

# THE VOICE

## MAGAZINE

Vol 11 Issue 27  
July 2, 2003



*Happy  
Canada Day!*

### **Nature Notes**

*Our Lepidopteran Friends  
[butterflies, of course....]*

### **Trip to the Brick Factory**

*Canada's heritage sites delight!*

### **Sounding Off**

*Gay marriages - is it time?*

### **Tribute to a great piano teacher**

### **Labour Market Inequality**

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

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Jul 02, 2003

Volume 11, Issue 27

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## Quote of the Week

Any intelligent fool can make things bigger, more complex, and more violent. It takes a touch of genius -- and a lot of courage -- to move in the opposite direction.

-- *Albert Einstein*  
(1879-1955)

## THE VOICE

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**Editor In Chief** Tamra Ross Low

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## EDITORIAL PAGES

### HAPPY CANADA DAY!

**This week:**

#### 2 New Graduate Profiles

**Sounding Off** - I asked for your opinions on the legalization of gay marriages, and you had plenty to say!

**Nature Notes** - Nothing says spring like butterflies...

**And much more...**

#### Congratulations Canada, on turning 136!

July 1st marks another Canadian birthday, and the end of an eleven day celebration designated by the federal government. In Calgary, it also marks the beginning of Stampede week celebrations, which open on July 4th with the annual Stampede parade, a festive and timeless event that creates many jobs for skilled "horse-puck" scoopers each year. Hopefully, this year's parade won't be marred by the flight of raucous and threatening military fighter jet over the parade route as it has been for the last few years! Last year, after September 11th, I nearly dove under my bed when that thing went screaming over, preserving the redneck image of Calgarians for another year.

After the parade, Stampede week will be in full swing. Drunken cries of 'Yee-Haw' will be heard on every downtown street corner, bank tellers and grocery store clerks will don unfashionably new jeans and western shirts and serve you from makeshift wooden corrals, and hay bales will replace boxes as in-store display shelves. Thousands of orders will be filled for bark-covered log trimmings, for use in displays, and the world's best window painters will scramble to cover every glass storefront in humorous cowboy cartoons.

Native Calgarians [a rare breed] and those who have lived here for a while, will enjoy playing 'spot the tourist', seeking the telltale dark blue jeans, red bandanas, string ties, and limping walks [someone has to tell these people that cowboy boots are the most uncomfortable footwear on the planet until you break them in!].

The Stampede grounds will open this year on July 4th, which is also my birthday, so this week is shaping up to be seriously festive!

Canada is also in a serious birthday mood, incorporating into this year's celebrations Saint-Jean Baptiste Day on June 24th, Canadian Multiculturalism Day on June 27th, and National Aboriginal Day on June 21st.

Often it seems that these special designated 'days' merely pay lip service to causes. We have Cancer Day, Children's Day, Women's Day, days for the handicapped, the impoverished, and a host of other minority or special needs groups. With the exception of Gay Pride day, which boasts some really awesome parades, little seems to actually happen on these Days.

This year, however, AU has gone out of their way to present some great information for National Aboriginal Day, including a special 24 page edition of the AU staff newspaper, *The Insider*. For a few excerpts from the special *Insider*, see this issue, and follow the link to read the full issue which is chock full of wonderful articles.

Happy Canada Day!

## AUSU COMMITTEES SEEK MEMBERS



AUSU Committees are looking for student members who can volunteer just a few hours a month to answer email or attend teleconferences. Anyone who wants to become more involved with AUSU Student Council can gain great experience and insight through committee work.

**The External Committee**, chaired by Shirley Barg, needs representatives from Atlantic Canada, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Northern Canada. Contact Shirley at [sbarg@ausu.org](mailto:sbarg@ausu.org) if you would like to get involved, and help improve services to AU students in your area.

**The Academic Committee** was dormant for awhile, but now it's back up and running under chair Tamra Ross Low. We will be working on ways to help assess student satisfaction with AU's academic services, and need student input into how we should collect data, and what questions we should be asking. A past project of the Academic Committee was the Course and Program surveys on the AUSU website. If you want to have some input into our next project, contact Tamra at [trosslow@ausu.org](mailto:trosslow@ausu.org) for more information.

### Attention Artists

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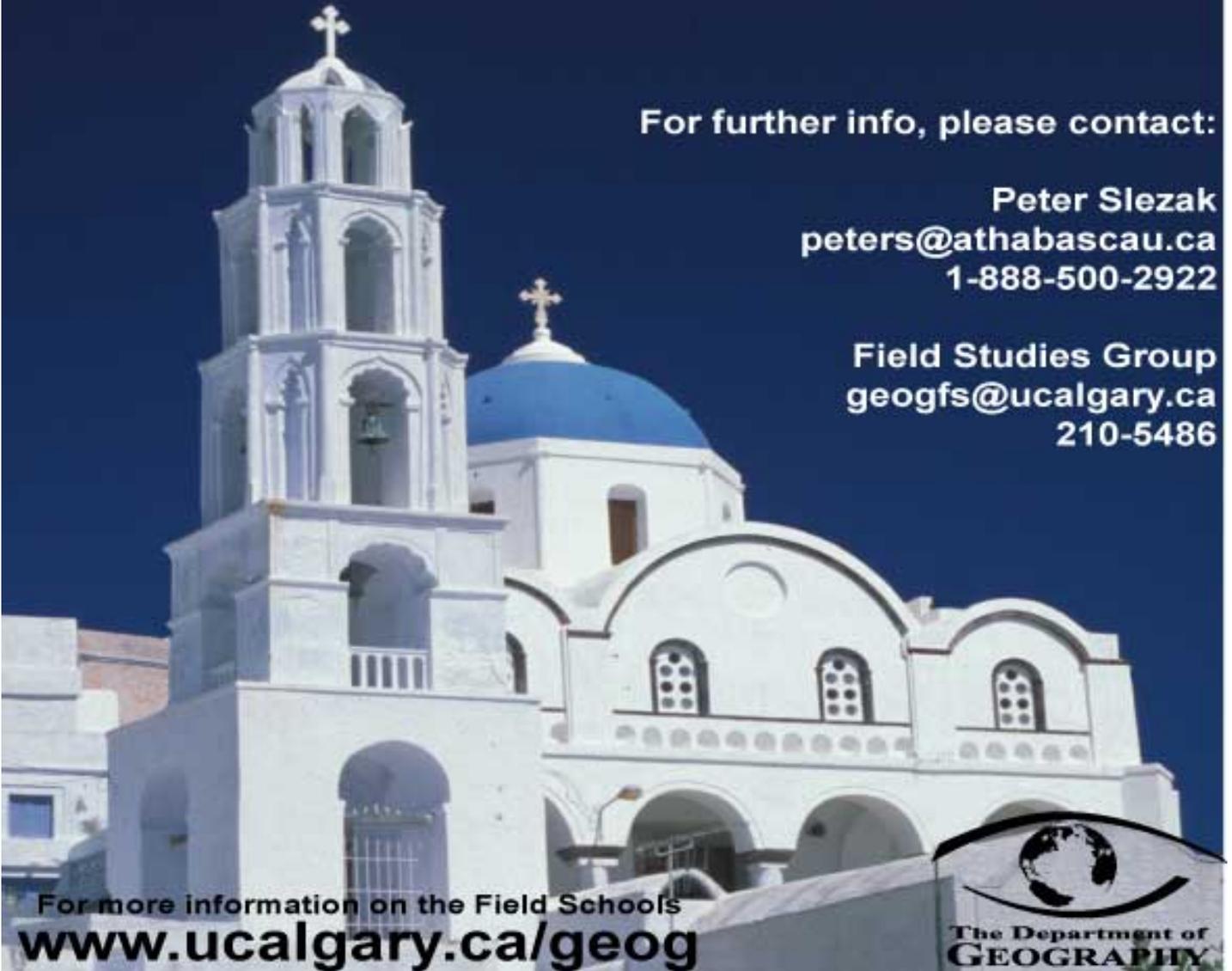
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**Last week I asked students to comment on the legalization of gay marriages. You had plenty to say!**

I think that this is a wonderful thing. Why should only straight people enjoy such things as prenuptial agreements, lawyers, divorce, property settlement, custody fights, alimony and such.

On the serious side, however, there are so many lonely people in this world, who are we to begrudge someone who has found someone to love.

**Michael Wiseman**

On my journey to joy I have learned many things. One of these is that when a person finds someone to love, we should celebrate not condemn.

I moved to northwestern B.C. several years ago from a conservative state in the midwestern United States to marry the man of my dreams. Where I came from simple cohabitation was (and bizarrely enough still is) illegal! The possibility of marriage between same sex couples - considering that was like considering bringing Martians to dinner.

My life has since been transformed. Not only have I found my soul mate, but I have also found my soul-peace. I have been blessed to live in a "diverse" community. My blonde-haired, blue-eyed self can walk into a store and be in the minority - lost in the sea of humanity's infinite variety. What an awesome, life-changing experience!

One of the greatest expansions of my social universe was being allowed into the lives of co-workers and community members who also happen to be in same-sex relationships. I have found these to be fully-realized, well-educated couples who have true, respect-filled, long-term committed relationships. One couple in particular taught me some important ingredients for a healthy marriage: saying no is okay - you'll still be loved, if you say you'll do something do it and then don't complain after, treat your partner as your best friend and greatest ally, your relationship is your safe haven, and always feed your passion. I will be eternally grateful to the two amazing women who shared their life so freely. They've been together 25 years. To be honest, that's one of the longest relationships I've known and it amazes me how much love and respect they have incorporated into their daily lives. I have since opened my eyes, heart and life to others who are also in same sex relationships and find my life and that of my family to be much richer.

I realize that some people feel marriage is a religious construct and as such can only occur in relationships sanctioned by the church. I disagree. The state sanctions marriage apart from the church. Religious affiliation is not necessary to validate a state sanctioned marriage. So, why then should religious, conservative values direct the state's law when it comes to recognizing same-sex marriage?

I believe the stability of marriage, of long-term committed relationships contributes to the stability of a society. If churches choose not to sanction same-sex marriages, so be it. I believe that as responsible members of the state we must support the good, stable and respectful relationships of our neighbours, co-workers and friends. They deserve our respect and should be treated on an equal basis in the eyes of the law.

I have a great admiration of Canada and its progressive, open attitudes. I am proud to be part of the Canadian world that encourages and accepts the variety of its people. I applaud the couples who have spoken out and fought to be placed on equal footing with the current, conservative social standard of marriage. I pray the government, the provinces and the people of Canada will expand their social universe and applaud individuals,

couples and families who just happen to include same-sex partners. It is vital to treat all members of our societal family as equals and to celebrate the love, commitment and respect they share.

Thank you,  
**Shelby Raymond**  
Terrace, British Columbia

Homosexuality has been around since the dawn of time as much to the dismay of our conservative government here in Alberta. Roman emperors "initiated" young boys (hey, the Catholic church still does this;-) ), and before colonization Native Americans had berdaches, male individuals who lived like females. Berdaches quickly disappeared because the settlers were so adamant about not accepting them, but the Natives never questioned this practice, so why should we? Who are our government officials to decide that same sex marriages are wrong? Governments once thought females voting was wrong, and that segregation was right. Females fought to win the vote, and now no one thinks anything of it. Non-whites fought for equality and now instead of segregating them governments are encouraging acceptance. It will take some time, but same sex marriages will become just as common in society as women voting and non-whites drinking out of the same fountains as whites.

Marriage should be based on love, respect, trust, attraction and admiration, not gender. Marriage over the years has evolved, once taboo issues like sex before marriage, pregnancy before marriage, divorce, adultery and the oh so taboo practices of oral and anal sex (once considered illegal among heterosexual couples) are all now generally accepted by society. Who we choose to love and how we choose to make love with them should be of no concern to the government. What the government should concentrate on are ethics, road repairs, national security, child welfare, education and health. The government, especially in Alberta, is treating homosexuals as invaders attempting to take over the province, convinced that if same sex marriages are allowed, our country will go to crap and these homosexuals will "convert" everyone, especially our vulnerable children. Fear, more than common sense is directing their decisions. What is there to be afraid of if we allow homosexuals the right to marry? Really, marriage is just a piece of paper and property rights. Their fear that if same-sex marriages are allowed then governments are acknowledging that there is nothing wrong with it and whoever is for it must be hiding homosexual tendencies themselves, and macho Albertan men would never admit that! I say, marry whomever you want, wherever you want and whenever you want, the government has no place deciding that for you!

name withheld

**For next week's Sounding Off, we have a Canada-related question for this Canada Day week. Is Canada remaining competitive with the world education market in terms of price, quality, and availability?**

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# NATURE NOTES:

## FROM THE BACKYARD TO THE BIOSPHERE

By Zoe Dalton

### Our Lepidopteran Friends

Now that summer is truly here, and the oppressive heat has taken over from the frigid cold as our preferred focus of complaint, it is time to discuss one of summer's unique treasures: the butterfly. Rare in the insect world for engendering among humans a love for its aesthetic qualities, the butterfly is admired for its grace, its colour, its form, and its habit of gaining a livelihood from another natural favourite: flowers. But butterflies offer more than beauty to dazzle the human senses. Beyond their superficial loveliness lies an evolutionary path so circuitous and complex that one cannot help but gape in awe at the spectacular mastery present in natural design.

Where to begin: the butterfly or the egg? Let's start with the little egg... Laid on a plant that will likely form its sole diet upon hatching, the young soon emerges from the egg phase into what many would consider the butterfly's less glamorous stage: that of the creepy crawly caterpillar. Covered in fluff, graced with a plethora of stubby legs, and equipped with mandibles ready for grasping, tearing and chewing, the butterfly's adolescent version is made to eat. The young caterpillar is likely to find itself going it alone on a food plant, deposited there by a mother careful to minimise competition and ensure that her young are provided with sufficient food resources for growth.

The frustrated gardener will no doubt scoff at this description of motherly care, remembering instead the holed plants of previous summers, and the little chompers that undoubtedly constituted the culprits. But a single caterpillar will in fact do very little harm to its host plant beyond aesthetic damage, so the wise garden steward will not dust or spray, but will instead remove by hand these solitary fuzzies, placing them on the less prized, or less visible of the caterpillar's favoured plants.

It must be remembered that without this essential eating and growing stage, there can be no butterfly to grace the garden with its loveliness. So lovely, too, must we consider the caterpillar and its gastronomic needs. Eating its way through succulent plant parts, the caterpillar grows in size and complexity, transforming internally in a manner unbeknownst to all but the creature itself. Beneath the comical, spiked exterior a sophisticated physiological process is occurring in which the caterpillar molts between increasingly developed larval stages known as instars. Internal wings begin to form, and the stage is set for the caterpillar's future existence as an adult butterfly. But there is no sign of such latent development in the still fuzzy, still hungry young caterpillar.

The next stage of the development process is possibly the strangest, and constitutes a complete alteration in the creature's physical form. The caterpillar's silk glands finally rise to their full potential, as the insect spins around itself a thick silken cocoon. Inside of this chrysalis the insect will undergo a process described most unattractively as self-digestion, or most pleasingly as metamorphosis. Attached to a stem or the underside of a leaf, the insect will remain in the pupal stage for one to two weeks. During this time its wings will fully develop, its mandibles, or lower jaws, will essentially disappear, and its maxilla (upper jaw) will transform into the curled, sucking proboscis the adult uses to drink from flowers. The completely metamorphosed creature will emerge from the pupal molt as an adult butterfly.



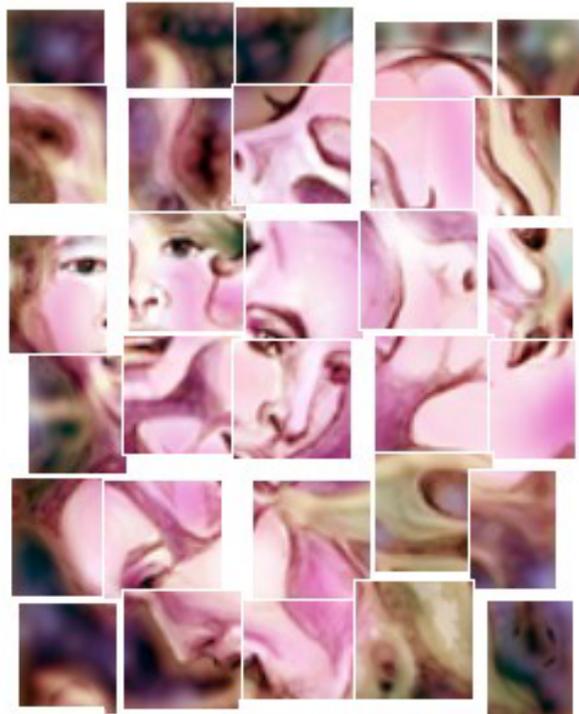
For the first time, this emergent adult will open its wings, still delicate and crumpled, and not yet flight-worthy; these four transparent membranes covered in a tapestry of coloured scales will allow the butterfly to carry out one of its most important evolutionary functions: dispersal. The newly-sprung butterfly must take its time entering the world in this form, pumping its wings full of fluid, and warming itself in the sun for what will be its first aerial experience. When sufficiently warmed and primed for flight, the butterfly will leave its host plant, and for the first time venture off as an adult in search of food, home and mate.

This is the stage at which we must truly appreciate the butterfly, second only to bees in facilitating plant pollination. Lured to meadows and gardens by the scent, colour and form of the flowers contained therein, a butterfly will unfurl its curled proboscis, and, like a child with a straw, drink the flower's sweet, nourishing nectar. That its body and legs become the vehicle for pollen transfer from one flower to another may little influence the butterfly's thoughts and musings. But such well-orchestrated activities suggest the butterfly's role as not only a gardener's decorative delight, but rather as an astounding example of evolutionary development, and an essential piece in the ecological puzzle.

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*Zoe Dalton is a graduate of York University's environmental science program, and is currently enjoying working towards a Master of Arts in Integrated Studies with Athabasca U. She can be reached for comments or questions at [zk\\_dalton@hotmail.com](mailto:zk_dalton@hotmail.com).*

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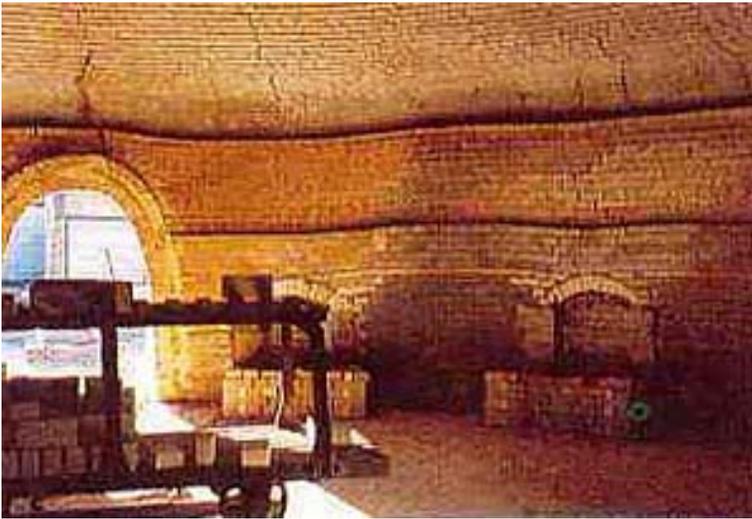
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# A TRIP TO THE BRICK FACTORY – CANADA'S HERITAGE SITES ARE WORTH A SECOND LOOK

*By Teresa Neuman*

*Photos supplied by the Claybank Brick Plant*



Adam, my ten-year-old son, attends Sacred Heart School in Regina, Saskatchewan. This year, through hot dog and "freezie" sales, Adam's Grade 4/7 class raised enough funds to finance a class camping trip as part of their Environmental Studies program. Chaperones were needed and I didn't want to turn down a great opportunity to spend some quality time with my son. Adam was thrilled when I volunteered to go.

Along with having fun, the purpose of the trip was to connect with the natural environment and learn new skills. The students planned their own menus, and prepared to do their own cooking. The equipment list grew as Adam was elected to

supply the pots and pans, juice containers, and cooking implements for his group. I had to take the truck to haul it all.

The day of the trip dawned and we traveled southwest to Avonlea, Saskatchewan. The students managed to set up their own tents, organized their gear and tested their menus by cooking lunch. Charred on the outside and raw on the inside, meals that would have been rejected by the adults were wolfed down by the students who were proud of their culinary efforts. The rest of the day passed quickly as the class learned how to read a compass and practiced their new orienteering skills.

At sunset, the adults took the group to the beach to skip stones. The students competed for the best round and flat stones. Those who had more patience and found the right one were rewarded by a good skip, discovering one of the joys of childhood in the process. The impatient children contented themselves with tossing large rocks into the water, probably resulting in many fish suffering concussions.

The second day was spent at the Claybank Brick Plant, located in the "Dirt Hills" just outside of Avonlea. Now a Saskatchewan Heritage site, in its heyday, the brick plant manufactured bricks made from the rare "refractory" or heat resistant clay found in rich deposits in the area. The original homesteader hauled the clay 50 kilometers to Moose Jaw by horse and carriage for manufacture. The arrival of the railroad about 1910 made it possible to build a plant at the site of the clay deposits. Due to the low water content of the clay, the bricks could be formed by machines and fired on-site in large kilns. These "refractory" or "fire" bricks were suitable for use in furnaces and other areas where high heat needed to be sustained for long periods of time. Bricks from the Claybank plant were even used to line the rocket launch pads in Cape Canaveral, Florida. The varieties of bricks manufactured at the plant expanded to include "face" brick suitable for use in construction. One of the best examples of face brick produced by the Claybank plant can be seen in the facing of the Chateau Frontenac Hotel in Quebec City.

As part of the outdoor education program, the students had the opportunity to explore the Massold Clay Canyons and Clay Pits; where the clay for the plant was mined. Divided into groups, Adam and his classmates were given maps, compasses, and digital cameras. The students went into the hills to explore and learn about the unique features of the area. The boys mainly wanted to explore the many quicksand pits, but some diversionary tactics on my part steered the boys away from these traps. The boys explored caves, hunted for rocks, discovered flowering cacti and took pictures until the memory on the camera was filled (These pictures would be made into a CD for the boys to take back to school.). Two hours later, we came down from the hills; sun burnt and thirsty, and took advantage of a cool drink and a chance to relax in the air-conditioned interpretive centre.



The group toured the brick plant, where bricks were manufactured from 1914 until 1989 when modern technology rendered the machinery at the plant obsolete. A reminder of the past, the time clock still blows the plant whistle on a regular schedule. The brick-making machinery is still operational and the Interpretive staff manufactures bricks once a year during Heritage Day activities. The plant is set up as it might have been found during the early part of the century. Employee pay scales were posted by the time clock and the students were surprised by the wages earned by the workers during the early part of the century. Specially designed bricks were hand-made by skilled craftsmen. These workers had to remain on the job until each one had completed a quota 400 bricks daily. Accuracy was important as faulty bricks were rejected and would have to be redone. Paid only pennies per brick, it was hard labour for these workers.

In Adam's opinion, the trip was a huge success. He connected with his natural environment and had a great time. As I drove my tired and sun burnt child across the spectacular beauty of the prairies towards Regina, I was grateful for the opportunity I had to reconnect with nature, if only for a short time. Adam expressed his feelings with that perception that ten-year-olds sometimes have, "You know mum, I'm not ready to be back in the city yet." And as we sat in the five o'clock traffic jam, neither was I.

*The Claybank Brick Plant is located about 10 kilometers west of Avonlea, Saskatchewan, on Highway #339. Information on the plant and the programs it provides can be found at <http://www3.sk.sympatico.ca/cbphm/>.*

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*Teresa is enrolled in the Bachelor of Professional Arts Program, Communications Studies, at Athabasca University and is enjoying returning to school after 18 years. Teresa enjoys writing, union activism and gardening, and lives and works in Regina, Saskatchewan, with her partner Kevin and son Adam.*

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# FROM MY PERSPECTIVE

## A Tribute To My Piano Teacher

*By Debbie Jabbour*



It was with great sadness I read an obituary notice the other day to discover that Thelma Johannes O'Neill had passed away, one day short of her 88<sup>th</sup> birthday. Her obituary states that Mrs. O'Neill was "dedicated to motivating and encouraging her students to search for the highest musical expression." I can testify to the truthfulness of that, since I had the honour of being one of her students.

I first met Mrs. O'Neill when I was 15 years old. I had been taking piano lessons for many years, but Mrs. O'Neill was my first "real" teacher, and she taught me what playing piano was really all about. My mother wanted us to take lessons, but as a non-musician she didn't know what to look for in a teacher. Convenience and cost were the criteria she used, and this meant that I had some very strange experiences. One teacher came to our house, which was a bonus from my mother's perspective. Unfortunately he was a bit eccentric. For example, he would always write in all the names of the notes (in pen) on any piece before he would allow me to learn it. I hated this since I knew how to read the notes and did not like my

music marked up. We had a conflict over this when I bought sheet music for Beethoven's Moonlight Sonata and asked him to help me learn how to play it – without writing in the notes. He turned several shades of red and purple, advised me that I had no business challenging him and that I would either learn his way or he would not teach our family anymore, then stormed out! He later called my mother to tell her that I was disrespectful and a terrible student. She was shocked, asked me what I had done to merit this, then insisted I call him and apologize, since she did not want to lose his services as a piano teacher. Even though I knew I had done nothing wrong, and that in fact his method of teaching was incorrect, I had to apologize and submit to having him write in the names of the notes all over my copy of the Moonlight Sonata.

I had other teachers who were even worse. One young girl taught at a studio down the block, and at my first lesson advised me that I played piano better than she did and that there was nothing she could teach me. For a year all I did was go to the lessons and play piano for her. Another teacher had a heavy Hungarian accent and I could barely understand her instructions, although I got a good giggle every time she referred to trills as, "thrillers."

Fortunately I had a lot of support and encouragement from my paternal grandmother and an aunt; both accomplished pianists, who were willing to listen to me and critique my playing. By the time I reached high school, I had already successfully passed several exams and was at the Grade 10 Royal Conservatory level. I finally begged my mother to find me a "real" teacher, suggesting that she call Alberta College, since they had a reputation for being the best in the city. She agreed, and several days later reported that she had set up a tentative lesson with a Mrs. O'Neill. My mother reported that the conversation was a bit scary and intimidating, and that Mrs. O'Neill had gruffly advised my mother that she only accepted students by audition - she would not consider me as a student unless she felt I was worthy.

I went to that first session nervously, and Mrs. O'Neill made no effort to put me at ease. She looked very serious and spoke in an abrupt manner, using words sparingly. She said nothing as I played the first piece I had prepared, then asked me what I hoped to accomplish. I told her I was hoping to work towards my Associate Royal Conservatory exam. Mrs. O'Neill gave a slight sniff and with an air of disdain told me that exams were one thing, learning to play piano properly was quite another. She then proceeded to show me the difference. By the end of the session I still had no inkling of what she thought of me nor whether she was willing to take me on. As I got up to leave, she simply said, "next week, same time," in a dismissive tone of voice. I walked

out of there elated and apprehensive – realizing that I had finally found a real teacher, but wondering whether I would prove to be a worthy student.

Over the weeks and months, I grew more comfortable with Mrs. O'Neill as she taught me how to really play piano. At last I learned how to make individual notes sing, to pull out the nuances of a tone, to bring passion and intensity to my playing. She showed me the difference between a note that was muddy and boring and one that rang true and clear "like a bell." I learned all kinds of tricks and exercises to improve my technique and speed, the proper way to use pedaling, and how to effectively memorize pieces so you never forgot. When I bemoaned the fact that I had to learn a Bach Prelude and Fugue for the exam, since I hated Bach...she just gave me a funny look and said that perhaps I had not found the right Bach piece. She then introduced me to Bach properly, choosing pieces that she knew I would find interesting and showing me how to find beauty and challenge in them by extracting the intricate pattern of the underlying theme and variations. By the time she was finished with me I loved Bach!

And I learned to love Mrs. O'Neill as well. Her gruff exterior and abrupt manner hid a deep passion for music and a heart that was full of affection and caring for her students. Although she was usually serious, her sense of humour would surface at times and she had a ready smile of encouragement when it was merited. I studied with her for several years, then left to move to Central America. Several years later, after I married and had my first child, I called her up and asked if I could take lessons again. She said she would be very pleased to have me. Mrs. O'Neill was always very professional, keeping the focus on the lesson, yet she could be very sensitive. On one occasion I came to my lesson upset and distracted over a problem at home with my husband. She noticed my mood and asked if I wanted to share with her what was going on, since I obviously was not able to concentrate for a proper lesson. I briefly shared with her what had happened – en route to my lesson I had seen his vehicle parked somewhere it should not have been and feared the worst - and she suggested I leave and go take care of the problem. The following week she simply asked if I had straightened things out and it was not mentioned again.

Mrs. O'Neill had weekly informal music performance sessions in her home for her beloved students and she always invited me, but I was too shy and intimidated to ever go. I did have a few lessons in her home rather than at the college - an older, smaller, character home in a mature part of the city. I recall being stunned by my first look at her living room. It contained two grand pianos side by side and little else! Mrs. O'Neill's husband was a painter – not an artist, but a house painter, and I often thought it was odd how someone so dedicated to music would be married to a tradesman with no musical connections. She had no children, and on reading the obituary I discovered that she had very few close family members. Her music and her students appeared to fill any gaps, however.

On one occasion, she had invited me to come to a recital she was giving. I took my eldest daughter with me, who was about three years old at the time. My daughter was entranced by the music, whispering the occasional question and comment about it to me during the performance. This irritated a woman sitting in front of me who kept making shushing noises and rude comments under her breath, condemning me for bringing a child to a piano performance. During intermission I leaned forward and said, "you know, enjoyment of music is not something reserved for adults." The woman opened her mouth as if to object, then moved away in a huff to sit elsewhere. A lady sitting on the other side of me thanked me for this, saying that if I had not spoken up, she would have. After the performance we went backstage to congratulate Mrs. O'Neill and I recounted what had happened. She was surprised that anyone would be angry because a child had so obviously enjoyed her performance, and told my small daughter that she was very pleased that she had come.

Although Mrs. O'Neill had music degrees from the Paris Conservatory and Ecole Normale in France; in 1981, at the age of 65, she completed a Bachelor of Music at the University of Alberta. I was still a student of hers during the time she would have been attending university, yet I did not know until reading the obituary that she, like me, had gone back to university as a mature adult to achieve a degree. What an inspiration!

Mrs. O'Neill was keenly interested in her students, and always asked about what I was involved in. I told her about my band, and she asked what kind of music we played. She seemed to have difficulty understanding what pop music was all about, so one lesson I performed an Abba piece for her called "Chiquitita", which I played and sang in the band." I could see by her expression that even though every radio station was playing Abba those days, she had never heard of them before. But even though it was alien to the classical musical world she was immersed in, she was eager to learn more, and supportive of me. The important thing, for her, was that I was playing music with passion and emotion – "making all the men cry" with my performance.

My life got busy with children, and I discontinued my lessons in 1980. Some ten years later, however, I called Alberta College on behalf of my eldest daughter, to see if Mrs. O'Neill would accept her as a pupil. The College advised me that Mrs. O'Neill rarely took any new students, and the few she accepted were by strict audition. They suggested I would be better off trying one of their other teachers since my chances with Mrs. O'Neill were very slim. I asked if they would just pass on my name and number to Mrs. O'Neill in any case. The next day I received a call. Mrs. O'Neill was thrilled to hear from me and asked many questions about what was happening in my life. To my surprise, she remembered that night so long ago when I had been upset, and with a hint of laughter in her voice asked if I was still having missing husband problems. She said she'd be pleased to accept my daughter as her student, and would not require an audition, since she would trust my recommendation. In a strange twist of irony, one of the first pieces my daughter wanted help with was the Moonlight Sonata, and Mrs. O'Neill's wry comment was, "they all want to play that one!"

I warned my daughter that Mrs. O'Neill could seem somewhat scary at first, but she soon found out, as I had, what a wonderful teacher she was. She didn't take lessons for a long time as it turned out, but they had a profound impact. We ran into Mrs. O'Neill often during the next few years at various music events at the College. She was always alone, attending one performance or another that one of her students was giving. We again lost touch for a while until 1995, when I called her to see if she would be willing to take another of my daughters as a student. She told me she would be very happy to do so, but unfortunately shortly after this my marriage broke up and I could no longer afford piano lessons.

I didn't see Mrs. O'Neill or speak to her again after that, although my eldest daughter would see her occasionally in the coffee shop where she worked. Only a few weeks ago I had occasion to stop by the Alberta College bookstore and I thought of Mrs. O'Neill and wondered if she was still teaching her beloved students.

I don't normally read the obituaries, but for some reason this past Sunday I did, and was surprised and saddened to see that Thelma Johannes O'Neill had passed away. I was even more surprised to realize that she was almost 88 years old. She had seemed to be timeless and ageless to me – yet she would have already been in her eighties when she agreed to take on yet another of my daughters as a student. I don't think I ever told Mrs. O'Neill just how much of a difference she made in my life. She wasn't one to offer words of praise, nor did she seem to expect them in return. The closest she came was during that last phone call in 1995, when she admitted that she always felt I had a special spark of talent in me. I hope that I managed to convey to her my deep respect for what she had done for me when I asked her to teach my daughters. Mrs. O'Neill was an inspiration in so many ways, and although I regret not ever telling her just how much her teaching meant to me, I think she knew. As a teacher, the greatest satisfaction and reward is not in the thank you's. It's in seeing the fruit of your teaching, watching your student grow and improve under your tutelage, seeing the spark of light your instruction awakens in them, that moment when your teaching comes alive. Mrs. O'Neill brought music to life, and her love of music and dedication to her students will never be forgotten by those of us fortunate enough to have been among that privileged group.

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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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# AU Profiles:

Sandra Moore spoke with Daris Ruest and Mary Marguerite Butler at Convocation:

## AU GRADUATE PROFILE OF DARIS RUEST

**AGE:** 34

**LIVES IN:** Hinton, AB

**TRAVEL TIME TO ATHABASCA:** 5 hours

**PROGRAM COMPLETED:** Bachelor Of Nursing

**YEARS IT TOOK TO COMPLETE:** 10

**FAVORITE COURSE:** Nursing Informatics

**LEAST FAVORITE COURSE:** Nursing Research

**FAVORITE TUTOR:** Liz Broad

**HIGHEST FINAL GRADE:** 96

**LOWEST FINAL GRADE:** 67



Daris is married to Gus and has two children, who came along near the end of her degree. She worked while obtaining her degree and is now progressing into AU's Masters of Nursing program. Obtaining this degree has meant personal and professional growth and Daris advises other AU students that "patience is a virtue." AU convocation for Daris was a wonderful experience!

**Congratulations Daris Ruest, BN!**

## AU GRADUATE PROFILE OF MARY MARGUERITE BUTLER

**AGE:** 48

**LIVES IN:** AB

**TRAVEL TIME TO ATHABASCA:** 6 hours

**PROGRAM COMPLETED:** Bachelor of Nursing

**YEARS IT TOOK TO COMPLETE:** 15

**FAVORITE COURSE:** Trends & Issues In Nursing

**LEAST FAVORITE COURSE:** Philosophy

**FAVORITE TUTOR:** Maureen Mcqueen

**HIGHEST FINAL GRADE:** 95

**LOWEST FINAL GRADE:** 72

Mary traveled to AU with her mother-in-law by her side and was amazed at AU's beautiful grounds and friendly organizers. She is married with children and worked while obtaining her degree. This degree has given Mary a "great sense of pride" and she now intends to go on and complete the

Masters Program in Nursing. She encourages fellow AU students to persist in their studies and to try to find a working group.

**Congratulations Mary Marguerite Butler, BN!**

Look for more grad profiles in upcoming Voice issues. If you are an AU grad and you were not interviewed on convocation day, contact [voice@ausu.org](mailto:voice@ausu.org) to be a part of AU profiles. As always, we are seeking undergrads, tutors and staff for profiles as well.

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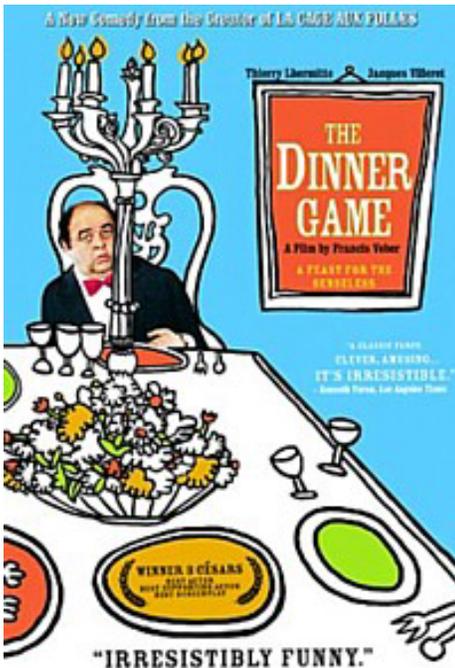
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**TRAVEL CUTS**



## THE DINNER GAME Movie Review

By Laura Seymour



I'm a bit embarrassed not to have heard of this film masterpiece from France. I admit it. But I'm awfully glad I caught up! Written and Directed by Francis Veber, *The Dinner Game*, is a hilarious comedy of errors. It popped on Bravo TV's screen recently and I found myself immediately disgusted seeing English subtitles. "Oh no! Not another film with subtitles...they'll kill me if I do a review," I whined. I figured I better change the channel. But try as I might I couldn't get away from this fun production. Sorry. We'll all just have to read quickly or bone up on our French. On the bright side I realized I know more of the language (not Quebec version) than I ever thought I did!

There are several positive points to this film. For me the best was that the film just keeps escalating in hilarity.

This film obviously had a budget behind it. Though I don't recognize the famous stars from France I recognize quality film production when I see it. The camera is steady, yet a bit pragmatic. The sets are well furnished. The actors aren't muttering or overdoing their lines. The script is continuously moving into new avenues.

The story begins when a group of yuppies get together in school and put on a dinner. As obnoxious schoolboys they decide to have a contest to see who can find the biggest "idiot" to bring along. They decide amongst themselves who wins and then start again for next week's dinner. The problem is these boys grew older and got good jobs, but they never grew up. They are still having these dinners. One of them brags, "no idiot has ever found out!" Ahhhh, but as you can guess that's all about to change.

A boomerang enthusiast is on the list of idiots and everyone sits around "politely" listening to him talk about the subject in the living room before dinner. The publisher, Pierre Brochant, perfectly played by Thierry Lhermitte decides he's found the prize-winning idiot in Francois Pignon, a low-level accountant at the Financial Ministry whose obsession is building models of famous architectural or engineering feats (the Eiffel Tower, for example) using only matchsticks. He happily tells strangers on the commuter train about his hobby, showing photographs and blabbing in great detail about how many matchsticks he used as well as how many tubes of glue etc. Pignon, hysterically yet sensitively portrayed by Jacques Villeret, is invited to dinner by Brochant, who says he's interested in doing a book on Pignon's models. Yet when Pignon shows up at Brochant's door ready to go to the dinner, Brochant has bunged up his back and cancels.

Through a serious comedy of errors Brochant's wife phones and leaves a message that she is leaving him. She cannot deal with his mean dinner game and decides it's too much. Our model maker had his wife leave him and for two years he told himself the same things Brochant did, "she'll come back." This of course makes Pignon want to stay to comfort Brochant. Brochant is obnoxious and tries to throw out Pignon. It takes a mountain of insults before Pignon gets the message...but before he gets away he proves to be useful to let go of! Brochant's wife does return, but since Pignon is the only one who can answer the door and Brochant's mistress is expected,

he mistakenly greets the wife as the mistress and the wife gets an unexpected ear full. Crushed, she leaves. Eventually the mistake is identified and Pignon is blamed.

Unfortunately, through a pile of mistakes the publisher finds out that his wife is not over at her ex's house, where he expects she's run to. Her ex says she has a date with a local Casanova at his secret love nest. Eventually, after Pignon's boss gets involved they get the address for the love nest. They decide to phone as the safest measure to ensure she is over there. No one can call in the room since the Casanova knows each man's voice -- except Pignon. Since Pignon has repeatedly bungled up phone call after phone call in front of Brochant they decide to coach him on exactly what to say. Eventually the call is made and over the loudspeaker they find out Brochant's wife canceled at the last moment. Instead the Casanova's "getting even" with the man who's auditing him, Pignon's boss, by sleeping with HIS wife. The boss, as it happens, is sitting in the room aghast -- listening to every word!!

Twists and turns abound, and the film is expertly made a thrill to watch by the fantastically enthusiastic performance of Jacques Villeret (Pignon). My husband and I found we were falling over our knees at Pignon's lack of tact, and his ability to get lost in a moment and forget the main point of a phone call. And yet when Brochant's mistress is suicidal he is there for her, tender, supportive, listening. He also winds up the film with a magnificent rescue of Brochant's marriage....uhhhh...we think he does. You'll have to see the film and see if you think he did or didn't.

*The Dinner Game* is subtitled I do admit. And I do hate to do this on my already crammed shelf, but I'm looking for a good subtitled DVD of this ASAP. It's too funny to pass up! Get a good box of popcorn and park yourself for about an hour and a half of severe fun!!

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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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## **ISFiR | 2003 International Student Festival in Rome**

ISFiR- the International Student Festival in Rome takes place from July 16 to July 25, 2003.

"With about 450 participants aged 18 to 50 from 90-100 different countries, ISFiR is the largest thematic student festival in the world. This year's theme is 'Challenging Attitudes,' and to make this festival a success, we need skilled participants from all over the world.

At ISFiR, a diversity of young people get the opportunity to meet. The festival is an arena for overcoming cultural, political and religious borderlines, in order to promote tolerance and understanding. "Furthermore, the ISFiR brings together students from some 90 nations. Living at close quarters with people from different parts of the world, exchanging ideas and experiences, offers unique opportunities to gain insight into other cultures, and adds an extra dimension to this summer program. "

For more information see: <http://www.sweb.cz/isfir2003/index.html>



### Private Schooling – Public Funding

The Ontario government is celebrating how it has managed to simultaneously rob its public education system and at the same time please many parents. A recent press release reminds Ontarians about how their provincial government passed legislation that allows parents to receive a tax-credit based on the tuition they pay to send their students to a private school.

As the years go by, the amount of the tuition eligible as a tax-credit will increase up to 50%. Supposedly this is done to reflect how parents removing their children from the public education system are taking fewer of the public education system's resources. Yet this credit cannot be applied

for by people with no children at all – even though they obviously place a smaller burden yet on the public education system.

At the same time, this still does little for those parents who still cannot afford the private schools in the first place, nor does it do anything for those parents who have "troubled" kids that many private schools simply will not accept. No, in those cases, the parents simply have to live with the fact that families that are better off do not have to provide the same level of support to the children of Ontario as everybody else.

As a directed tax cut, this is one of the worst I've seen, especially among those that the government pats itself on the back for. If couples without children still have to pay the full tax, why should parents who are rich enough to be able to send their children to private school in the first place get a tax break?

Under this type of logic, I suppose the next thing we can expect is a break in provincial income taxes for those people who can fly down to the U.S. for operations. It seems somebody in the Ontario Provincial Government has forgotten the idea behind the word "public" in public education.

A far better tax cut is the one given to the seniors. This cut basically eliminates the educational portion of property tax for all senior citizens in Ontario. While I am not in favour of any tax-cuts that pull money away from our education system as they are all short-sighted, at least this one is applied fairly and not simply to those who happen to be able to afford an extra expense.

### Private Funding – Public Schooling

The Ontario provincial government is also pleased to announce a 400 million dollar investment into the Ontario Student Opportunity Trust Fund (OSOTF). This came as a surprise when I first read it, because the idea of the Ontario Government actually working to make post-secondary cheaper for students seems contrary to all the evidence we've seen so far.

The OSOTF is a set of awards and bursaries for students who are on Ontario's student loan programs. It's a worthy idea, those who are suffering financial need can apply for various OSOTF sponsored awards and perhaps reduce the amount of their loans. So this 400 million dollar investment will really be a great boon to many students in Ontario.

It is interesting however to note that the government is actually the last contributor to the fund. The government's contribution is a dollar for dollar match of the amount of funds donated by the private sector, with the donations being raised by the Universities.

So really, the congratulations for this funding must go the Universities themselves, and not to the provincial government.

Still, congratulations are in order. A total of 800 million being delivered to needy Ontario post-secondary students over the next decade will go far into encouraging many people to go forward with their post-secondary educations, something that benefits Ontario and all of us in the long term.

### Disaster Relief for Cattle Farmers ... Again

The Alberta Provincial government is announcing that 100 million dollars is being committed to a national program to help cattle producers last through the crisis brought on by a single case of Mad Cow disease. Of course, it was just last year that more money was being poured into the industry to help it survive the record droughts that had made cattle feed prices so expensive.

Since that initial case, the news has seemed rather good. No other cases have been found, and all the farms have been released from quarantine. This supposed good news has its dark side of course – with no other cattle seeming to have it, the question of where it came from in the first place still remains.

Which is more disturbing, the amount of economic damage that this single case caused, or the idea that – with no cause determined – it could happen again tomorrow?

I've said it before, and I'll say it again. Instead of using the money to prop up cattle industries, maybe we should start using money like that to take a look into alternatives to beef.

I don't know what those alternatives would be but I don't have \$100 million dollars to help me look into the matter, either.

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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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Walter Gretzky, Stroke Survivor

I'm alive today  
because someone  
knew the signs  
of a stroke.

Do you?



## STROKE WARNING SIGNS

### WEAKNESS

Sudden weakness, numbness  
or tingling in the face,  
arm or leg

### TROUBLE SPEAKING

Sudden temporary  
loss of speech or trouble  
understanding speech

### VISION PROBLEMS

Sudden loss of vision,  
particularly in one eye, or  
double vision

### HEADACHE

Sudden severe  
and unusual headache

### DIZZINESS

Sudden loss of balance,  
especially with any of the  
above signs

Call 911

or your medical  
emergency number  
immediately.



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[www.heartandstroke.ca](http://www.heartandstroke.ca)



Dear Sandra,

**Why do some people's joints hurt when the weather changes?**

**Achy in Ontario**

Dear Achy,

It always amazed me as a young child that my grandmother knew just when it was going to rain. If I wanted to go for a bike ride on a sunny day she would holler after me to take a jacket. Sure enough dark clouds would roll in a few hours later and I'd end up riding home through a torrent of rain.

Now my mom hounds my kids to carry jackets with them. Is it coincidental that both of these ladies have arthritis?

Unfortunately science does not have a definite answer to whether there is a connection between arthritis pain and weather conditions. But, cold and damp weather does cause muscles to tighten which puts a strain on mobility and lowers the pain threshold. Warmth, on the other hand, as evidenced by anyone who has soaked in a steaming hot bath, relaxes muscle tensions and eases pain, hence why arthritis sufferers may feel better on a warm sunny day.

Just one more reason to get outside and enjoy the sun – with sunscreen and a hat of course!

*Sandra*

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

*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)*

The advertisement is a vertical rectangular block with a blue background. At the top, the word 'INSURANCE' is written in large, bold, red, sans-serif capital letters. Below this, on the left, is a close-up photograph of a woman's face wearing a headset with a microphone. To the right of the photo, the text 'Group Rates for AUSU' is written in large, bold, blue, sans-serif capital letters, with 'Students - Employees - Alumni' in a smaller, blue, sans-serif font below it. In the center, the text '1 CALL CHECKS THE MARKET' is written in bold, blue, sans-serif capital letters. To the right of this text is a white corded telephone handset. At the bottom left, the logo for 'CBL OXFORD' is shown, featuring a stylized blue 'C' and 'O' with a swoosh. To the right of the logo, the phone number '1-800-272-8840' is written in large, bold, red, sans-serif capital letters, with 'In Edmonton' in bold, red, sans-serif capital letters below it. Underneath the phone number, the text 'Click here to find a local office' is written in a smaller, red, sans-serif font. At the very bottom, the text '24 Branches Throughout Alberta Including Athabasca' is written in bold, yellow, sans-serif capital letters, with the website 'www.brokerlink.ca' in bold, yellow, sans-serif capital letters below it.

# LABOUR MARKET AND WORK ORGANIZATION INEQUALITIES: PART 1

By Wayne E. Benedict



There are numerous inequalities and inequities inherent to the Canadian labour market(s) and organizations of work. Different social groups are affected to various degrees and by numerous forms of inequalities throughout the social relations of production. This week's article will identify the major inequalities in Canadian work and industry and the social groups most affected. In next week's conclusion, major theoretical perspectives on labour markets and work organizations will be identified and compared to assess the adequacy of explanations for work-related inequalities that they provide. Krahn & Lowe (1998, p. 94) define "...a *labour market* as the arena in which employers seek to purchase labour from potential employees who themselves are seeking jobs suitable to their education, experience, and preference." Also in next week's

article, conclusions will be drawn regarding which government and employer policies appear to be most effective in reducing work-related inequalities.

Inequality in treatment results from *discrimination*, which is the most oft-heard word describing the cause of work-related inequality. Everyone has heard, and likely used, the word and many have personally felt the negative consequences of discrimination, but few understand the depth and breadth of the subject.

## Forms of discrimination

Discrimination takes three basic forms: direct, indirect, and systematic. Canadian and provincial legislations set the grounds upon which discrimination is legally prohibited. While the prohibited grounds vary slightly between jurisdictions, they conform closely to the federal statute which prohibits discrimination based on a person's "...race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, disability or conviction for an offence for which a pardon has been granted" (Canadian Human Rights Act, 1985). Direct discrimination occurs when a person knowingly and purposefully treats another person or group differently and unfairly because of prejudice based on one or more of the previously mentioned grounds or any other personal factor unrelated to the issue at hand—in this case work. Indirect discrimination occurs when a person (or organization) has no conscious intention of discriminating against a person or group, but whose actions or policies nonetheless result in discrimination. Systematic discrimination is indirect discrimination which is the result of entrenched policies or practices built into the Canadian system of industrial relations. Women are the most prominent victims of systematic discrimination in Canada resulting in both gender-based pay inequity and gender-based employment inequity. Direct seniority discrimination against women occurs where collective agreements provide for separate seniority lists for each sex. "...a Quebec Human Rights Commission Study...found that at least fifteen collective agreements entered into in that province in 1980 still provided for separate seniority units for male and female workers..." (Dulude, 1995, p. 27).

Other groups that face systematic discrimination are aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities and members of visible minorities. Numerous factors can form the basis for discriminatory exclusionary practices against individuals based on: age—perceptions that older workers cannot learn and/or adapt as well as younger workers, and perceptions that younger workers have fewer skills and less experience; gender—direct and indirect gender discrimination, systematic gender discrimination; disability—perceptions that all disabled workers suffer similar impairments, and employers may be uncomfortable with or fearful of the disabled; ethnic origins—direct racial discrimination; sexual orientation—direct discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, homophobia, morality-based condemnation.

Persons with disabilities face direct and indirect forms of discrimination: "There are about 1.8 million disabled people of working age in Canada and some 80% are either unemployed or underemployed" (McKay, 1993, p. 167).

### **Discrimination against minority workers**

Canada's early history is rife with examples of both direct and systematically incorporated forms of discrimination against visible minority immigrant workers. Railways were notorious for the treatment of their minority employees, such as the Chinese workers used to build the transcontinental rail-beds at an estimated loss of one worker killed per mile of track laid (CAW, 2003). According to Calliste (1993, p. 139), race (or ethnicity) was used as a basis for building inequality into the systems of employment used by the railways. She cites evidence which suggests that the caste system on Canadian railways was the result of collaboration between the higher paid groups (whites) and employers. She submits that labour markets split along ethnic lines developed conflict among business (employers), higher paid dominant labour (white workers), and lower paid ethnic minority labour (blacks). Employers aimed to have as cheap and docile a labour force as possible to compete effectively with other businesses. Higher paid dominant labour felt very threatened by the introduction of cheaper labour into the market, fearing either displacement or reduction in wages. Such competition led to forms of ethnic antagonism: exclusion (keeping lower-paid minority workers out of the territory) and caste (dividing white work from black work). Similar fears and ignorance exist today and lead to ethnic discrimination.

Aboriginal peoples are still underrepresented in both "the Canadian workforce [and] those segments of the Canadian workforce that are identifiable by qualification, eligibility or geography and from which the employer may reasonably be expected to draw employees" (Employment Equity Act, 1995). Waldram (1993, pp. 172-178) writes about the impact of native employment in mega-projects touted as major employers of affected band members. He suggests that the overall impact of development projects on Native employment is that Native people are enticed to become active participants in their own underdevelopment by seeking employment on projects that do harm to, rather than benefit, their economic future. This is because the jobs provided to Natives by such developments are of short-term, paid poorly, and require little or no skills. Training, education and mobile certification is not provided to Native workers and so when the jobs disappear at the end of the project, the Natives can not take new skills to other areas for work—they have gained none. Therefore, they end up back in subsistence production of hunting, trapping, fishing and the like and in an area whose natural resources that support such activities are markedly worse off due to the environmental damage caused by the project—flooding, redirected waterways, lost forest, cleared land, etc.

"...research findings show that racial discrimination continues to handicap visible minorities seeking to improve their employment situation" (Krahn & Lowe, 1998, p. 133). According to Reitz (1993, p. 157), evidence indicates that racial discrimination is equally as pervasive in Canada as in other western post-industrial capitalist nations; however, there is less overt racial *conflict* in Canada due to four specific factors: the generational composition of racial minorities; the economic status and position of racial minorities in relation to overall economic trends; the structure of immigration institutions; & multi-ethnic political structures and culture.

### **Harassment**

Harassment is an issue closely related to discrimination that negatively affects disadvantaged minority individuals and groups; such as women, visible minorities, gays and lesbians, or anyone who is perceived as *different* by the majority individual or group. Wishart (1993, pp. 185-186) states that: "Two types of harassment are emerging as workplace hazards—sexual and personal. Sexual harassment is any sexual advance that threatens a worker's job or well-being. It is usually an expression of power made by someone in authority. ...Personal harassment is any behaviour by any person in the workplace that is directed at, and is offensive to, an employee or endangers an employee, undermines the performance of that job or threatens the economic

livelihood of that employee." Because harassment is a power issue, wherein the harasser attempts to dominate and subordinate the harassed individual, it results in workplace inequality. Sexual harassment is illegal and has been defined as follows:

Harassment of an individual by another on the basis of sex; sexual harassment at the workplace may include (1) conduct ranging from unwelcome physical conduct to gender based insults [jokes] and taunting, or (2) threats to an employees economic well-being and job security; such conduct and threats are illegal under human rights legislation, either explicitly through the prohibition of sexual harassment or implicitly as a result of the injunction against discrimination based on sex (Sack & Poskanzer, 1984, p. 139).

Personal harassment that is predicated on prohibited grounds as outlined *supra* is also illegal under applicable human rights legislation.

### **Labour market inequalities**

Inequality in pay occurs across industries and sectors of the Canadian economy. There are major differences in occupational rewards in terms of income (direct pay) and fringe benefits (indirect pay). Many primary, secondary and upper-tier service sectors receive high wages, secure fulltime employment, and generous benefit packages. However, vast numbers of workers employed in the lower-tier service sector, and minorities of those in the primary & secondary sectors are poorly paid contingent workers (part-time, temporary, contract, own-account self-employed, etc.) who are not entitled to benefits. The former group is primarily composed of women, minorities, young workers, and older female workers; the latter group is primarily composed of middle-aged and older male workers. Pay inequity is most often studied as a gender issue in Canada although other disadvantaged groups, most notably young workers and minority workers, are also clearly suffering wage-inequality.

Beginning at their initial entrance into mass wage-work in the mid-nineteenth century, Canadian women have been paid less than men. The occupational labeling of jobs contributes to occupational gender segregation by separating jobs into *male* and *female*. "...men historically opposed the employment of women in their occupations for fear of having their wages undercut. Furthermore, traditional values narrowly defined female roles as child-rearing and homemaking. Women, therefore, were relegated to the less rewarding jobs that men did not want. Because these occupations came to be labeled 'female', future employers would likely only seek women for them and, regardless of the skills demanded by the job, pay and status would remain low" (Krahn & Lowe, 1998, p. 166). The gendered division of labour continues today despite numerous governmental policies aimed at rectifying that inequity. "Low-wage earners are overwhelmingly female, one-third are the only earners in their families, and almost half are over the age of 35. Most surprising, one-third have a postsecondary diploma or degree" (Maxwell, 2002). The fact that one third of low-wage earners possess a postsecondary diploma or degree is empirical evidence against the human capital theory examined *infra*. For a more in-depth examination of gender-based pay inequity, see Benedict (2002a).

Inequality in employment opportunities result from numerous causal factors including: regional labour market variations, segmented labour markets; various forms of discrimination; and the gendered division of labour. According to Krahn & Lowe (1998, p. 128), geography can create barriers to mobility out of secondary labour market segments because: a work record showing frequent layoffs or job changes may simply reflect the nature of the local labour market (rural areas) but, it could also be interpreted as an indication of unstable work habits by prospective employers; there are simply fewer good jobs available outside of the metropolitan heartland of Canada; or residents of the hinterland regions are less likely to have obtained the credentials necessary for participation in primary labour markets. The labour market segmentation theory, which is examined *infra*, posits that core sector industries contain a *primary* labour market wherein *good* jobs with higher pay, benefits, and security can be found; while *periphery* sector industries contain a secondary labour market wherein *bad*

jobs with lower pay, few if any benefits, and little security can be found. Disadvantaged labour-force participants are concentrated in the secondary labour market and secondary to primary inter-market movement is extremely difficult to effect. Direct, indirect, and systematic discrimination can block the career aspirations of disadvantaged workers, constraining their options to lower-tiered service-sector jobs, limiting their internal labour-market career options (internal labour markets refer to well-developed training and promotion systems found within most large corporations and public institutions), or banishing them to the unemployment line. Women experience inequality in employment opportunities through various means: female job ghettos; the double-day; the glass ceiling; professional male-culture exclusion; gender-role socialization, etc. For a more in-depth examination of gender-based employment inequity, see Benedict (2002a).

Inequality in Health and Safety conditions of work abound across industries, sectors and professions in Canada and they exhibit varying rates and risks of injury, illness and death. Blue-collar workers are much more likely to be exposed to dust or fibers, loud noises, and dangerous chemicals; while white-collar workers were more likely to report poor air-quality in their work environment. The former are far more likely to be killed on the job, which is doubtless related to the comparative hazards of the work and the dearth of engineering controls in place to alleviate those hazards (Krahn & Lowe, 1998, pp. 101-103). For a more in-depth examination of occupational health and safety inequities and how they are systematically incorporated into the Canadian OHS systems, see Benedict (2002b).

**Clearly, Canada's labour market(s) and work organizations are rife with inequalities and inequities. This article will be concluded in next week's *Voice* with a discussion on the identification and comparison of major theoretical perspectives on labour markets and work organizations, and an assessment on the adequacy of explanations for work-related inequalities that they provide. Conclusions will be drawn regarding which government and employer policies appear to be most effective in reducing work-related inequalities.**

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# NATIONAL ABORIGINAL DAY

June 21, 2003. - Notes from *A Special Insider*



See:

<http://www.athabasca.ca/insider/2003/June20-03.htm> to read the entire issue of this special insider, in tribute to National Aboriginal Day

## In Memoriam

"This edition of the Insider is dedicated to our friend and colleague, Lori Oddson. We think of Lori as the epitome of professionalism, and as a quiet and dedicated Aboriginal Rights advocate. She practiced what she knew, and lived what she believed. She supported us as an advisory committee member, human rights advocate and friend. Most of all, Lori taught us how to integrate our political beliefs into our practical lives and served as an example of the effectiveness and efficiency of anti-racist thinkers who constantly search for ways to live together in peace." - *The Centre for World Indigenous Knowledge and Research at AU*

**In the special edition - these stories and more:**

## **And Justice For All? ... Aboriginal Peoples in the Canadian justice system - By Priscilla Campeau**

*"Two police officers who abandoned an Aboriginal man on the outskirts of Saskatoon on a freezing cold night have been sentenced to eight months in jail. Ken Munson and Dan Hachen were convicted of unlawful confinement earlier this year. The Crown had asked for a minimum one-year sentence. The maximum penalty is 10 years. Judge Eugene Scheibel cited the fact that both men were facing financial ruin as reasons for the lighter sentence. Both men lost their jobs and their pensions after the incident..."*

## **Certificate program aims to address Canadian Aboriginal policing needs - By Sharon Hobden**

The first graduating class of the new Aboriginal Police Studies certificate program at Grant MacEwan College 'hit the streets' May 2003. Developed one year ago in response to various stakeholder groups and a growing demand for Aboriginal police members everywhere, the program seeks to address the needs and trends experienced by Canadian police services...

## **Anti-racism and Anti-colonialism in an Institutional Context - By Tracey Lindberg**

*This has been a hard year. Leaving my job and attending school for a year was supposed to be an educational experience, and it has been. However, most of the lessons I have learned have been hard ones and few have been in the classroom. For the most part, I have been learning to look beyond the individual to the collective (in terms of racism, understanding, and responsibility).*

*We know from experience that when individuals harbour racially biased and stereotypical beliefs and act on them, individuals are acting in a racist manner. We also know that education is a key weapon in the war*

*against racism. Take, for example, the racially charged situation I found myself in recently. This month I had the misfortune to be seated by a group of teenagers who, in a ten-minute word strip, pulled out every racialized notion of Aboriginal people and splattered the walls with them.*

*You know the stereotypes. I will not dignify them by repeating them.*

*I will however, repeat my response, because this is the silenced voice which I do not always possess and many do not hear enough...*

## **A reflection on the Blue Quills First Nations College (BQFNC) Cultural Camp June 2-6 - By Janice Makokis**

*Blue Quills First Nations College 2nd Annual Cultural Camp was held June 2-6. Through activities, workshops, inspiring speeches and traditional Cree ceremony and celebration, people of all ages and generations came together to provide a shared experience in a natural traditional setting; to provide knowledge and understanding of the historical colonization process and its impact on Aboriginal Peoples; to provide emotional and spiritual healing opportunities that would empower community members and encourage them along their healing journey; and to reconnect with traditional values and teachings in a cultural yet educational context. Janice Makokis had the opportunity to attend the Cultural Camp June 3 and 4, and here reflects on the experience...*

**The Voice extends belated Aboriginal Day best wishes to AU's many aboriginal students, and members of our affiliated northern schools.**



**University of the Arctic**

## **UArctic Comes Full Circle**

**(Akureyri, Iceland) April 9, 2003** – Almost exactly four years since the second meeting of the then *Interim* Council of the University of the Arctic, the membership of this unique network of northern institutions and educational organizations came together again in Akureyri, Iceland. With the eight new members added in this meeting, UArctic's membership has grown from twenty to nearly sixty in that time. Murmansk Humanities Institute (Russia), the University of Oulu (Finland), St Mary's University (Canada), the Canadian Polar Commission (Canada), Pomor State University (Russia), Iceland University of Education (Iceland), Technical Institute of Yakutsk State University (Russia), and University of Regina (Canada) bring the strength and resources of their institutions into the UArctic network.

At the meeting in here in 1999, a small group of academics sat around a coffee table and discussed the plans for a new kind of academic program in the North: the Bachelor of Circumpolar Studies (BCS). Earlier this week, the successors of that first group met to assess the online pilot of the second BCS course to be delivered, *Contemporary Issues of the Circumpolar World*, due to be completed by the end of April. Twenty-five students at eight sites around the circumpolar North are now enrolled in the online version of the course. Additionally, a second group of fifteen students are taking the course in a traditional classroom setting at the University of Northern British Columbia, in Prince George, Canada. Plans for the final stage of the BCS, the advanced emphasis, are now being developed by partnerships of UArctic members...

Athabasca University is a member of the UArctic Coalition. To read the rest of this release, see: <http://www.uarctic.org/documents/GENPRL13.pdf>

# NEWS FROM AU

Contributed by *The Insider*

## AU graduate appointed to COC

Christian Farstad, financial officer, chartered financial analyst and AU graduate, has been named Director, Athletic Relations for the Canadian Olympic Committee. **Read more [here](#).**

## AU Profs Get Piece of Funding Pie

AU's Drs. Oscar Lin and Peter Holt have each been named to receive some of \$325 million in new research funds from the National Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada [NSERC]. **Read more [here](#).**



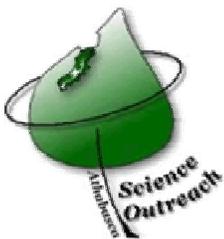
## Humidity at AU

*Greg Wiens, Director of Facilities and Services at Athabasca University, concludes a three-part series devoted to helping us understand humidity, where it comes from, and how it affects comfort levels and personal health issues at AU.*

The main Athabasca University campus building, located at 1 University Drive in Athabasca is supplied tempered ventilation air by nine separate systems. Each air system contains an evaporative system, also known as an adiabatic system, to increase the humidity level of the supplied air. The relative humidity of the ventilation air supply is continuously computer monitored and adjusted to achieve the supply air relative humidity set point during normal building hours.

As the outside temperature changes, so does the relative humidity set point for inside ventilation air. For example, the relative humidity set point at +10 C (and warmer) is 40 per cent, at -1C is 35 per cent and at -30 C (and colder) is 20 per cent. These humidity set points allow for providing an increase in the indoor air relative humidity while protecting both the building and its occupants from the serious long-term risks associated with high humidity levels inappropriate for the building design and local weather conditions.

This ability to increase the relative humidity levels is important, as the naturally occurring outdoor humidity levels in the colder winter periods tend to be low, sometimes in the single digits. Heating this almost dry outside air, without the continuous addition of water to achieve the indoor humidity set point, would make the air very dry indeed. Most buildings in Athabasca and area do not provide humidification to the inside air thus their typical indoor relative humidity in the winter tend to be less than 10 per cent during the colder winter months.



## Science Outreach continues this summer

- Submitted by Science Outreach - Athabasca

Science can be both fun and educational. This summer Science Outreach – Athabasca is helping to offer four science events for children. This is great for working parents, and for an additional \$5 you can your child can be dropped off at 8 am and picked up at 5 pm at Athabasca Landing Pool. Ask for details when you register with Athabasca Regional Recreation.

## Jr. Paleontology Camp

**Date:** Monday, July 7, 2003

**Place:** Grassland School

**Time:** 10 am - 2 pm

**Ages:** 6-12 years

**Price:** \$12; Register with Athabasca Recreation, 4705 - 49 Avenue, 675-2967

Become a junior paleontologist for the day! Join Indiana Kirsten on an adventure in Grassland to learn how to “Walk with the Dinosaurs.” Enjoy a scavenger hunt, check out some real fossils and dinosaur bones, and go through a Science-In-A-Crate exhibit from Science Alberta Foundation.

Children should bring a lunch, including a drink, shoes that can get wet, a jacket (we go out rain or shine), hat, and sunscreen.

### **Discover Crawly Critters**

**Date: Tuesday, July 8, 2003**

**Place: Muskeg Creek Chalet, Athabasca**

**Time: 9 am – 3 pm**

**Ages: 6-12**

**Price: \$10; Register with Athabasca Recreation, 4705 - 49 Avenue, 675-2967**

Join biologists, Robert Holmberg and Lisa Carter, to examine the critters that inhabit Muskeg Creek and the surrounding area. We will look at earthworms and insects with hand lenses and microscopes, have a nature scavenger hunt and go through a Science-In-A-Crate exhibit from Science Alberta Foundation.

Children should bring a lunch, including a drink, shoes that can get wet, a jacket (we go out rain or shine), hat, and sunscreen.

### **Mad Chemist ... Learn to Have Fun with Chemistry**

**Date: Wednesday, July 9, 2003**

**Place: Muskeg Creek Chalet, Athabasca**

**Time: 9 am – 3 pm**

**Ages: 6-12 years**

**Price: \$10; Register with Athabasca Recreation, 4705 - 49 Avenue, 675-2967**

Learn to have “Fun with Chemistry.” Join chemist, Dietmar Kennepohl and scientist, Lisa Carter, in a fun-filled day of “gold panning,” and discovering the mysteries of chemistry.

Children should bring a lunch, including a drink, shoes that can get wet, a jacket (we go out rain or shine), hat, and sunscreen.

### **Athabasca Butterfly Count**

**Date: Saturday, July 12, 2003**

**Time: 1 – 4 pm**

**Location: Muskeg Creek Chalet, 56 Street and 49 Avenue, Athabasca**

**Ages: All ages (children younger than 12 must be accompanied by an adult)**

**Fee: Free**

Come and learn something about butterflies, and contribute to our knowledge of what species occur here and in what numbers. For more information, check out our current events section on our web page: <http://scienceoutreach.ab.ca>.

Bring walking shoes, water bottle, and sun protection. Optional items include butterfly book, binoculars, and an insect net (some provided).

*Science Outreach – Athabasca promotes science activities in the greater Athabasca area and science research throughout the Athabasca River Basin. Contact Linda Lindballe, Science Outreach – Athabasca Coordinator at 675-6653, or e-mail [sc-outreach.coord@athabascau.ca](mailto:sc-outreach.coord@athabascau.ca). You may also send a message snail mail to Science Outreach – Athabasca, Centre for Science, Athabasca University, Athabasca, AB, T9S 3A3. Check out our Web-page at <http://scienceoutreach.ab.ca>.*

# SCHOLARSHIPS & AWARDS

For scholarships available through the Athabasca University Student's Union, see the AUSU website at [www.ausu.org](http://www.ausu.org)



## FELLOWSHIPS FOR FULL-TIME STUDIES IN FRENCH (300)

**Value:** \$1000

**DEADLINE:** November 15, 2003

**Administrator:** Alberta Scholarship Programs

**Notes:** Applicants must be plan to enrol full-time in a post-secondary program of at least one semester in length. At least three courses per semester must be taught in French. Based on academic achievement during the previous academic year. See the Web site for more details.

### Contact Information:

Alberta Scholarship Program  
9940 - 106 Street, 9th Floor, P.O. Box 28000, Station Main  
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 4R4

Phone: (780) 427-8640

Fax: (780) 422-4516

Web Site: <http://www.alberta-learning.ab.ca/scholarships>

E-mail: [heritage@gov.ab.ca](mailto:heritage@gov.ab.ca)

Application Address:

<http://www.alis.gov.ab.ca/scholarships/forms.asp>

## WEYERHAEUSER ABORIGINAL SCHOLARSHIP

**Value:** \$1000

**DEADLINE:** n/s

**Administrator:** n/s

**Notes:** Awarded to aboriginal students who are pursuing careers in business and science.

### Contact Information:

National Aboriginal Achievement Awards Secretariat  
70 Yorkville Avenue, Suite 33A  
Toronto, Ontario M5R 1B9

Phone: (416) 926-0775

Fax: (416) 926-7554

Toll Free: (800) 329-9780

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

E-mail: [naaa@naaf.ca](mailto:naaa@naaf.ca)

An anti-smoking advertisement with a green background. At the top, a lit cigarette is shown with smoke rising from it. The smoke forms a trail of red circles that leads to a red telephone receiver. A red circle contains the text "Want to STOP smoking?". Below the telephone, the text "It's easier with HELP." is written. At the bottom, a red banner contains the text "Smoker's Help Line 1-866-33AADAC". Logos for AADAC and Alberta Health First are at the bottom right.

Want to **STOP** smoking?

It's easier with **HELP.**

Smoker's Help Line **1-866-33AADAC**

**AADAC**  
Alberta Aboriginal Development Agency of the Government of Alberta

alberta  
HEALTH FIRST

[www.aadac.com](http://www.aadac.com)

# CONFERENCE CONNECTIONS

## Contributed By AU's *The Insider*



- **IASTED** - "International Conference on Computers and Advanced Technology" - June 30 - July 2, 2003 - Rhodes, Greece. Details: <http://www.iasted.org/conferences/2003/greece/cate.htm>
- **Distance Teaching & Learning Conference:** - 19th annual - "Working Smarter - Building on Success" - Aug. 13-15, 2003 - Madison, Wisconsin. Details: <http://www.uwex.edu/disted/conference>
- **AU Learning Services Conference** - October 3 & 4, 2003 - Edmonton, Crowne Plaza Chateau Lacombe. Details to follow.

## OTHER CONFERENCES

- **CAPDHHE [Canadian Association for the Prevention of Discrimination and Harassment in Higher Education]** - To be held in Calgary, October 29 - November 1, 2003. <http://www.capdhhe.org/conference2/index.htm>
- **Teaching In A Digital Age** - the impact of new communication technologies on teaching and pedagogy. l'Université de Montréal. <http://profetic.org:16080/coll2003/> [French only]
- **China Conference 2003** - Edinburgh July 2003. China Conference Info welcomes people from the commercial and educational sector involved in E-Learning, Distance Learning, Training, HR, IT Training, Localisation, ICT or Knowledge Management, to this world first international event. China represents the biggest target market for these sectors ever and is still largely untapped.

Entering the Chinese market place is a complex move. This conference provides a forum on exchange of market information not only on product and service requirements, but on specialist market entrance requirements. If you are working in any of these sectors you should seriously consider entering this event in your diary. The conference will be patronised by professionals from, China, the USA, Europe and Australia and represents the largest collective gathering of these specialists centred around the Chinese market ever!

For more information:

<http://www.chinaconferenceinfo.com>

## Summer Symposium on Health Ethics

Wednesday 6 August 2003

The John Dossetor Health Ethics Centre (JDHEC) invites you to attend a one-day symposium on health ethics. This course will offer a series of presentations by JDHEC Faculty that will challenge you to examine and explore the essential place of ethics in health care practice.

### For more information:

Website [www.ualberta.ca/bioethics](http://www.ualberta.ca/bioethics)

Email [Dossetor.Centre@ualberta.ca](mailto:Dossetor.Centre@ualberta.ca)

Phone 780-492-6676

**Know of an educational conference that is not on this list? Contact [voice@ausu.org](mailto:voice@ausu.org) with the details and we'll list it in Conference Connections.**



## **CLASSIFIEDS:**

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**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  
2nd Floor, 10030-107th Street, Edmonton, AB T5J 3E4  
800.788.9041 ext. 3413

**Editor In Chief** Tamra Ross Low

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