since gone on to publish a cookbook for the medical condition *Candida*. She is working toward her B.A. (Psyc).

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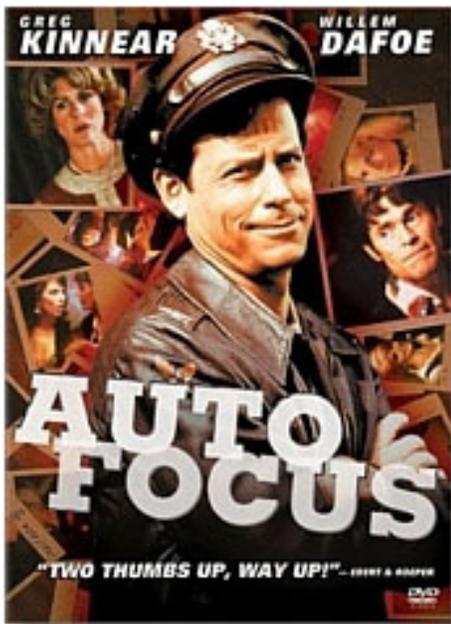
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## REVIEW: *AUTO FOCUS* DEPRESSINGLY BRILLIANT

By Jeanette Bliemel



I never thought a movie could pull me into a full depression; that is until I saw the film *Auto Focus*. This film is about the life of Bob Crane (played astonishingly well by Greg Kinnear), the witty and favourable star of the 1968-1971 television show *Hogan's Heroes*. This movie starts out in a pleasant tone, with a happy-go-lucky Bob Crane, and its refreshing 1960s setting. But underneath Crane's "oh so perfect" life lies a man with an obsession who drives his family, his career, and his charming personality into a self-destructive downward spiral.

I knew very little about Bob Crane before I saw this film and was shocked and surprised by his life behind the television screen. He did start out with a seemingly good life, but underneath it all he was obsessed with photographing and videotaping his sexual endeavours. His sex addiction ended his first marriage after his wife, Anne Crane (played by Rita Wilson), found his girly magazines and nude photos, which he tried to pass off as a "hobby". This turning point in his life is when he begins to be faced with his addiction, but instead of coming out of it, he continues walking into it.

Crane is quite oblivious that he has a sex addiction, which increasingly gets worse. Most of his conflicts start when his fame surrounds him with women, leading him to strip clubs and womanizing. Crane was not flying solo in his obsessions. One of the main reasons he was so drawn into this sexual behaviour is his relationship with his confidant, John Carpenter (played by the brilliant William Dafoe). Dafoe does an amazingly convincing job as a sleazy, electronic guru who shares Crane's passion for sex. The two of them create a friendship that is based on all kinds of strange sexual behaviour. As much as I didn't care for Carpenter, I couldn't help but feel sorry for him, since he is very much Crane's underdog.

Crane did not only ruin in his first marriage, but also ended up neglecting his very open-minded, second wife, Patricia Crane (played by the stunning Maria Bello). As another marriage was failing once again, his career was failing as well; people were very wary to hire him. His life going to shambles becomes a common theme in this film, which just keeps escalating. I found myself waiting for Crane to get a break, or to realize the magnitude of his illness. Unfortunately, it appears that Bob Crane's life was rather hopeless.

The actors in *Auto Focus* are truly amazing. This film has a great cast who are all very believable. Kinnear and Dafoe are especially striking, and together they have this amazing chemistry. The distorted passion they share creates a strange bond between them. They even adopted the motto, "A day without sex is a day wasted". Dafoe especially caught my attention. After seeing the movie *Spider-Man*, every time I would see Dafoe in a movie I would think of The Green Goblin. But in this movie his character was so convincing, that evil super villain Gobby never crossed my mind once. And anyone who was a fan of *Hogan's Heroes* will love the characters of Sgt. Schultz (played by Lyle Kanouse) and Col. Klink (played by Kurt Fuller).

Director, Paul Schrader, did an excellent job in depicting Bob Crane's life. Schrader went through a dark period in his life as well, therefore he was perfect for this directing role. He did an amazing job setting the mood for this film, especially, at about three-quarters of the way through the movie. This is when Crane's life seems to have lost all signs of hope; all that matters to him is sex. At this point, very dreary, almost nauseating music starts, the camera is also very shaky and the film is overexposed. For me, as the viewer, it was agonizing. It was like waiting to lose your lunch, but without any relief. All I could think was, 'when is this going to end?' and 'why would they torture the audience like this?'. But really, it was nothing less than brilliance. It was perfect for depicting how Bob Crane felt: completely stuck in this horrible dark world of mental illness.

This movie is so depressing. I continually waited for a favourable turn of events, except it never happened. It was like being stranded in the middle of the ocean for eons with no sign of land. Bob Crane's life was sad and pathetic. So, by now you are probably wondering why you would even consider seeing this movie. This isn't a bad movie. If anything, it depicts his life amazingly well. It's just that Crane had a depressing life. Whether you were a fan of *Hogan's Heroes*, or never even heard of it, this film is worth seeing. In my opinion, *Auto Focus* is a work of art. So, if you don't mind watching a film that might have you reaching for the Prozac, check it out.

### **Auto Focus - Must Know Facts About the Director Paul Schrader**

- Was born on July 22, 1946 in Grand Rapids, Michigan
- Raised in a strict religious household.
- Didn't see his first movie until he was 18 years old.
- Wrote his first script in 1975: 'The Yakuza'
- Best known as the guy who wrote *Taxi Driver*
- One of the original seventies movie brats

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*Jeanette was born and raised in Edmonton. She has finally found her place as a university student and is working towards a Bachelor of Arts Degree with a very dubious major in English. This movie buff enjoys creative writing and reading all kinds of books. She hopes to work towards being a predominant writer in the entertainment field.*

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## WRITE ON

*By Lonita Fraser*



Keeping a journal, and personal writing in general, are topics very dear to my heart. Yet despite my love for the act of writing, I sometimes become stale, run out of ideas, and can find no story to tell. I am always on the lookout for ways to augment and enhance my writing, whether that be through writing prompts or other projects not devoted specifically to the pen. I have written previously about keeping travelogues and lists of personal factoids, both things I've enjoyed immensely. Now, however, I want to introduce you to some wonderful writing projects found on the Internet.

Many people, when they set out to write a journal or something personal, are daunted by the concept of length. Some of us have the misconception that something short is insufficient to tell a story, or to relate enough information to be understood. This, of course, is not at all the case.

The 100 Words project is proof positive of the concept that short, can indeed, be very sweet. In fact, the whole aim of the site is to be concise, to pick one topic, one idea, one *something*, and encapsulate it into no more and no less than one hundred words. The project runs on a monthly basis, in the sense that participants are required to write an entry every day for a month, on whatever topic they wish, and post it to the website - typos, bad grammar, and all. At the end of each month, if a person has participated every day, their entire stock of entries is made public for all to see. It does not matter if the entries are poetry, fiction, fact, fantasy, or prose, thematic, formulaic or otherwise - the point is simply to write. It is an excellent project on many levels, particularly for anyone who might want exercises in being more concise, or folks wanting to stretch writing muscles in small steps at a time.

If you've been writing a long time, perhaps talked of the minutia of your day, maybe told all your childhood stories, or tackled all the issues of the world that strike a chord with you, then you might be feeling as if you've come to the end of an inspiration rope. It is a frustrating feeling I have faced many times myself. It is in this area that the World Wide Web excels in providing new directions and perspectives. One of the most popular ways of doing this - of providing a spark - is simply asking questions.

The If Project is one such provider of questions. Terry's brainchild has been running since September of 2000, and without fail, a new question is posted on the first day of every month. These questions are personal, sometimes very deep, and require introspection and imagination. They usually aren't difficult questions, in the sense of not being hard to answer, yet they still provide some difficulty. They still call for us to - as I said - look inward and perhaps address moral and philosophical, as well as social, issues. One of my favourite questions posed on the website was from December 2000: *If you were able to lend one of your five senses to a person born without, which one would you give? What would you forgo so another could experience?* This project welcomes you to share your answers by providing space for web links, in case you've made your answers public on your own web space. Your own website is not required, however; *The If Project's* owner will post your entries on her own space if you wish it.

Random Acts of Journalling is similar to the above in that it is run on a monthly basis and provides space for links to your answers if you've put them on the Internet, but it doesn't confine itself to just one question, or just one theme. The site's creator provides many different kinds of prompts to help get the writing juices flowing including questions, photographs, quotations from books, other quotations, a poem-writing prompt, and more. Participants can respond to as many of the different prompts as many times as they wish to. The only thing that is asked in return, is that when you submit the links to your answers or responses, you share a writing prompt of your own.

If one question isn't enough, or if you want something more frequent than once a month, you might wish to check out Friday Group Therapy, which posts a themed series of seven questions once a week. The issues are personal and wide-ranging, and are sparked by what the site owner finds in the news. This week's issue, for example, is based on a young girl who received donated organs of the wrong blood type, and, as *Group Therapy's* creator Brian Peace states, "This week's Therapy session revolves around incompetence." This project, just like *The If Project*, provides you space to share your answers via web links.

Not all of us want to consider deeply personal issues all the time, though. There are days we feel like writing but don't want to face anything more complex than what we might have had for lunch or what our favourite films are. There are several projects catering to this more casual approach.

The Friday Five is a perfect example of the personal without being too involved. As the FAQ states, "The *Friday Five* questions were never meant to be deep and thought-provoking. They have always been basic questions that just about anyone can answer." Each set of five questions, posted once per week, usually carries a theme or at least some binding tie. This week's theme, for example, is reading material that covers what your favourite poem is, what you're currently reading, and what your favourite book is. This project, too, provides space for you to either link to your answers or share them via a message board. The site's creator welcomes you to share any theme or question ideas you might have.

Similar to the *Friday Five*, is the Weekly Wrap-Up. Each week five questions are posed that might involve nothing beyond the casual, or they could cover topics more in-depth. This week's topic, for example, is feelings. The questions range from asking what makes us feel happy, sad, or angry, to what emotions we experience most frequently. You may post links to your own answers via the message board provided.

Whatever your taste, desire, or need, the World Wide Web is an endless source of writing projects of all types; projects guaranteed to exercise a variety of writing and thinking muscles. What I've listed above is only a very tiny sample of what's available, so if none of the above are to your liking, a web search should enable you to find something that is more suitable. Moreover, how you answer them need not be confined to the Internet. You can take whatever prompts you find, and apply them to a paper journal as well. It's up to you. The bottom line is, of course, that there is always a way to get around writer's block or to get started in writing to begin with - you just have to keep your eyes open. You never know from where inspiration will strike.

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*Lonita has been an AU student since early 2002, and is studying towards a Bachelor of General Studies in Arts & Science. She enjoys writing, creating websites, drinks far too much tea, and lives in hopes of one day owning a plaid Cthulhu doll. The most exciting thing she's done so far in her lifetime is driven an F2000 racecar, and she's still trying to figure out how to top that experience. Her personal website can be found at <http://www.lonita.net> and what you can't find out about her through that, you can ask her via email: [lonita\\_anne@yahoo.ca](mailto:lonita_anne@yahoo.ca)*

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# CANADIAN FED WATCH!

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## NEWS ACROSS THE NATION...

*By Karl Low*



### TOBACCO COMPANY GETS BURNED

The RCMP has filed criminal charges against RJ Reynolds Tobacco Company (a subsidiary of RJR Nabisco) and a host of its former executives for illegally smuggling cigarettes into Canada.

Between 1991 and 1996, the RCMP alleges that the company and the executives worked together to defraud the government of over 1.2 billion dollars in tax funds. Since those years, the company has been reorganized, and many of the executives have gone on to other companies, including two to Japan Tobacco International, located in Geneva.

One of them, however, hasn't been so lucky and is already in jail in the United States for smuggling related offences.

All have been summoned to appear before a Justice on Wednesday, March 26<sup>th</sup>. The RCMP says that it is not finished yet, and there is a possibility that more charges will yet be laid.

For comparison's sake, 1.2 billion dollars is equivalent to 30,000 full student loans from the Alberta Government. To give more meaning to that number, consider that Athabasca University has approximately 25,000 undergraduate students currently taking courses.

Of course, if the charges are true, the chances of getting that much money out of the company is pretty slim.

But we can dream, can't we?

### FUN WITH NUMBERS

The Ontario Conservative Government is pleased to announce that over 22,000 more people have been removed from the welfare rolls. These people join the already 600,000 people that have been removed since the Conservative government came to power. Brenda Elliot, the provincial Minister of Community, Family, and Children's services said "As a result of our reforms and Ontario's strong economy, more than 620,000 people have moved from welfare to work since June 1995"

Hopefully that "more than" means 2,000 more than 620,000 because otherwise we are looking at about 2,000 people who have just been sent out to starve in the streets.

They're probably students, too.

## ON THE BRIGHT SIDE

I should probably give credit where credit is due. And to their credit, the Ontario Provincial Government has proudly announced a cheque for up to \$364,423 for the government's Information Technology Training for Women Program (ITTW). This comes from the Minister Responsible for Women's Issues in Ontario, Dianne Cunningham, for International Women's Week.

The ITTW program is a good one in that it provides IT training for low-income women, hopefully giving them the skills they need to find a decent paying job in a sector that's traditionally under-represented by women.

It's just too bad that programs like these are the exception across the country.

## MORE FUNDING FOR RESEARCH

The Canadian Foundation for Innovation is giving 17.7 million to various universities across the country to promote new faculty research programs.

Some of that money will be going to the University of Calgary for research into a "electrophysiology and laser stimulation system for assessing the synaptic regulation of the stress response. "

Of course, this means of Calgary that it has still had to cut almost 30 million dollars from its budget.

Research funding is nice. Research funding is necessary. But so is enabling the next generation of researchers to take the education they'll need. Forcing a university to cut thirty million dollars from its budget and then being proud of giving eleven million to the entire post-secondary system in the province is like stealing a bottle of pop but expecting praise for giving the bottle-refund back to the store.

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*A native Calgarian, Karl is perpetually nearing the completion of his Bachelor of Arts with a Major in Information Studies. He also works for the Computer Sciences Virtual Helpdesk for Athabasca University and plans to eventually go on to tutor and obtain his Master's Degree.*

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selection of writing  
and preferred genre.

**NEW**

## THE VOICE FICTION FEATURE



The Voice is pleased to introduce a brand new fiction feature.

To kick off the column, we have a special treat – *Forgotten Promise*, an original short novel by Carla Johnson. For part one of this story, see the February 19<sup>th</sup> edition of The Voice [v11 i08].

After the last installment we will begin running a piece of student fiction each week, so start sending in your submissions. Any form of creative writing is acceptable, including short stories and poems.

*By Carla Johnson*

### Part four ...

*Laura proceeded to explain about the adoption certificate that she had seen, leaving out details about who had given her the document. Adam seemed irritated that she hadn't shared this information with him. But after all, he hadn't called in more than a week! Laura stated as much,*

*"Well, you hadn't called, and I don't like to call you. But", she added, ashamed suddenly - after all, it was his daughter too, "I should have told you. We did agree to always compare notes." She didn't add that Aaron's involvement had complicated things somewhat for her. Adam had no right to be jealous anyway.*

*"Laura . . .," there was a sudden break in his voice. "I'd like to see you."*

**W**hy, Adam? There is no point. We'll talk as soon as we have more information, but that's as far as it can go."

"Alright, Laura, I understand. But on Saturday, I'm taking my housekeeper's granddaughter to West Edmonton Mall. She's a good kid, very lonely, and I

promised I would take her somewhere if she had a good report card for Grade I. Please. . I'd like you to come with us." The naked hope in his voice stabbed her.

"Well . . .," she hesitated long enough for him to know he had the advantage.

"We'll pick you up at 10:30." Then he hung up quickly, not giving her a chance to refuse. She mused for a moment. Why would Adam be taking his housekeeper's granddaughter anywhere? He must have a soft spot - or perhaps it was regret at not being able to enjoy a child of his own. As she thought, she remembered a conversation they had after she first arrived, in which he described his housekeeper's granddaughter as a "bright, artistic and sweet child, one who needs something more than her grandmother can give her." Remembering those words convinced her that going with Adam on Saturday would be appropriate. Her experience and training had shown her that children needed all the

attention and love they could get. Obviously this little girl was someone special to Adam. She looked forward to seeing what kind of child had touched Adam's heart.

Saturday dawned full of sunshine and promise of summer. Laura felt a pang as she remembered the warm, breezy mornings she had enjoyed breakfast with her parents on their deck, watching the surf crash over the beach. Life in Vancouver had not been so bad.

Her inquiries into her parent's source of income had not yet revealed much. The bank manager was unwilling to provide too much information, but indicated that it was a trust fund set up by some external source, payable until death. Blood money? The thought popped into Laura's head involuntarily. Was there a connection between the unknown person from Edmonton who had taken her child and the large trust fund that had supported them in a comfortable lifestyle in Vancouver? It seemed reasonable. Answers must come soon, she reassured herself. "I feel very close. I feel my daughter within reach. I know she must be here and soon I will know the truth." These thoughts and feelings overwhelmed her until she heard the rumble of the Caddy promptly at 10:30. "Must be a special occasion" she thought, noting that Adam was punctual as always. She left her room and walked towards the parking lot. As she approached the Caddy, she was brought to a surprise halt. The child in the car was Melanie, the girl she had met in the park. The "Adam" Melanie had spoken of was "her" Adam after all.

They greeted each other like old friends, much to Adam's surprise, until Laura explained how they had met. He digested the news silently, his manner somewhat distracted. However, Melanie's good spirits soon dispelled any ghosts, and the day proved to be a magical one. It was the kind of day Laura had always dreamed of. A day a real family would enjoy together. Every smile she and Adam exchanged, every accidental touch - Melanie's innocent gaze - they all conspired to push reality far away.

All too soon, it was supertime. Melanie's choice, of course, was 'MacDonalds'. As they enjoyed their hamburgers and fries, Adam's eyes met Laura's. A

sudden electric shock rocked her. She blinked in consternation. Did he feel the same way she did about the day they had just spent together? It seemed so. Laura's defences were fast falling away.

Melanie asked for permission to go and play in the indoor playground, and ran off happily. Laura reluctantly watched her go, somehow afraid to be alone with Adam.

"Laura!" he spoke quietly but commandingly. She looked up at him. "Thank you for coming. It meant a lot to me, and to Melanie."

"I was glad to come. Melanie is a lovely child, and I've enjoyed being with her." Laura replied.

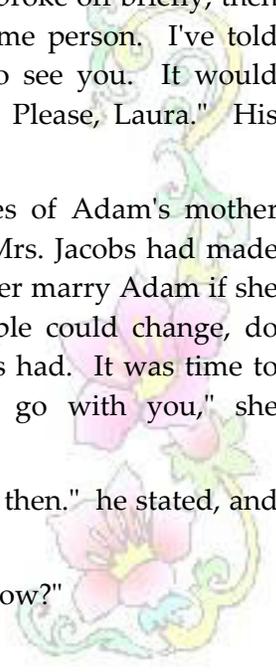
"Only Melanie?" he asked. Laura looked up and met the electric gaze. "No. Not only Melanie. I've enjoyed being with you too," she was forced to admit.

"Me too," he replied, then added, "It's almost like . . .", then he broke off, changing the subject all at once. "Laura, I'd like to ask one more thing of you today. I want you to come with me to see my mother," he paused as Laura opened her mouth to object. "No, Laura, before you turn me down, hear me out" He took a deep breath. "Mother has changed. I know she treated you badly, but she's learned her lesson, believe me. She thought Vicki was everything she ever wanted for me, but she very quickly changed her mind. Since Dad died, she's been so lonely. I'm all she has. She'd love grandchildren, but as I already told you, Vicki doesn't . . .," he broke off briefly, then continued, "Mother isn't the same person. I've told her about us, and she asked to see you. It would mean a lot to her, and to me. Please, Laura." His voice was quiet, humble.

Laura hesitated. Her memories of Adam's mother weren't particularly pleasant. Mrs. Jacobs had made it so clear that Laura would never marry Adam if she had any say in it. Yet ... people could change, do unexpected things. Her parents had. It was time to forgive. "Alright, Adam, I'll go with you," she answered.

"Let's collect Melanie and leave, then." he stated, and got up.

"Now? You mean .. go see her now?"



"Yes, what did you think I meant?"

"Oh, nothing. It's O.K. I guess." In reality, Laura had been hoping for time to brace herself mentally.

"Mom loves to see Melanie, and Melanie really enjoys going there too. She's expecting us at 7:00, so we should leave now."

Again, his arrogant assurance that she would agree to accompany him. Laura refused to let it bother her; it had been a wonderful day, and nothing was going to ruin it. And as for this visit, well, she would just make the best of it.

It seemed strange to be close to her old neighbourhood once again. She was lost in memories of good times with Adam. Happy times, loving times. The empty, lost, lonely times hadn't touched her here, for she had taken them with her to Vancouver. Adam seemed wrapped in thought as well. He again wore that worried, distracted air.

"Something's happened," Laura thought. Well, perhaps he would confide in her soon. Even Melanie seemed touched by the strange atmosphere, and sat quietly, looking out the window. Then she broke the silence.

"There it is!" she said, excitedly, "Grandma Jacob's house!" Laura again revised her opinion of Mrs. Jacobs. She must really have changed to inspire such excitement in Melanie!

Adam's mother answered the door on the first ring, obviously waiting for them. Her welcoming smile was for Melanie first, as she gave her a warm hug. Then she looked up at Laura. She smiled tentatively and reached to hold Laura's hand in both of hers. "Thank you for coming", was all she said.

Melanie's obvious enjoyment in Mrs. Jacobs' company eased the tension as they sat in the elegant living room. "Angie has gone home already, but she baked your favorite cookies", she said to an excited Melanie. "Come with me and we'll bring them out, along with some tea", she invited. Laura was forced to admit to herself that Mrs. Jacobs *had* changed for the better.

As they disguised their nervousness in the routine of having tea and cookies, conversation remained on

general topics. Mrs. Jacobs asked about Laura's work and expressed proper sympathy at the loss of her parents; but what was foremost on their minds was not spoken of. After an hour, Adam got up. "Laura, I'm going to take Melanie home since she has school tomorrow. Perhaps you would stay here with Mother and wait for me." Laura was about to refuse, eager to escape, when Mrs. Jacobs spoke.

"Yes, of course dear, Laura will stay here with me. We have years of catching up to do!" It seemed obvious where Adam had inherited his habit of ordering people around. Laura sat back down, acquiescent. "Time to bite the bullet!" she said to herself.

The moment Adam and Melanie left, Mrs. Jacobs cut straight to the heart of the matter. "Laura, dear, first of all I want to say . . .," it seemed difficult for her to form the right words. "It's hard to admit when you are wrong. I was wrong about you and Adam. I'm sorry. I hope ... you can find a way to forgive me." Adam had said almost the same words. It was time to have things out in the open.

"I won't deny that you hurt me." Laura wasn't letting her off the hook too easily, "But I've realized that I must learn how to forgive many people, including my own parents. The most I can say right now is that I'm trying. I'd like the past to disappear. All I want now is a future for me and my daughter."

"Yes dear. Adam told me. I hope you don't mind, but he told me everything. He wanted my help. I'd like to offer it to you as well. Whatever way I can help you both, you have only to ask." She paused, her voice becoming unsteady, then she added, "She's my granddaughter too."

Laura nodded and looked down at her hands. She had never expected this once cold, rude woman to one day admit any relationship between them. Laura was learning that others had deep, intense feelings about what had happened. Things were never as they seemed on the surface.

After that a comfortable camaraderie filled the room. Laura found herself confiding in Mrs. Jacobs, telling her of her feelings about her own parents, confessing her inability to understand why they had done what

they had. Mrs. Jacobs' words were an unexpected comfort.

"Sometimes, we as parents try too hard. We have dreams. We dream that our children will be everything we wish, the culmination of all our hopes." She gave a little laugh. "It rarely turns out that way, of course, but we keep trying to make it happen. I think your parents chose the way they believed would be the best for you to find the dream they envisioned for you. They, as we all do, believed that if your child always follows the path you lay for him, he will always be happy and successful in life. You strayed from that path. They tried to find a way to put you back on." With that, they both sat quietly for some time, each given to their own private thoughts.

Adam's arrival broke the mood. He stood at the doorway uncertainly, "Well, it looks like you had a nice visit", he stated, rather lamely.

Laura couldn't help but laugh. Trust a man to be a master of understatement. "We said things that needed to be said," Laura said, glancing over at Mrs. Jacobs and sharing a secret smile. "But I think I should be getting back now, if you don't mind." They said their goodbyes, with promises to speak again soon.

As they drove, Adam seemed restless, wanting to tell her something, until finally Laura lost patience. "O.K., Adam. Spit it out!" she ordered, then softened her tone. "I know something's bothering you. I know you. Please, tell me."

His jaw tightened. "I spoke to Vicki this morning. I served her with a petition for divorce. As I expected, it wasn't a pleasant scene."

"Oh, Adam, I'm sorry." Laura couldn't think of anything to say to somehow comfort him.

"It's alright. I expected her to react that way, but still ... I guess Vicki feels that somehow, she's ended up being a loser. I was a prize she won, and she was determined to keep me. You know Vicki - if she owns something, she will never give it up. Her father brought her up to believe she could always have her own way, that she could always control people. But this time, there's nothing she can do. I've made up

my mind. She can have everything. I just want my freedom. More than that, I want ...," he suddenly pulled over to the curb and stopped the car. Laura looked at him uncertainly.

"I was waiting for the right time, but maybe this is it. Laura, whatever happens, I want to spend the rest of my life with you. I've never stopped loving you." He made no move to touch her, just gazed at her with eyes glowing with desire.

His words were not entirely unexpected. Laura had been unable to deny the feelings that still lived between them. He obviously had had the same problem. Yet, could she live with what he had done? "People change," she reminded herself. Adam had changed. So had she. Was there a chance for them?

"Will you ... will you give me a little more time?" was all she managed. "So much has happened ..." Her heart and body yearned for him to hold her, cover her with the security of his embrace, kiss her until her crazy heart promised him anything. But Adam sat very still and made no move towards her, as if afraid to touch her. Then all at once he grabbed her in a tight embrace and kissed her fiercely. Just as suddenly he let her go and started the car again, leaving her reeling.

"I have all the time in the world", he stated, and put the car in gear. Laura leaned back against the seat, somewhat dazed. What had just happened? What had she promised? Their love had not won out under test seven years ago, how could it do so now? But she put no voice to her thoughts.

When they were close to her motel, Adam spoke again. "When I talked to Vicki this morning, she said something odd. She was screaming and raging, and I didn't think much of it at the time. But now I wonder if maybe she really could make trouble ..."

"What is it, Adam", Laura asked, reaching her hand to touch his arm gently.

"She said . . let me think what exactly her words were ... she said, 'Don't think you've won. You don't know what I have. I will still win. You can leave me but I'll always have the best of you.'" He paused, thinking. "That was about it, and it didn't worry me much then. Now I wonder what she was talking about. Vicki can

be ... very vindictive. I can't help but worry that perhaps she could make things difficult somehow. I just don't know how, nor what she was threatening, for that's what it was, a threat."

Laura rubbed her hand softly along his arm, feeling his distress as acutely as if it were her own. "I don't know what she could have meant either, Adam. Divorces happen everyday, and she can't stop you if you really want one. Other than taking you for everything you own financially ..."

"I don't care about money," he spat out angrily. "She can have it all. It's all just blood money anyway. I just don't want any unexpected surprises." Then he lapsed into silence.

Laura dropped her arm and sat up straighter. What an odd choice of words! She struggled to remember the echo of those words in her own thoughts recently. But her train of thought was interrupted as they drove into the parking lot.

"I wish this day didn't have to come to an end, Laura", he spoke, as he stopped the car, his voice soft and caressing once more. "But I hope it will be just one of many in our future together."

"Please don't rush me, Adam", she pleaded. "I've got a lot to think about right now. But", she softened, "It was a wonderful day, and Melanie was a treat. Thank you for taking me." She opened the door and got out quickly before he could act on the obvious intention in his eyes, but he was too fast for her. He jumped out, and had reached her door in seconds, his hand on her arm as he helped her out. "Ever the old-fashioned gentleman!" she thought. But his intentions were far from gentlemanly.

"Don't I get a good night kiss?" he growled. Before she realized it, he had wrapped her in his embrace, and her lips met his in wild abandon. It was like no goodnight kiss she had ever received, and she was trembling when he finally released her. When she leaned back towards him to continue the embrace, he pushed her firmly away. "Goodnight, Laura", he said. "If I don't stop now, I'm coming in, and I don't think you want that."

"How do you know what I want?" Laura thought, still dizzy from his kiss, her heart pounding. But she

agreed with him. It would be too dangerous to continue. It was not time. "Goodnight, Adam," she said softly, as she pulled away from him and turned to her door. "My love", she added, almost to herself, as he turned on his heel and walked away.

Laura's sleep was tormented by vivid dreams. Morning came too quickly, and with it an early shift at the hospital. Aaron greeted her with excitement. "Laura, I've thought of something! I'll check it out on my coffee break and let you know later." By now Laura knew better than to pressure him. He obviously liked to keep people in suspense. Coffee break came and went, and both were kept busy in emergency. Finally, shortly before lunch, Aaron cornered her.

"I think we're on to something. We have a supper date in the restaurant across the street, if you're free. Meanwhile, come to lunch with me in the cafeteria and I'll explain everything."

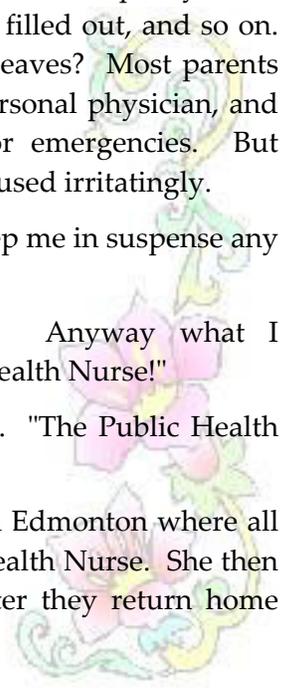
After they were settled in a quiet corner, Aaron leaned forward, his face aglow. "I got thinking about where we might find a connection between the hospital and the baby's home. Most of the time when the baby is born in the hospital we keep records. As we already saw, that didn't apply when your daughter was transferred here and adopted. But I figured there had to be a way, somehow, that the hospital would retain some kind of contact, some kind of record. I thought about standard policy when the baby is born, forms that are filled out, and so on. But what about after the baby leaves? Most parents just continue with their own personal physician, and only return to the hospital for emergencies. But suddenly I remembered!" he paused irritably.

"Aaron, please, go on. Don't keep me in suspense any longer!" she begged.

He looked contrite. "Sorry. Anyway what I remembered was - The Public Health Nurse!"

Laura let her puzzlement show. "The Public Health Nurse? What do you mean?"

"Well, we have a system here in Edmonton where all birth records go to the Public Health Nurse. She then contacts the parents shortly after they return home



from the hospital to arrange a home visit, just to make sure everything is all right", he explained.

Light was filtering through. "So what did you find out?" she asked.

"One of the nurses I worked with when I interned is a Public Health Nurse. I called her and asked if she could help me. I explained the circumstances surrounding your daughter's transfer here, and when it had happened. She wasn't Public Health Nurse then, but her supervisor was. Anyway, to make a long story shorter, she put me in contact with Mrs. Murray. When I asked her about the chances of her remembering a specific child, she said it wasn't likely. But when I mentioned the date, Vancouver, and adoption, it rang a few bells for her. She said she definitely remembered the occasion, but would have to think for a bit to remember details. When I suggested we meet later and treat her to dinner, she

jumped at the chance. So what do you think?" he finally paused for breath.

"I think you are wonderful, Aaron. Maybe I shouldn't get my hopes up too high, but this seems so promising. If she actually remembers the home visit!" Her face shone with pleasure. "I just don't know how to thank you, Aaron."

"Don't thank me yet. It could be a false lead. But it does sound good. At the very least, I get to have dinner with you again!" he added, smiling boyishly.

Laura smiled back. His charm was infectious. Now all she had to do was get through the next few hours till supper.

---

*Carla Johnson grew up in Western Canada. She loves to read and tell stories to her cousins and younger sisters; and especially loves creating mystery romance stories because love is like that. If she could change the world she would do it through peace, love and song. Her favourite pastime is baking goodies for her family and friends, riding her bike, traveling to new places, and staying up waaaaay past everyone else's bedtime. She is not related to Johnson & Johnson product providers although she avidly uses most of them.*

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Read The Voice next week for the conclusion of *Forgotten Promise*. For submissions for the upcoming Voice student fiction column, contact [voice@ausu.org](mailto:voice@ausu.org).



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# CANADIAN LABOUR

## A SHORT HISTORY [Conclusion]

### *Worker Gains and Changes in the Working Class and Labour Movement 1940-1975 – A look at the struggle of the African American and Canadian Worker for Equality in the Canadian Labour Force*

*By Wayne E. Benedict*



In the late nineteenth century United States, the Pullman Palace Car Company utilized African Americans as porters because: they were cheaper in both wage rates and their lack of unionization; and there was an assumed social distance between blacks and whites that impersonalized the relationship between the African American sleeping car porters and the white passengers. African Americans had traditionally been assigned service roles so it was considered a sign of high social status among many whites to be waited on by African Americans.

When Pullman service was extended to Canada, African American porters came with the cars and their exploitation continued on Canadian railways. In the 1920s, the Canadian National Railway (CNR) moved to keep African Americans in the low paid/low status porter positions by implementing a sectionalization scheme that kept black and white employees on separate seniority lists. CNR went even farther in its quest to maintain a cheap, subordinated labour pool by promoting a double split labour market, importing temporary African American migrant workers from the U.S. south during peak seasons in order to “create and maintain a double split labour market between black Canadian and imported black American labour on the one hand, and between black and white Canadian labour on the other” (Calliste, 1992). Thus, CNR kept the African American labour supply high, wages low, and undermined African American organizing attempts in Canada.

With black Canadian workers socio-economically and politically weak, and confronted with rampant racism within industries and established white unions, African Canadians made little headway against their exploitation until after WWII. As a result of the postwar labour legislation improvements, membership in the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (BSCP) grew rapidly, there was more meaningful union advocacy on behalf of the porters, and there was more union contact with, and attempts to sway, government agencies on the porters’ behalf. The BSCP attempted to break CNR’s control over temporary workers through attempted persuasion of immigration officials to restrict the importation of temporary American workers.

Ultimately, through their use of the Fair Employment Practices Act of 1953, the porters were successful in forcing the railways to allow African Canadians to be promoted to the position of Conductor, which had previously been a position reserved for white employees. Eventually the BSCP successfully campaigned for the amalgamation of the sectionalized seniority lists, ending—in theory—ethnic discriminatory labour practices in the industry.

Major changes to Canada's labour markets occurred beginning in the 1950s. There was an increase in female labour force participation; there was marginal female movement into blue-collar positions such as mining, forestry, steel working, and railroading; and there was an overrepresentation of women in part-time work.

There were also high job losses due to technological change, affecting females worse than males due to the gender division of labour. Many of these women began performing piecework in the home or home based computing in "the electronic sweatshop" in order to continue working. While the majority of the working-class raised its standard of living during the 1940-75 period, 60% of single parent families headed by a woman lived below the poverty line and 70% of poor senior citizens were women. Not all women were left behind, "unionization made major inroads among professional women, especially nurses and teachers" (Prentice et al, 1992).

The gains that the Canadian labour movement made during the 1940-1975 period were important. Compulsory union recognition, compulsory collective bargaining, and human rights/equality legislation, gave labour the tools to carve out a more equitable place in Canadian society and raise its standard of living to comfortable levels. Postwar legislation was clearly not a panacea however, as unions lost much of their grassroots strengths. Many of the governmental labour laws in theory differed markedly from the realities experienced in practice and often actually worked to the detriment of labour's goals.

Even with its flaws and inequities, the period of the postwar compromise was much preferable to labour than the contemporary era of neo-conservatism. Hard won labour rights began a rapid decline reminiscent of the pre-WWII period in the mid to late 1970s and they continue to be eroded to the present day.

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Prentice, A. et al (1992). Work in the Electronic Era. In L. S. MacDowell & I. Radforth (eds.), *Canadian working class history: selected readings* (713-734) Toronto Ontario: Canadian Scholars' Press.

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Wayne E. Benedict is a Locomotive Engineer at BC Rail and President of the National, Automobile, Aerospace, Transportation and General Workers Union of Canada (CAW) Local 110. He is working toward his Bachelor of Human Resources and Labour Relations at Athabasca University.

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## Notice to AU Graduate Students and Those Considering Grad Studies at AU

Athabasca University Students' Union is in the process of establishing an AU Graduate Students' Association.

Here's a sampling of benefits of belonging to a grad students' association:

- Grad student representation on University Committees
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### For more information contact:

Shirley Barg [sbarg@ausu.org], Vice-President  
Athabasca University Students' Union  
Call: 1-800-788-9041 ext 3413

# AUSU COUNCIL MEETING – MARCH 4 2003

*Reported By Tamra Ross Low*



On March 4th AUSU council convened for a regularly scheduled meeting. All council members were present, along with legislative committee chair Karl Low, Administrative Assistant Carla Benavides, who took minutes, and myself.

The following report is based on my observations of what transpired, and is intended to allow students who could not attend understand what transpires at an AUSU council meeting. The Voice will continue to report on future council activities, and both The Voice and AUSU welcome any questions you may have.

The meeting convened at 6:00 pm, at which time the agenda for the evening was approved, as were the minutes of the last council meeting.

One order of business, the addition of new councillors, was moved to the beginning of the agenda. Due to the departures of councillors Darren Kereluk and Tamra Ross Low, president Debbie Jabbour proposed that long-time Legislative Committee chair and Strategic Planning Committee member Karl Low be appointed to a council position. This recommendation was passed by a unanimous vote, and Karl was welcomed to council. Karl said that he would like to remain as chair of the Legislative Committee, which will continue the long term project of updating the AUSU bylaws and policies.

Next on the agenda was a discussion regarding the activities of Secretary Treasurer, Gurpreet Dulai. Discussion began with a statement by AUSU President Debbie Jabbour, in which she detailed concerns about ST Dulai that had been under discussion by council for some months, and also some that had recently come to light.

She began by detailing the recent revelation by herself and Finance Committee Chair Karie-Anne Getta that Mr. Dulai had not been performing the bookkeeping duties for AUSU but had instead contracted the accounting firm responsible for AUSU's audits to perform audits, bookkeeping and clerical duties at a rate of approximately \$1000 per month. She also stated that she and Ms. Getta had found documents detailing outstanding accounts that were recently written off by the Secretary Treasurer because he claimed that insufficient records of the debts made them un-collectable. Ms. Jabbour mentioned that she had spoken with AUSU's accounting firm, and been informed that AUSU had been charged a much higher fee for their audits due to insufficient and poorly kept records (under the AUSU bylaws, the keeping and safeguarding of AUSU records is the responsibility of the secretary treasurer). Ms. Jabbour said that she had spoken with ST Dulai about these concerns, and that at first he had denied that he had not been doing the bookkeeping, but later he admitted that he may have been a little lazy.

Mr. Dulai interjected and denied ever having said this, but Councillor Getta, who had been present, confirmed that he had.

At the end of Ms. Jabbour's statement, she told council that she felt personally responsible for not being more aware of Mr. Dulai's activities, the poor state of council paperwork, and for not responding in a more timely manner to concerns about Mr. Dulai. She further suggested that council consider bringing a reprimand against her if they felt it was appropriate.

After President Jabbour's statement, the floor was opened for discussion. I was invited to be involved in the questioning as some of the issues were initially raised by me, and also because any student is permitted to ask questions in a council meeting. It was also noted that as Voice editor I am responsible for a significant

portion of the council budget, and therefore I require timely and accurate information from the Treasurer and Finance committee.

It was the opinion of many councillors that the bookkeeping should have been done by the treasurer. Ms. Moore noted that Mr. Dulai is paid a monthly wage of \$1,000.00 to perform these tasks, and that it was improper for him to accept this wage while using AUSU funds to hire the accountants to do the work.

Mr Dulai said that the bookkeeping for AUSU has been handled in this manner for some time, and that in his opinion this is the most appropriate way to ensure a separation of duty between the treasurer, the accountant, and the Finance Committee of AUSU. He warned that if the treasurer were expected to write out cheques, put one of the two signatures on cheques, and perform bookkeeping duties, there would not be sufficient separation of duty in order to ensure honesty.

Finance Committee chair Karie-Anne Getta responded that the very purpose of the finance committee is to oversee and double check the work of the treasurer, and that this alone provides more than sufficient separation of duty. She also said that by having the same firm do the bookkeeping and perform the audits, there was less separation of duty.

I then asked Mr. Dulai "If it is your belief that having the accountants do the bookkeeping is appropriate, then why were you so angry in September when I suggested that you were not doing the bookkeeping duties yourself, and you vehemently denied this being the case?" Councillor Dulai replied that he did not recall this particular conversation, but reiterated that in his experience, and based on his significant financial background, he was proceeding in the most appropriate way in order to ensure a separation of duty and to provide a number of checks on the bookkeeping process.

Council member Moore and I then asked Mr. Dulai about his apparent reluctance to provide financial records when requested in September, and many times since then. Mr. Dulai said that he did not remember receiving any requests with which he did not comply and that he would always send out information if asked for it. He stated that it did not sound like something he would do, to receive a request and not respond to it. He suggested that the requests might not have been clear enough, or he might not have understood what was expected.

Both Ms. Moore and I said that we had requested records in September, and had met with a great deal of resistance and hostility. Mr. Dulai said he did not think he was involved in this exchange, but I reminded him that it was not a private exchange and that the emails had gone to all of council. President Jabbour had copies of these emails on hand and confirmed the date of September 14th and 15th on which they were sent. Mr. Dulai then confirmed that he remembered this exchange.

Councillor Moore mentioned that when she requested reports from other councillors she received them quickly and without question, and she could not understand why she did not get a report from Mr. Dulai for many months. She also stated that as an executive member, Mr. Dulai had missed several council meetings and executive committee meetings, and had failed to be present at many government and university meetings that required student union representation.

AUSU Vice President Shirley Barg pointed out that Mr. Dulai had informed council of his absences, and thus had complied with council regulations regarding absences.

I then mentioned that when I requested information about the Voice budget, it was either not provided by Mr. Dulai, or it was incomplete or very late in coming, and I had to turn to Finance Chair Getta with my requests. Ms. Getta responded that she had tried to get the Voice budget information, but had been unable to because the treasurer had not given her sufficient information to answer any of the questions she was asked. She felt that as Finance chair she was not able to be effective because she was never given timely information from the treasurer despite repeated requests.

To obtain information on the Voice budget, Ms. Getta traveled from Calgary to Edmonton to get the answers directly from AUSU records, along with President Jabbour. It was at this time that both council members became aware that none of the bookkeeping was being done directly by Mr. Dulai.

Mr. Dulai said that council had not told him exactly what he should be doing, and that if they would give him some specific tasks then he would be happy to comply. Ms. Getta and Ms. Moore stated that the treasurer should be doing the books, as well as performing other executive member functions like attending meetings and conferences, and interacting with students. Mr. Dulai countered that in his opinion the treasurer should not do the books as there was no way for council to know if he was being honest.

Ms. Getta angrily responded that Mr. Dulai continually asked to be told what to do, but countered all suggestions as improper.

VP Barg suggested that instead of seeking the resignation of Mr. Dulai, council should instead consider a reprimand. Several council members objected to this suggestion.

VP Barg then asked if the upcoming motion for dismissal, proposed by council member Moore, would request that Mr. Dulai be removed only as treasurer, or from council entirely, and a discussion ensued over whether or not removal from an executive position automatically required dismissal from council. Ms. Moore said that she had lost all faith in Mr. Dulai and would ask that he be removed from council entirely.

At this point, council member Mac McInnis asked ST Dulai if he would be submitting his resignation from his post as treasurer. VP Barg interjected that ST Dulai had not had sufficient time to consider his decision, nor had he been given time to compose or deliver a rebuttal. Ms. Moore noted that Mr. Dulai had known about the meeting and her upcoming motion for several days, and had plenty of time to prepare a response, and she was surprised that he had none to offer. Councillor McInnis stated that he had informed Mr. Dulai several days before that Mr. Dulai would be asked for his resignation at the council meeting. Mr. Dulai reiterated that he was not yet prepared to make a formal statement in his defence, and that many of the claims made against him did not sound like things that he would do or would say and he wished more time to investigate the claims.

VP Barg mentioned that council could not proceed with action against Mr. Dulai until he was given time to prepare an official defense, and council members Low and Jabbour both agreed that this was the proper procedure. President Jabbour reminded VP Barg that the motion for dismissal had not yet been presented and was only brought up for discussion. She confirmed that Mr. Dulai would be given the opportunity to make a statement at such time as a motion for dismissal was brought forward, and that he would be given advance notice so that he could prepare a statement.

VP Barg then asked what the options were for proceeding in this matter. President Jabbour listed three: Mr. Dulai could resign voluntarily from his position, he could remain on council subject to any adjustment that council wished to make, or Ms. Moore's motion for dismissal could be brought forward at the next council meeting.

Treasurer Dulai noted that since the complaints were brought to him a week previous, he had made been involved in more council business, put in more time, and he emphasized that he had prepared the most recent set of financial statements himself, and that he was open to further suggestions from council.

VP Barg said she that as someone who has known Mr. Dulai for a long time, she is certain that his actions were the result of his conscientiousness, and concern for always doing things properly and in accordance with due diligence.

Treasurer Dulai reiterated that since the complaints had been brought to his attention that week, he had been performing more council duties and he had prepared the latest financial statement himself, but then a councillor noted that although Mr. Dulai had agreed to start doing the bookkeeping and said he would continue to do so, he still forwarded a request to council asking to have things go back to the old way with

the accounting firm doing the bookkeeping. VP Barg noted that Mr. Dulai had experienced time pressures since beginning a new full time job, but President Jabbour countered that she had approached Mr. Dulai several times in recent months to ask if it would be appropriate for him to leave the executive and take on a regular councillors role in order to reduce his workload.

A heated exchange then occurred between Mr. Dulai and Ms. Getta, who felt that Mr. Dulai had been making inferences that President Jabbour was the reason he was being examined, and Mr. Dulai vehemently denied placing blame on any council member. The discussion became more heated, but was quieted by Nicholas Palamarchuk who pointed out that these comments were a matter of perspective, and that no conclusions could be drawn as to their meaning.

At this point Ms. Moore was asked if she intended to proceed with her motion, and she confirmed that she did. The motion was slated for presentation at the next council meeting. Council member Barg suggested that the motion was not clear, as it asked that ST Dulai be removed from his position as treasurer, but did not specify that he be removed from council entirely. She again asked Ms. Moore to clarify if she wanted Mr. Dulai removed from his post as treasurer or from council entirely. Ms. Moore, said that if the motion was unclear she would allow the motion to stand as only a request to remove him from his treasurer position.

Regarding the next agenda item, President Jabbour and VP Barg informed council of organizational changes within the CAUS [Council of Alberta University Students] organization, of which AUSU is a member. Due to intense recent activity related to tuition increases and other student concerns, CAUS has deemed it necessary to hire a full time staff member to handle requests for information and other administrative duties. This organizational change has necessitated larger donations from member universities, of amounts to be based on the number of full time students or full time equivalents at the university. For AUSU, this would mean an increase in our yearly fees from approximately \$1,500.00 to \$5,000.00. All AUSU members agreed that CAUS membership is extremely valuable for AU students, and that the organizational changes are reasonable and needed. The increase in CAUS donation was approved and will take effect next year.

In a related matter, President Jabbour discussed the upcoming CAUS Northern Alberta initiative, which would bring seminars about tuition increases and other post-secondary issues to high schools in the northern Alberta region. Some AUSU councillors have volunteered to speak at these seminars, and Council approved a small donation to the initiative, of an amount to be determined after discussions with CAUS.

Next on the agenda was the relationship between The Voice and AUSU. In the past, The Voice was viewed as an entirely autonomous newspaper. In practice, this relationship proved to be difficult to maintain as The Voice is entirely funded by AUSU, and it is also an important vehicle by which AUSU communicates with the AU student body. President Jabbour noted that in a traditional university the students' union is much more accessible, but that at a distance university alternate means of communication become very important. It was proposed that from now on The Voice and AUSU be considered a partnership, although it was stressed that the voice would maintain absolute editorial autonomy. VP Barg clarified that if the Voice is to work closely with AUSU, it must be clear that AUSU cannot dictate what is published in the Voice, and that the Voice should be free to report on AUSU happenings.

The other items on the agenda included a item recommending an adjustment on the credits required for AUSU bursaries – which was tabled but not discussed, an update to the information sharing agreement with the university, a report on the progress of the AU grad student's association, and the appointment of an AUSU representative to the AU employee awards committee. Councillor Mac McInnis agreed to represent AUSU on this committee.

Finally, The newly revised AUSU bylaws were tabled for the second time, for further consideration by councillors. It is expected that the new bylaws will be passed at the next council meeting, in time for students to examine and vote on at the upcoming AGM.

The meeting was adjourned around 9:00 pm.

# FREE MICROSOFT .NET STUDENT EVENT

Join us in a city near you to hear the latest information on creating next-generation applications. Learn all about developing and accessing XML Web Services on the Windows .NET Framework and Shared Source CLI (Rotor). Be one of the first to check out new mobile device programming techniques and preview the upcoming Visual Studio .NET 2003.

Dinner will be provided. All attendees will receive a free copy of Visual Studio .NET Academic (\$109 value), and variety of academic resources including tutorials, and code samples. Please be aware that you must be a student with a valid student ID to attend these events.

## FREE SOFTWARE FOR STUDENTS WHO ATTEND!

### EVENT AGENDA

4:00 pm – 4:30 pm	Registration
4:30 pm – 5:15 pm	.NET Overview
5:15 pm – 6:00 pm	.NET Languages
6:00 pm – 6:45 pm	Dinner
6:45 pm – 7:45 pm	Shared Source CLI (Rotor)
7:45 pm – 8:30 pm	XML Web Services demo
8:30 pm – 8:45 pm	Tablet PC Demo and Academic Programs

### REGISTRATION

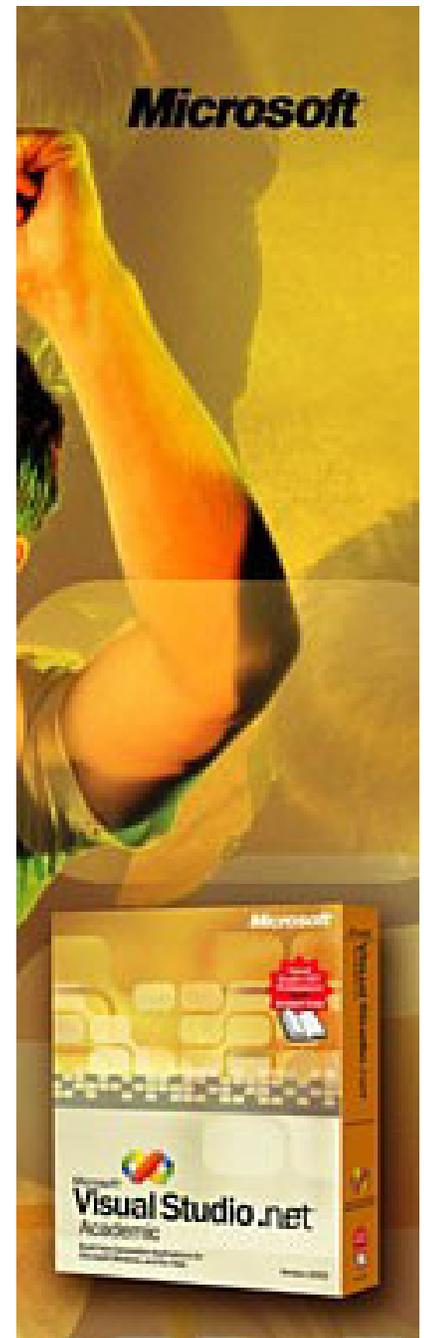
For more information and to register for an event in a city near you, please visit: <http://www.msdn.ca/canada/studenttour>. Below is the tour itinerary:

Halifax	Monday, March 10th, 2003
Montreal	Wednesday, March 12th, 2003
Toronto	Thursday, March 13th, 2003
Regina	Monday, March 17th, 2003
Calgary	Wednesday, March 19th, 2003
Vancouver	Thursday, March 20th, 2003

#### Just added:

Edmonton Wednesday, April 2, 2003

***We look forward to seeing you at this exciting event!***



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*Interview with the leading corporations recruiting for positions across South Africa*

Global Career Company, the international recruitment consultancy that specializes in the Africa region, will be hosting the '**Careers in Africa**' recruitment summit on the 7-9 March 2003 in Boston, USA. This will be held in conjunction with the African Business Club Conference at Harvard Business School.

Here you will find multinational corporations looking to recruit graduates, MBAs and professionals into their South African operations, across a wide variety of functions.

Once we receive your application, your details will be matched against the company profiles and you will be selected to attend and interviews will be scheduled accordingly.

### **At the summit you can expect:**

- To meet and interview with leading multinational corporations over two days
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- A variety of company presentations for you to find out more about your potential employers
- An excellent chance of receiving at least one job offer

### **Applications are welcome from candidates that possess:**

- Fluency in English, French or Portuguese
- Work authorization for South Africa
- At least an undergraduate degree (or the equivalent)

**Apply on line at: [www.careersinafrica.com](http://www.careersinafrica.com) or send your resume to: [sa@careersinafrica.com](mailto:sa@careersinafrica.com)**

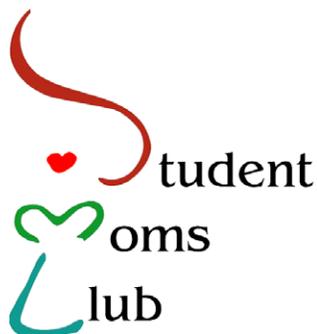
Registering will also ensure that you are informed of any other suitable opportunities that match your profile and expectations for a career in South Africa. For more information regarding the conference at Harvard Business School, please visit: <http://sa.hbs.edu/afrbc/>

**Companies Recruiting across Africa include:** ABI - Barclays - Citibank - Flour Mills of Nigeria - PricewaterhouseCoopers - South African Breweries - Unilever - Accenture - bp - Coca-Cola - Mars - SABCO - Stanbic Africa - Woolworths - Anglovaal - Cadbury Schweppes - Ernst & Young - MSI Cellular - Shell - TotalFinaElf – Stanbic Africa -

*Does the pressure of having to study alone keep you up at night?*

**AUSU STUDY BUDDY**

# ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' UNION GROUPS AND CLUBS COMMITTEE ANNOUNCEMENT



## *Welcome to the Student Moms Club!*

The Athabasca University Students' Union would like to announce the addition of the second AU student club. The Student Mom's Club web site is now up and running (<http://www.ausu.org/clubs/smc/index.php>). All student moms or moms-to-be are welcome to come and check out the site which boasts a private discussion forum, recipes, tips, and feature articles. A huge thank you goes out to founder Joy Kryz for all her dedication in getting this club off the ground because of a strong desire to unite with other mothers trying to obtain an education while raising a family. If you'd like to find out more about the SMC or have any questions email [smc@ausu.org](mailto:smc@ausu.org).

Also, the Athabasca University Psychology Students' Society would like to announce that they will be chatting live on their site every Monday from 9:30AM – 10:30 AM MST and every Wednesday from 7:00 PM – 8:00 PM MST. The AUPSS is looking into starting up a peer-counselling program. This would help students connect with peers to help solve their academic or personal problems as well as assisting students in rural areas to obtain some work experience before finishing their degrees in psychology, sociology, etc... If you are interested in becoming involved or have any questions about the AUPSS email Sandra at [smoore@ausu.org](mailto:smoore@ausu.org)

And finally, we have students who are interested in forming an English Club and a Technology Club. If you'd like to participate in either or if you have an idea for a club you'd like to start at AU whether it is personal or academic, email Sandra at [smoore@ausu.org](mailto:smoore@ausu.org) The Groups and Clubs committee offers free web space and web page maintenance to any AUSU clubs.

We think it is great that students are starting to express to an interest in communicating with their fellow students. AU is a distance learning University but that does not mean that AU students cannot form the same friendships with their peers as normal university students. We don't have cafeterias or hallways to hang out in, but we do have chat rooms and emails and it is possible for us to connect. Connecting with fellow students can help ease orientation for new students, as well as help students with their career and academic goals. We strongly encourage you to get involved with your fellow students, whether it is through joining or starting a club or just stopping by AUSU's discussion board and chat rooms (chat times are posted on the AUSU home page).



**THE VOICE FICTION**

**The Voice wants your fiction.**

We are accepting creative writing in all genres for a Voice fiction feature.

Send us your stories, poems, and other short fiction.

Send submissions to [voice@ausu.org](mailto:voice@ausu.org)

# 2003 BRYON PAEGE MEMORIAL AWARD CALL FOR NOMINATIONS



CUPE Local 3911 is currently accepting nominations for the 2002 Bryon Paege Memorial Award. This annual \$450 award, sponsored by CUPE Local 3911, is presented at the end of June in each year to a recipient selected by the Bryon Paege Memorial Award Selection Committee from among those nominated. The election committee is composed of two members delegated by CUPE 3911, one member delegated by AUSU, and one member delegated by AU Counselling Services. The Committee will make their best effort to select a worthy recipient from among those nominated, and their decision is final.

Bryon Paege graduated in June 1988 with a Bachelor of Administration from AU. Starting in 1990 he was employed by AU as a tutor, and worked in that capacity until his untimely death in 1995. He really lived the ultimate AU student dream, achieving his degree and then joining the AU academic community in giving his knowledge and expertise back to other AU students.

Bryon was a valued member of the AU family. He is vividly remembered by his sisters and brothers in Local 3911, and it is their intention that his achievements, contributions, dreams and passing never be forgotten.

Any AU tutor, AU counsellor, or AU student may make nominations for the Bryon Paege Memorial Award. Self-nominations are also acceptable. Tutor and counsellor nominators must obtain written consent to disclosure of personal information from their nominee. Self-nominations should be accompanied by a written reference from a teaching or counselling member of an academic community.

Nomination and consent forms are available at <http://www.cupe3911.net/paege.shtml>

## CRITERIA:

A nominee must:

- be currently enrolled in an AU course, or have successfully completed one within the six months prior to the nomination deadline;
- have, in the opinion of the nominator, demonstrated courage and/or resourcefulness worthy of commendation in the overcoming of, or current coping with, some particular challenge or adversity in order to pursue distance education studies. Such challenge or adversity may include:
  - financial adversity;
  - being a member of a minority or marginalized group required to make challenging adjustments to mainstream Canadian academic culture;
  - physical disability, or any challenging health problems, generally;
  - personal loss (for example, loss of family member, loss of job);
  - adjustment to a new country and culture;
  - difficult family circumstances, past or present;
  - other challenge that in the opinion of the nominator corresponds with the spirit of these criteria.

**NOMINATION DEADLINE IS JUNE 10TH, 2003**

If you have any questions about this award, please direct them to [donna@athabascau.ca](mailto:donna@athabascau.ca) or (780) 424-2915

# SCHOLARSHIP NEWS

## EDGE DIRECTORIES SCHOLARSHIP

**Value:** n/s

**APPLICATION DEADLINE: MAY 31, 2003**

**Administrator:** EDge Interactive

**Notes:** Award amount to be determined. Must be Canadian citizens or landed immigrants and have been or be helping to make Canada a better place to live. Must be entering into any accredited post-secondary institution in Canada. Students must also submit an essay not longer than 1,000 words outlining their contributions to improving Canada. Please follow the application Web link in the contact details for more information and to obtain an application form.

**Contact Information:**

Rob Taylor - Senior Editor  
470 Pharmacy Ave  
Toronto, ON M1W2S7

Phone: 416-494-3343

Fax: 416-494-0949

Web Site: <http://www.edgeip.com>

E-mail: [editor@scholarshipscanada.com](mailto:editor@scholarshipscanada.com)

Application Address: <http://www.edgeip.com/company/scholar.asp>



## IMPERIAL TOBACCO CANADA LIMITED SCHOLARSHIP FUND FOR DISABLED STUDENTS

**Value:** \$5,000

**APPLICATION DEADLINE: JUNE 01, 2003**

**Administrator:** Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC)

**Notes:** Candidates must be Canadian citizens or have lived in Canada for at least two years as permanent residents. Must be attending any Canadian degree-granting institution or community college following a degree program under the college-university transfer system. Holders of an undergraduate degree are not eligible to apply. This award is for students with general disabilities.

**Contact Information:**

Canadian Awards Program  
Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada

350 Albert Street, Suite 600

Ottawa, ON K1R 1B1

Phone: (613) 563-1236

Web Site: <http://www.aucc.ca>

E-mail: [awards@aucc.ca](mailto:awards@aucc.ca)

# LABELED GENERATION DEBT FOR A REASON

Press Release from CASA – March 10, 2003

**Winnipeg - Student debt in Canada is in crisis and continues to be a major concern for The Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA). CASA is alarmed at the statistics on student debt loads presented today in the Millennium Scholarship Foundation's release "Making Ends Meet."**

The study points out very clearly that debt is increasing and students are taking on many forms of debt. On average, students accumulate \$5600 a year in debt; two-thirds of students have at least on[e] credit card, the average balance being \$800; and that 44 per cent of students have governments loans, 30 per cent have private loans and 24 per cent have loans from family members. "It's absolutely critical that governments address this problem of increasing student debt and not only recognize student needs but act on it," says Erin Stevenson, Communications Officer for CASA. "This study demonstrates problems with student loan policies such as loan limits, capital cost items and expected parental contribution. The list goes on and on." According to the study, 61 per cent of students receive less than \$2000 a year in parental support. An additional 13 per cent receive no support. 74 per cent of students receive less than two grand a year from their parents to go to school.

The study also shows private debt has become a large problem, mainly due to huge tuition increases and inadequate loan programs. "We need to overhaul the Canada Student Loan Program (CSLP)," says Stevenson. "It's just not meeting the needs of students. For example, when 93 per cent of students have access to a computer at home, it is clearly showing the necessity to own a computer while in school; yet the CSLP hasn't modernized its policies to allow students the money to buy a computer."

CASA has offered solutions to the Federal Government that would modernize the student loan program and make it more accessible for students and future students to receive the money they need to pursue a higher education.

**CASA is a federal student lobby organization. CASA is a coalition of 21 student governments representing over 280,000 post-secondary education students nationwide.**

**For more information please contact:  
Robert South Government Relations Officer  
613-266-2272  
[gov@casa.ca](mailto:gov@casa.ca)**

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**The Voice**

**Classifieds**

# YOUTH TOURISM CONSORTIUM SEEKS TALENTED STUDENT ARTISTS TO DESIGN NEW YOUTH TRAVEL LOGO FOR CANADA

**OTTAWA, Feb. 26, 2003** – The Youth Tourism Consortium of Canada, a cooperative of Canadian tourism and transportation partners in cooperation with the Canadian Tourism Commission, is launching a contest for student artists in its search for a new youth travel logo for Canadian youth tourism.

“We are looking for a design that encompasses the pride of Canada and exuberance of youth,” said Michael Palmer, Executive Director, Student Youth Travel Association of North America. “The Youth Tourism Consortium and its partners will use the chosen logo in all promotional materials targeted toward youth travel.” Our message will be that Canada is the premier four-season destination to connect with nature and experience diverse cultures and communities.”

The deadline for entries is April 30, 2003. The winner will receive a \$250.00 cash bursary, and over \$1000.00 worth of travel prizes. Students enter the contest by submitting their design in a PDF file format to Cris Leonard of Greyhound Canada at [youth\\_consortium@greyhound.ca](mailto:youth_consortium@greyhound.ca). Judges from the Youth Tourism Consortium will review all entries and select the winner in May 2003.

Judges include representatives from the Canadian Tourism Commission, Greyhound Canada, New Dimension/School Voyageur, Temple & Temple Tours, Tourcar, Trip Publications and Moose Travel Network.

The Youth Tourism Consortium is a group of industry partners whose mission is to get youth of Canada and youth of the world to visit Canada. The Youth Tourism Consortium conducts, supports, and disseminates youth tourism research on youth travel into and within Canada. Partners include tourism destinations, attractions, travel accommodations, transportation providers, packagers and other companies that provide youth travel services.

**For further information, please contact:**

**Joël Marier**  
**National Executive Director**  
**Hostelling International - Canada**  
**and President of the Steering**  
**Committee**  
**Youth Tourism Consortium of**  
**Canada**  
**Cell: 613-864-5534**  
**[joel.marier@hihostels.ca](mailto:joel.marier@hihostels.ca)**

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## CONFERENCE CONNECTIONS

Contributed By AU's *The Insider*

- **CASE District VIII** - March 8-11, 2003 - Coeur d'Alene, Idaho - "Connect in Coeur d'Alene." Details: <http://www.connectincda.com>
- **CU Expo** - Community-University Institute for Social Research - "Partnerships, Policy & Progress" - May 8-10, 2003, Saskatoon, SK. Details: <http://www.usask.ca/cuisr/cuexpo>
- **Distance Education Technology Symposium (DETS-03)** - sponsored by the Centre for Distance Education - May 15 - 17, 2003 - Edmonton, Crowne Plaza Hotel. Details: <http://cde.athabascau.ca/DET/2003/> or contact [Pat Fahy](#).
- **AMTEC (Association of Media & Technology in Education in Canada)** - "E-convergence: Education, Media & Technology" - May 25-28, 2003, Montreal, PQ. Details: <http://www.amtec.ca>
- **ICDE World Conference** - 21st annual - June 1-5, 2003 - Hong Kong. Details: <http://www.ouhk.edu.hk/HK2003>
- **CADE** - June 7-11, 2003 - St. John's, NF. Details: <http://www.cade-aced2003.ca/>
- **"Women and Leadership in Higher Education: How Thick is the Glass Ceiling?"** - International Conference - June 12 - 14, 2003 - Monterrey, Nuevo León, Mexico. Details: [http://www.swaac.ca/Prof\\_Dev.htm](http://www.swaac.ca/Prof_Dev.htm) or <http://www.swaac.ca/Regional.htm>

## GREAT CANADIAN LITERARY HUNT Call For Submissions

"**THIS Magazine** is now accepting poetry and short fiction entries for its 7<sup>th</sup> annual Great Canadian Literary Hunt. First prize in poetry is \$1000 and national publication, first prize in fiction is \$1000 and national publication. For entry guidelines and details visit [www.thismagazine.ca](http://www.thismagazine.ca)"





# Community Networks Group

## U. OF A. HUMAN RIGHTS LECTURE - DR. KEVIN BALES

Monday, March 17th, 2003 / 7:30 p.m. @ **The Myer Horowitz Theatre**  
University of Alberta Students' Union Building Info: [www.ualberta.ca/~lecture](http://www.ualberta.ca/~lecture)  
Tickets \$10 available at TicketMaster

The world's leading expert on contemporary slavery, Dr. Kevin Bales, will deliver the 2003 University of Alberta Visiting Lectureship in Human Rights on Monday, March 17th at 7:30pm in the Myer Horowitz Theatre, University of Alberta Students' Union Building.

### About Dr. Bales ...

Dr. Bales is a sociology professor at the University of Surrey in London, England, and is a consultant to the United Nations on slavery and trafficking. During the years he has been researching slavery, he has travelled to five continents and published extensively, including the insightful Pulitzer Prize nominated book Disposable People: New Slavery in the Global Economy. He is director of Free the Slaves, an organization that recently forged an alliance of human rights organizations, the Ivory Coast, the US government and the chocolate industry to work together to bring slavery in the cocoa industry to an end.

For more information: [www.ualberta.ca/~lecture](http://www.ualberta.ca/~lecture)  
**Doug Weir**, Director International Student Services  
Phone: 492-5396 / Fax: 492-1134  
<http://www.international.ualberta.ca>

## CANADA WORLD YOUTH:

### [WWW.CWY-JCM.ORG](http://WWW.CWY-JCM.ORG)

Recruiting Young Women 21-29 / 'Live & Learn in Ukraine'  
Application Deadline: March 31, 2003 / Infoline: **432-1877**

Canada World Youth is seeking young women to participate in a unique international learning opportunity with a group of young women from Ukraine.

### YOUNG WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE

**Program Structure:** This exchange will include 16 women participants, 8 Ukrainian and 8 Canadian, from 21 to 29 years of age, and 2 Project Supervisors, one from each country. The exchange begins in a host community in Alberta. The Canadian phase runs from late-August to mid-December. After a Christmas break, the exchange resumes in the city of Lviv in Western Ukraine from mid-January until late-April. The 16 participants will work in counterpart pairs of one Ukrainian and one Canadian, and each pair will live with a host family and work in a volunteer work placement related to the project goals. They will also participate in ongoing group educational activities exploring issues such as domestic violence, health, poverty, civil society and small business - and more specifically, how these relate to women.

**Canada World Youth (CWY)** is a national, non-profit organization with 31 years experience co-ordinating non-formal educational exchanges for youth between Canada and countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, and Central & Eastern Europe. CWY selects the Canadian participants and manages the Canadian phase of the exchange.

The program is implemented in partnership with the Lviv Board of Education in the City of Lviv, in western Ukraine .

**Goals of the Exchange:** The program includes training in: communication and language skills, cross-cultural understanding, teamwork, problem solving and conflict resolution, organization and planning, social analysis and community development particularly in relation to women.

**Participant Costs:** Upon selection, participants pay a \$500 non-refundable participation fee and undertake additional fundraising of \$3,000 (fundraising training and tools are provided). Participants are responsible for the cost of their own personal effects and incidentals; a valid passport; necessary vaccinations; pre-program medical & dental; any personal food, lodging or transport costs. CWY covers the cost of all other program related expenses including international travel, food and lodging for the duration of the program.

**Important Dates** (may be subject to change)

> Personal Interviews early April > Participants selected mid April  
> Program starts Aug. 28/03 > Program finishes April 11/04

**Funding:** The partner organizations of Canada World Youth and the Lviv Board of Education fund the program with assistance from: The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Alberta Wild Rose Foundation and individual donations received through participant fundraising.

**For complete information** brochure & application procedures, please contact: Western Canada Regional Office in Edmonton: Toll free: 1-877-929-6884  
Local: **432-1877** / Fax: 433-4489 > e-mail : west-ouest@cwj-jcm.org

## EDMONTON DIALOGUES ON FOREIGN POLICY

Join us & share **your** views on Canada's foreign policy...

Saturday March 15, 2003: The Commercialization of Foreign Policy  
Saturday March 22, 2003: Responses to Unrest

Time: 1:00 - 4:30 p.m. @ Central Academic Building 265  
University of Alberta Campus / **Admission is free**  
Infoline: 492-5962 / [www.international.ualberta.ca](http://www.international.ualberta.ca)

### (1) Theme: Commercialization of Foreign Policy

Speaker **Dr. Claire Turenne Sjolander** argues that globalization has "forced" a more self-interested foreign policy upon the Canadian government. Canada has focused on expanding free trade agreements and "Team Canada" initiatives to expand the Canadian economy. As a result, trade policy is now the 'tail' that wags the foreign policy 'dog.' Broad foreign policy objectives have become secondary to the requirements of international trade promotion.

Dr. Claire Turenne Sjolander is Associate Professor of Political Science and Associate Dean (Academic) of the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Ottawa. She has written extensively on Canadian foreign policy, and in particular, on questions relating to globalization and Canadian foreign economic policy.

**Dr. Edward J. (Ted) Chambers** is with the University of Alberta's Faculty of Business. His present research interests are primarily in western Canada's economic position in the international economy, and in the effects of structural adjustment on resource requirements and allocations in the region. He is the co-editor of NAFTA in the New Millennium, 2003.

### (2) Theme: Responses to Unrest

Today there are about 37 conflicts in 30 countries around the world -- all of them civil wars. Most of them began more than a decade ago, meaning entire generations of children are being denied access to meaningful education, health care is minimal, economic development remains on hold and large numbers of displaced people require humanitarian assistance and resettlement. Add to this much more attention and anxiety about the issue of international terrorism.

One of the presenters for this theme is **Prof. David Dewitt**, Director of the Centre for International and Security Studies at York University. He is the author or contributing editor of eleven books as well as other publications on Canadian foreign, security, and defence policy, international and regional security and conflict management in Asia Pacific and the Middle East, and linkages between security and development. He served as national chair of Canadian Professors for Peace in the Middle East and is currently co-director of the Canadian Consortium on Human Security.

For further information, please contact:

[Nancy.Hannemann@ualberta.ca](mailto:Nancy.Hannemann@ualberta.ca)

Tel: (780) 492-5962 / Fax: (780) 492-1134

[www.international.ualberta.ca](http://www.international.ualberta.ca)

## 6TH ANNUAL HARMONY BRUNCH

### "Embracing Change - Embracing Diversity"

Sunday March 16, 2003 12:30 p.m.

@ the Ramada Hotel & Conference Centre, 11834 Kingsway

Info & Reservations: Indira Puri **438-1966** / Karen Gall **458-5515**

Tickets \$10.00 / Tables seat 8

The Board of Directors of the **Canadian Multicultural Education Foundation** (CMEF), invites you to join us for the 6th annual Harmony Brunch on Sunday, March 16th, 2003 in Edmonton Alberta. This year, the theme for the Harmony Brunch is "Embracing Change - Embracing Diversity".

Among the many activities of **CMEF** ([www.cmf.ca](http://www.cmf.ca)) designed to educate and support the national multicultural

*International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.*

The Harmony Brunch brings together over 250 people from diverse cultural backgrounds to celebrate diversity and harmony and to mark this important anniversary. Each year, the program for the Harmony Brunch includes a major speaker as well as a program of song and dance, performed primarily by young persons.

This year, our Keynote speaker is the Honourable Senator **Don Oliver**, Q.C. Some of Senator Oliver's interests and activities include, work to achieve equality and fairness for visible minorities, support of human rights and a private members bill against stalkers. Senator Oliver also has an interest in the youth of Canada and he has worked to encourage young Canadians to understand the parliamentary process and the importance of education in their lives.

Also involved in the program this year will be Sister **Rosaleen Zdunich** of the Edmonton Interfaith Centre, **David Beckman** of the Public Service Commission and writer/broadcaster, **Fil Fraser**.

6th Annual Harmony Brunch

12:30 p.m. Sunday, March 16, 2003

@ the Ramada Hotel and Conference Centre,

11834 Kingsway - Tickets \$10.00 / Tables seat 8

For further information about CMEF or the Harmony Brunch, please do not hesitate to contact **Karen Gall**, Chair, Harmony Brunch: **458-5515**

Courtesy of: **The Community Networks Group** (c) Tel/Fax: (780) 474-6058 > Cell: (780) 995-6819





## **CLASSIFIEDS:**

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### **CLASSIFIED SPACE:**

Students of AU may print classifieds in *The Voice* free of charge (maximum three per issue) as long as they are not representing a company or product.

Classified ads should be submitted to the editor at [voice@ausu.org](mailto:voice@ausu.org) with 'CLASSIFIED AD' listed in the subject title.

The Editor reserves the right to refuse any classified advertisement at her discretion. Thank-you.

## **THE VOICE**

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c/o Athabasca University Students' Union  
#306, 10030-107th Street, Edmonton, AB T5J 3E4  
800.788.9041 ext. 3413

**Editor In Chief** Tamra Ross Low

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***THE VOICE ONLINE: [WWW.AUSU.ORG/VOICE](http://WWW.AUSU.ORG/VOICE)***

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