
CONTENTS

WELCOME TO THE VOICE PDF

The Voice interactive Table of Contents allows you to click a story title to jump to an article. Clicking the bottom-right corner of any page returns you here. Some ads and graphics are also links.

Features

Editorial 3

Articles

In Conversation With: The Fast Romantics..... 4

Eras in Education: Instant Modernization in Turkey 6

Columns

The Mindful Bard..... 9

From Where I Sit 11

Sister Aurora..... 12

Dear Barb 13

AUSU This Month 14

News and Events

Click of the Wrist 8

International News Desk 17

Education News 18

Did You Know?: Parliamentary Primer 19

From the Readers

Letters to the Editor 2

The Voice
Magazine

www.voicemagazine.org

1200, 10011 109th
Street NW
Edmonton AB
T5J 3S8

800.788.9041 ext. 2905

Email
voice@voicemagazine.org

Publisher
AU Students' Union

Editor-In-Chief
Tamra Ross

Managing Editor
Sandra Livingston

Regular Contributors
Hazel Anaka
John Buhler
Christina M. Frey
Barbara Godin
Bethany Tynes
Wanda Waterman St.
Louis

The Voice is published
every Friday in HTML
and PDF format

To subscribe for weekly
email reminders as
each issue is posted,
see the 'subscribe' link
on *The Voice* front
page

The Voice does not
share its subscriber list
with anyone

Special thanks to
Athabasca University's
The Insider for its
frequent contributions

© 2008 by *The Voice*

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

We love to hear from you! Send your questions and comments to voice@voicemagazine.org, and please indicate if we may publish your letter.



EDITORIAL

Sandra Livingston



On the Agenda

Last month, the online encyclopedia Wikipedia announced a major change to its editing policy. From now on, any revisions to the pages of living people must be approved by editors before the updates will be published.

It's a fundamental shift away from the wide-open, sometimes chaotic approach of allowing anyone to freely edit articles. And in spite of what the critics say, it's about time.

On the surface, unfettered editorial access seems like a good idea. It provides a central location for the free exchange of information, a vast repository of knowledge that anyone can add to without the interference of some omnipotent corporate or political agenda.

In many ways, the concept has an appeal similar to citizen journalism. With more media outlets being consolidated under fewer owners, it's important for a wide array of voices to be heard.

Nice thought, except that free-for-all editing makes a very large—and very mistaken—assumption: that the average person doesn't have an agenda as deep and wide as any politician or corporation out there.

It's not a trait we usually ascribe to the average person on the street. The popular imagery, especially in this age of corporate monopolies, is that the citizenry represents the untainted voice of truth. But Wikipedia (and the Internet in general) remind us otherwise.

Take, for instance, the growing problem of vandalism to Wikipedia entries. Maybe it's the result of a personal grievance, or someone wanting to push an opposing viewpoint. Or maybe a misleading or malicious entry is simply the result of boredom. Either way, it boils down to the same thing. We all carry a set of beliefs and objectives, and most of us are blithely certain that ours are right. Or at least more right than the other guy's.

So what's wrong with throwing those opinions out there? Nothing, except when they're presented as fact. And that's where Wikipedia is right to insist on some editorial control. A blog is one thing; it's clearly understood that it's one person's opinion. But the term "encyclopedia" carries with it a measure of authority.

It also comes with a certain responsibility. There's always the chance that certain facts will be highlighted and others left out, but blatantly misstating the facts can land a publisher in legal hot water. Consequences ensure at least a certain degree of accuracy. With anonymous online entries, though, people feel free to cite such "facts" as Tony Blair's middle name being "Whoop-de-do."

And with over 65 million people getting information from Wikipedia every month, those are the kinds of "facts" we can do without.

IN CONVERSATION WITH . . .

Wanda Waterman St. Louis

**The Fast Romantics**

The Fast Romantics are a Calgary rock band whose style is one part British invasion, one part indie rock, and eight parts tight, infectious fervour. They recently put out a self-titled debut album (available on iTunes) and are currently touring Canada.

Lyricist and lead singer Matthew Angus recently spoke with Wanda Waterman St. Louis; the following are notes from their conversation.

Where Did That Sound Come From?

Most of us were brought up on mod rock—the Beatles, the Kinks, and those kinds of bands. Then later on The Clash really hit us. Three of us were in a band before called The Mood and that band was really serious because we were really into Radiohead. I still am; I love Radiohead and I think we all do but back then we really wanted to *be* Radiohead, really brooding and melancholy.

After we made a record we took a break and looked at it and thought, *That's not really us*. So we redeveloped ourselves.

I think at one point we had a real aversion to being pop. The word *pop* really scared us. Then we realized there's nothing wrong with the word pop and we wanted to take the word back. Pop used to mean The Beatles.

Rehearsals

I don't think there is a typical rehearsal. They last a long time and often alcohol is involved. It's not like it's a big party; we want to be sure that we get good. There've been times that we've been pretty loose. We've got a nice balance between getting down to business and working out songs and just jamming out funny songs that never see the light of day.

If you're a real musician you realize you're going to be improving until the day you're dead. We just thank God every day that we can do this, because there's really nothing better than getting together for four hours a day and making music.

Our Audience

Our audience is everyone. Yesterday where we played there were 90-year-old couples sitting and eating sandwiches. We expected them to plug their ears and leave but they stuck around the whole time. We get a lot of kids, even underage. The twenties indie scene is really supportive, and their parents even like us. At our shows there are adults with real jobs. It's kind of cool.

We don't seem to offend anybody. They say if you're making good art you have to be offending somebody, and I know for a fact that a lot of people hate us, but there's no one demographic that hates us.

Musical Pasts

My mother's a piano teacher and she had me into piano lessons at about age three. I'm self-taught on the guitar. Everyone in the band has a really good musical background.

My mom was constantly playing *Abbey Road*. And she had that single "Hey Jude" that I would play over and over. My parents were also into The Rolling Stones, Bob Dylan. The four of us all have very musical parents and grew up hearing music all the time.

Musical Writing

I'm the lyricist for the group. I write tons. At one point I was even trying to write books. Matt and I are both really into fiction and I think that plays a role in our creativity.



Kurt Vonnegut is a huge influence on both of us. We were thinking of calling our band The Pluto Gang, which is a reference from *Breakfast of Champions*. Vonnegut wrote in a very musical way, I think. He wasn't one of those over-the-top, over-intelligent writers. He had this really human narrative.

They say artists are supposed to be these dark, moody, whiny people. But we find that when we're in our depressive, dark moments it's really hard to write music. The best condition for creativity is happiness. Even our darker songs are probably written while we're really happy, because then it's easy to create and we don't come off sounding contrived.

Right-handed Lefty

I wouldn't call myself religious but I'm pretty political. Most of my views are leftist and people label me a communist. But sometimes I'll have a view and go, *Holy crap, that's really right-wing of me*. I don't think everyone should be cut and dried.

ERAS IN EDUCATION

Jason Sullivan



Instant Modernization: Atatürk's Grand Vision for Turkey

It happens in one of any number of classes: Math, French, English, or Art. A student pipes up: "Aww, when am I ever gonna use *this*?" Then a debate spins into galactic proportions, as students and their teacher discuss the relative merits of the material being taught.

Of course, perceptions are not the same as reality and many of us now admit that learning to draw our running shoes, or conjugate French verbs, in fact taught us to

think in ways that were applicable in the real world. We were learning how to learn, learning to express ourselves using the mode of the dominant society. Although the material itself may be obscure, the method is largely the same be it applied to binomial nomenclature or double-entry accounting. For students in Turkey during the 1920s the education system was revamped so rapidly that students and parents alike must have been utterly bewildered. Leading the charge toward modernization was a statesman named Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. His belief in secular education revolutionized Turkish schooling.

As with many leaders throughout history, Atatürk rose to prominence by way of the military. During WWI, when Turkey led the Islamic Ottoman Empire, part of the German-led Central Powers, he spearheaded a successful defence of the waterways (called the Dardanelles) between Turkey and Greece. The Allies wanted to open up this maritime channel for trade so they could access Russian grain.

As the war ended and the Ottoman Empire dissolved, it became clear that Allied countries wanted to control Turkey. Atatürk concluded that his country "must give up its ideas of empire and confrontation with Russia, and become a national state in Asia Minor, instead of trying to be a regional empire." To this end he opposed the Islamic caliphate that tied Turkey to the rest of the Muslim world. For Atatürk, Western-style democracy was the way forward rather than traditional Islamic theocracy.

Taking advantage of his popularity as a wartime hero, Atatürk set out to Westernize the education system of his country. He stated that "We must liberate our concepts of justice, our laws and our legal institutions from the bonds which, even though they are incompatible with the needs of our century, still hold a tight grip on us." Legal and civil laws were also remade in the image of European models; Koranic law was no longer the basis of Turkish justice.

Instead of being run by mosques, schools were to be run by the state. The Turkish written language was remade using a Westernized alphabet and the Koran was translated into Turkish, a move that strict Islamists considered to be beyond reproach. This turn toward the more developed Western European way of learning would allow students to see the world in a broader way and, Atatürk hoped, strengthen Turkish society as a whole.

He summarized his position with the words "today, our most important and most productive task is the national education [unification and modernization] affairs The liberation of a nation is only achieved through this way." Atatürk hoped to "win a victory in the field of education" by raising the literacy rate

from 10 per cent so that Turkey would be comparable to Europe. To a great extent his reforms succeeded: today 87 per cent of Turks can read and write, with that number pegged at 94 per cent for men.

Women in particular benefited from Atatürk's education reforms. Under the Islamist caliphate, girls had received little or no instruction in reading and writing, instead being prepared for domestic labour. Atatürk famously declared that "everything we see on Earth is the product of women," and stated that "there was no logical explanation for the political disenfranchisement of women. Any hesitation and negative mentality on this subject is nothing more than a fading social phenomenon of the past." These were incredibly strong words for a leader in a culture like Turkey's during the first part of the 20th century. Unlike Europe, which had experienced a slow yet steady liberalization since the Age of Enlightenment during the 1700s, the Islamic world had remained tradition-bound and unflinchingly opposed to gender equality.

It is interesting to note that as an individual, Atatürk may have held a personal interest in his reforms. After all, people rarely support positions they will not themselves benefit from, even if only in conscience. He was a heavy drinker, which Muslims oppose, and had only a short-lived marriage. In fact, Atatürk may have been gay. Recently, a Belgium school textbook promoting tolerance of sexualities listed him as one of many great leaders of history who were gay or bisexual. The resulting uproar in Turkey led to the website YouTube being banned and was reminiscent of a similar controversy in neighbouring Greece when a movie portrayed the Greek hero Alexander the Great as a homosexual.

From a sociological perspective, the educational reforms bring to mind the works of a theorist named Immanuel Wallerstein. Wallerstein's theory of "World Systems" outlines how, unlike in Classical times when empires such as that of the Romans were held together by military might, the modern world is one in which economic systems are the basis of power.

Wallerstein called this a "world empire" system. As part of an ever-expanding capitalist order (albeit tempered by the then just-emerging Soviet Union) Atatürk's Turkey was what Wallerstein called a "periphery" country, characterized by raw materials to be shipped to more developed industrial countries in Western Europe and North America.

In order to become more closely linked to these "core" countries, and thus to make more money for the Turkish business class (bourgeoisie), Atatürk knew that he had to have a citizenry educated in the ways of the core nations. To become closely linked with the dominant "world economy" people needed education that would allow them to fill more valued positions in the division of labour.

Wallerstein's theories are Marxian and based on the idea that all progress brings with it conflict. In the case of core versus periphery nations, conflict occurs because "the key to capitalism lies in a core dominated by a free labor market for skilled workers and a coercive labor market for less skilled workers in peripheral

In order to become more closely linked to these "core" countries, and thus to make more money for the Turkish business class (bourgeoisie), Atatürk knew that he had to have a citizenry educated in the ways of the core nations.



areas." Being a proud nationalist, Atatürk wished for his people to occupy the skilled jobs and be part of a skilled workforce; these skills required modern education.

Westernized workers also required a sense of Western fashion and style and so it was that in one of his defining moments, Atatürk donned a panama hat while visiting a particularly conservative village. This was to "demonstrate that the hat was the headgear of civilized nations." Atatürk meant business; in 1934 a law called "The Law Relating to Prohibited Garments" was passed, making the Western-style business suit mandatory.

Today Turkey is a respected and important part of the world economy. For instance, its cherry exports were so bountiful this year that orchardists in the BC interior noticed an effect on global prices. This is an inevitable outcome of a country becoming a vital part of the "world economy" and is just as Wallerstein's theory predicts.

Of course, students in 1920s classrooms would have had a hard time believing that they were ever going to need all the strange, seemingly irrelevant material they were suddenly being taught.

CLICK OF THE WRIST – Say Cheese

From Edam to Gouda to plain old cheddar, every cheese is somebody's favourite. Unless, of course, it's Vieux Boulogne, a French cheese with the dubious honour of being the smelliest in the world. This week, we take a look at some new ways to enjoy that humble standby—cheese.

Gloucestershire Cheese Rolling

Stand at the top of a long, steep hill with up to 20 other competitors. Wait for a double Gloucester cheese to be set on its way down the hill. Hurtle after the cheese at reckless speeds, likely incurring injuries. The prize? The cheese. The event? The annual Gloucestershire Cheese Roll. I'm already in training for 2010.

Cheddar Art

If you thought playing with cheese strings was creative, wait until you see the sculptures created by Sarah Kaufmann, also known as the Cheese Lady. It takes an average of six to 12 hours to create one of these artworks using just a small sculpting tool.

Cheese

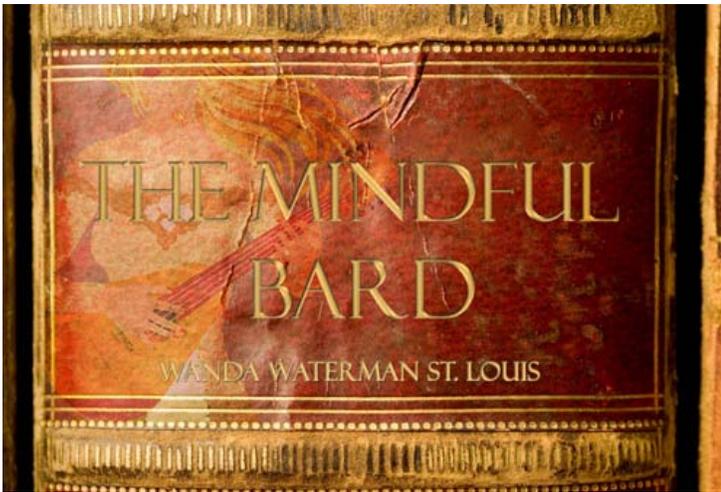
With the millions of websites out there, you just knew there had to be one devoted to cheese. Cheese.com has cheese supplies, cheese recipes, a cheese bookstore—and a database with details on 670 cheeses.

Cheese Cigarette Filter

That's right—back in 1966, an inventor actually patented a cigarette filter made of cheese. According to this site, the magic behind Patent No. 3,234,948 is the filter of "grated cheese preferably mixed with charcoal."

Virgin Mary Grilled Cheese

Not many people would be able to sell a partially eaten grilled cheese sandwich on eBay, especially when the sandwich is 10 years old. This one went for an astonishing \$28,000 though. Apparently, the toasted treat featured an image of the Virgin Mary on it.



Books, Music, and Film to Wake Up Your Muse and Help You Change the World

DVD: *Heaven on Earth*

Theatrical Release: 2008

DVD Release: 2009

Starring: Preity Zinta, Balinder Johal, Vansh Bhardwaj

Director: Deepa Mehta

A Hamilton Mehta Production in co-production

with The National Film Board of Canada

A Myth Within a Fable Within an Actuality

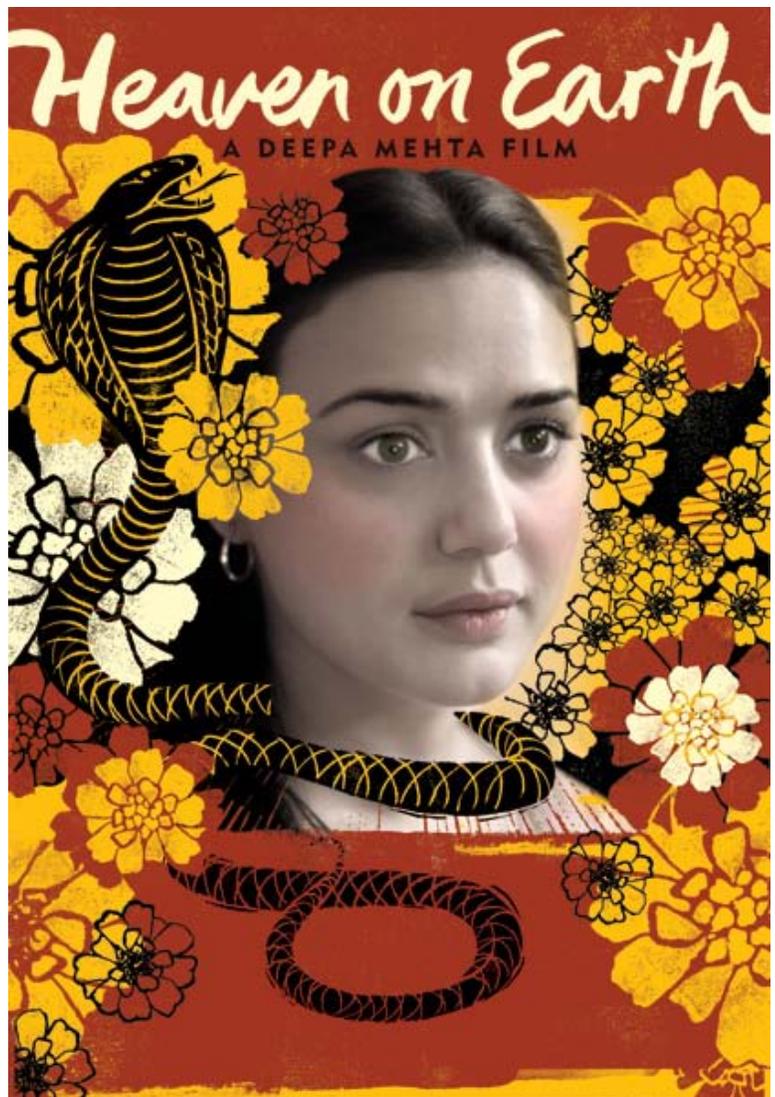
"The demon locks Chand up in his castle. It starts to rain for seven days and seven nights. The sea rises and enters the castle, breaking down the castle door. The water carries with it a black cobra. The snake has a golden crown on his head. The snake says to Chand, 'Come Chand, I'll take you home to your mother.'"

Heaven on Earth

A group of beautifully dressed women in a large room in India is joyfully singing, clapping, and dancing. Chand sits among them, a lovely, dimpled girl brimming with happiness, self-confidence, and love.

Chand, still composed and self-assured, takes a plane to Canada to meet her husband, Rocky, and his family for the first time. She is warmly welcomed in a series of beautiful (and obviously expensive) ceremonies ushering her into her new family in Brampton, Ontario. The romance and beauty of these scenes prepare the heart for the jarring scenes that follow.

After a brief honeymoon during which the consummation of the marriage is interrupted by Chand's whiny, jealous mother-in-law and Chand receives the first of many blows, Chand is forced to work in a factory, her wages paid directly to her husband. She has no money of her own and must quietly put up with the



insults of her mother-in-law, who seems to take pleasure in watching her son beat his young wife, seeing it as solid evidence that Mummy comes first.

Bhardwaj subtly and brilliantly reveals the repressed anger Rocky feels toward his overbearing and utterly selfish mother, anger that he releases on his new bride. The character Rocky is a clear representation of how domestic violence correlates with greed, sexism, exploitation, colonialism, and racism.

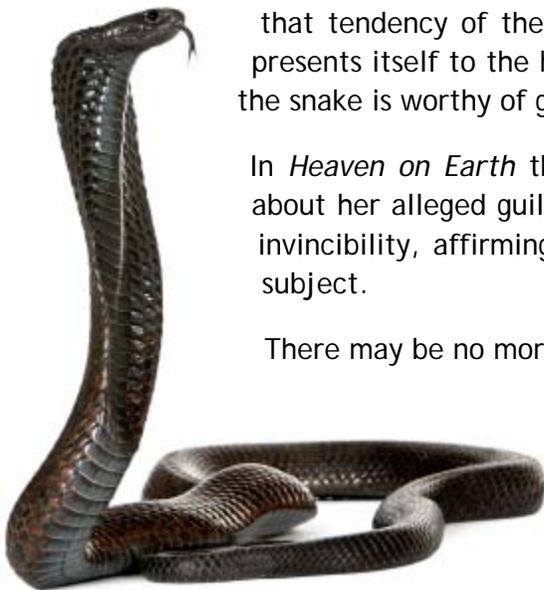
The close camera work, vivid cinematography, and Zinta's sensitive portrayal of Chand lend an immediacy and realism to the story. But nearly halfway through the story primitive, mythic elements emerge as if to challenge the horror of Chand's reality. A shape-shifting cobra soon takes a central role in the story.

The story of the shape-shifting serpent that appears malevolent but eventually reveals itself as the personification of love itself can be found in several world mythologies, notably the Zuni story The Serpent of the Sea. In this myth the river god Kolowissi takes revenge on a hyper-clean maiden who dirties his water with her constant bathing. While she is grieving having to leave her family to go live with a monster, the serpent is transformed into a handsome and loving prince who ushers her into paradise.

Carl Jung pointed out the frequency with which snakes appear in hero tales and in paintings and sculptures of heroes. The snake in this context can be seen as a symbol of the hero's shadow side, that tendency of the hero to believe himself above ethical considerations. The snake presents itself to the hero, and the test is not to deny its power; only the hero who lifts the snake is worthy of glory.

In *Heaven on Earth* the heroine bravely brandishes the snake as she speaks the truth about her alleged guilt. Like snake-handling Baptists, Chand thus proclaims her spiritual invincibility, affirming a refusal to acquiesce to the moral degradation to which she is subject.

There may be no more fitting portrait of the abused woman as hero.



Heaven on Earth manifests 11 of The Mindful Bard's criteria for films well worth seeing: 1) it is authentic, original, and delightful; 2) it confronts existing injustices; 3) it renews my enthusiasm for positive social action; 4) it gives me tools enabling me to respond with compassion and efficacy to the suffering around me; 5) it makes me want to be a better artist; 6) it

gives me tools that help me be a better artist; 7) it displays an engagement with and compassionate response to suffering; 8) it inspires an awareness of the sanctity of creation; 9) it is about attainment of the true self; 10) it stimulates my mind; and 11) it poses and admirably responds to questions which have a direct bearing on my view of existence.

The Bard could use some help scouting out new material. If you discover any books, compact disks, or movies which came out in the last twelve months and which you think fit the Bard's criteria, please drop a line to bard@voicemagazine.org. If I agree with your recommendation, I'll thank you online.

The character Rocky is a clear representation of how domestic violence correlates with greed, sexism, exploitation, colonialism, and racism.



*From
Where
I Sit*
Hazel Anaka

Rendezvous with a Friend

I'm too cynical to use Facebook despite the recent pressure on the company by Canada's privacy commissioner. I can't see the value in Twitter. Who gives a damn about what you're doing as you're doing it? I never texted and frankly can't be bothered learning.

Cripes, I'm starting to sound like that old codger Andy Rooney. I guess I just remember how it used to be. Nostalgia aside, how it used to be wasn't all bad. There is no turning back the clock. Scholars and historians will judge the long-term implications of all this.

I guess there needs to be balance. A cherry-picking of the best features of the best technology. A rejection of the stuff that is mindless or risky or a substitute for better behaviours.

Some days I'm not even so sure about email, though I use it daily. A lot of crap still slips through despite firewalls and virus protection programs. It can be an insidious waste of time, especially in the workplace. It has been the undoing of some people's careers or political aspirations.

You can't beat it as a low-cost, efficient way of staying in touch with colleagues, family, and friends. You can send or reply at your convenience, whether that's 6:00 a.m. or 11:30 p.m. You can organize your thoughts and your message. You have a paper trail, so to speak, of who said what when.

It's through email that I've kept in touch with a dear friend who moved away eight years ago. At its worst, communication was no more than forwarding some funny or sentimental piece that ended up in either inbox. At its best, we recently used a flurry of emails to plan a rendezvous in Red Deer. She drove from Airdrie. I did my drive in two legs so I wouldn't have to wake up at the crack of dawn.

The other day we met downtown for the deluxe spa pedicure. With lowered lights, soothing music, and a private room Shelly and I were pampered.

Scented exfoliation (I picked citrus, Shelly chose lavender) followed the whirlpool soak. A foot and leg massage was invigorating. And who doesn't love a paraffin wrap while sipping vanilla chai tea? Finally I emerged with a deep, deep almost brown burgundy polish that's great for the fall. Shelly chose the very popular deep purple. Now let's hope there's some sandal weather left in September.

With the aestheticians present Shelly and I used this time to catch up on lighter topics like kids and vacations. A two-and-a-half hour lunch at Original Joes afforded the privacy to exchange gifts and talk about more delicate matters like surgeries, past and impending. To talk about those issues closer to the heart.

What a gift to see an old friend and pick up exactly where we left off. Email helped make it happen. Email will help us stay in more meaningful touch until next time. And that, my lovelies, is a good thing, from where I sit.

Sister Aurora

There's a rainbow dancing in the sky tonight, and I think I'm gonna go outside . . .

#10

Sonja, did you pick your English essay topic yet?



Not really.



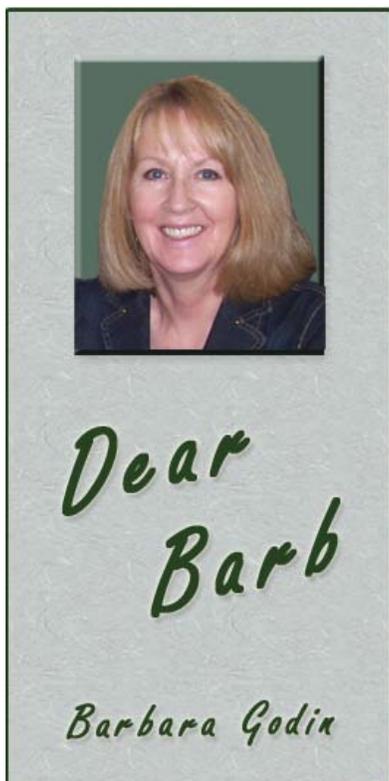
Do it on the goddess Aurora!



You won't be hanging with your friends on a Friday night, you'll be doing research!



Uh, yeah...



Lack of Intimacy Could Signal Deeper Problems

Dear Barb:

I can't believe I'm writing to you, but I'm not sure what I should do. I have been dating my girlfriend for about a year. Everything seems to be wonderful except for our intimate life. She is happy to be intimate once a week, whereas I do not feel this is enough for me. I love her very much and I feel this is a way to express my love for her.

When I talk to her about it she says she does not feel we need to be sexually intimate more than once a week. I feel she is being selfish and not willing to consider my feelings. My biggest fear is wondering what our relationship will be like in five years. I know sexual intimacy is usually more frequent early in relationships and begins to slow down as the relationship progresses. At this rate our intimate life could become very sparse and I know I would not be happy with that.

I don't want to end this relationship, but I don't know what else to do. Help!

Ken

Hi, Ken, thanks for the great question. It is very insightful of you to look ahead and see that your present situation may cause future difficulties. Not very many people are brave enough to do this.

You said everything else in your relationship is wonderful. However, as you know sexual intimacy is a very important part of any relationship. Often, if two individuals do not agree on the frequency of sexual relations, this can become a major issue that leads to all kinds of problems. For example, one party can be left feeling undesirable and possibly exploring other avenues to get their needs met. You need to do something before this situation erupts into something far worse.

As you say you have discussed this with your girlfriend, but she seems unwilling to compromise. Therefore I would suggest your girlfriend speak to her family doctor to make sure there is not a physical reason, such as hormone imbalance or any number of other conditions that can affect a person's libido. If everything checks out then possibly you both could see a counsellor or sex therapist. There may be a psychological reason for her lack of desire.

If neither of these avenues provides any answers, you may have to accept that you simply do not share the same need or desire for sexual intimacy. At this point you will have to ask yourself if this relationship is going to be fulfilling enough. Are there enough good aspects to compensate for what's lacking? You are the only one who can answer this question, although a counsellor may help you to find the answer.

Email your questions to voice@voicemagazine.org. Some submissions may be edited for length or to protect confidentiality; your real name and location will never be printed. This column is for entertainment only. The author is not a professional counsellor and this column is not intended to take the place of professional advice.

AUSU THIS MONTH



Annual AGM Held

As you probably already know from the AGM Report put out by the *Voice*, AUSU held its annual general meeting on March 23, 2009.

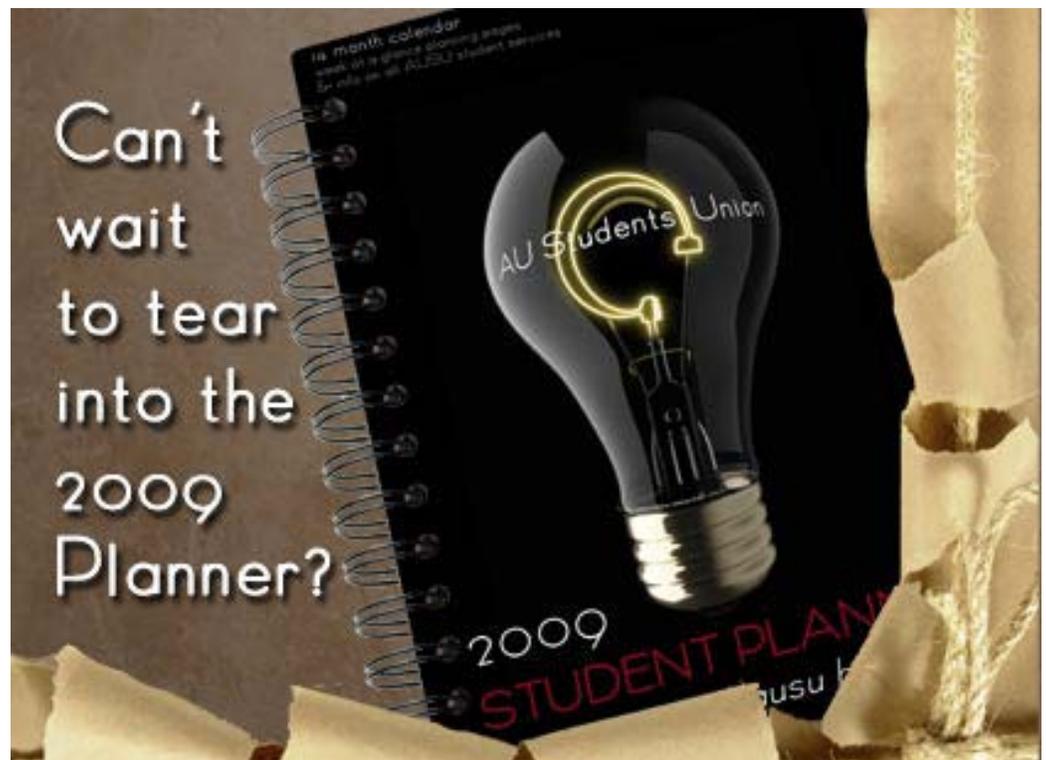
In that meeting a number of important revisions to the definitions of AUSU membership occurred, to make sure that the Councillors you elect are able to represent you during General Meetings and so that if you're a student in an AU collaborative undergrad program, you'll still be counted as an AUSU member even during a term that doesn't have any AUSU courses scheduled.

Also, our fees were changed from being \$8, \$16, or \$24 per course depending on the number of credits, to being a flat \$3 per credit, an increase of a dollar per course for most students. With this extra money, AUSU should be able to begin moving forward with a lot of desired programs that have been held up due to our staffing not being as big as our ambitions.

Also at the AGM, some good discussion was held with respect to email accounts, an issue we know a lot of you are concerned about, and we'll keep working with the university to see if a reasonable solution can be found among all of the priority issues AU needs to deal with.

Media Committee Started

Council has approved the terms of reference for the new media committee. This group, including your *Voice* editor, will be working hard to deliver new multimedia content to you on a regular basis. Our hope is to bring forward a more engaging, interactive AUSU, one that can help you get everything you want out of your education.



AU Fees Increasing

On March 27, the AUGC approved the new fees that will come into effect in September 2009. The bottom line is you'll be paying an additional \$29 per 3-credit course, including the increase to the AUSU fees. This includes an \$18 increase to base tuition and a \$10 increase to the Learning Resources fee. AUSU has noted

concerns with the university continuing to increase fees by the maximum allowable by Alberta legislation, but has agreed that lower quality service is not a viable alternative.

More concerning is the increase to the Learning Resources fee. AUSU will continue to press for details on how this fee relates to the prices the university has to pay for your textbooks and online materials.

au.world Closes

AUSU has noted the closing of the au.world publication with sadness, and has brought this to the governing council of AU. In its place, AU has begun a new magazine called *AU Open* which, rather than being strictly student focussed, contains a mix of stories for alumni, investors, and students. We have strong hopes that AU will increase the focus of this new magazine to be at least as relevant to current students as the old au.world was.

2009 AUSU Handbook/Planners

Members are snapping up our 2009 AUSU Handbook/Planner. Now in full colour, it has more course tracking pages, brief guides to the citation styles you'll need for your essays at AU, and of course, all the important AU dates and addresses that you need to know. You can order your own copy by going to <http://www.ausu.org/handbook/index.php>



SmartDraw Program Continues

If you haven't yet, you might want to download a copy of SmartDraw. AUSU has purchased a licence agreement to supply the award-winning SmartDraw software to all AUSU members (current undergraduate students). To access this deal and find out more, visit the front page of our website.

SmartDraw allows you to create a wide range of graphics for your assignments and submit them electronically in a Word file. You can also place your graphics in Excel or PowerPoint files, or export them as TIF, GIF, or JPEG files to make a web graphic or even a logo.

Just a few of the graphics you can make include Venn diagrams, genetics charts, graphs, organizational and flow charts, and Gantt charts.

For any course that requires charts that cannot be easily created in Word or Excel, this should be a real time saver and make it easier to submit all portions of an assignment by email.

Remember, though, that you should always check with your tutor to find out if there is a specific format he or she prefers. Your tutor does not have to have SmartDraw to view these graphics, however. Installations under this program are good for one year. The package includes both the Standard and Health Care editions of SmartDraw.

Merchandise Still for Sale

We still have some locks and memory keys available for sale. Both of these were designed with ease of mailing in mind, which means they're small enough to be easily stored pretty much anywhere.

The wristband USB key is a unique way to carry around your assignments, online materials, and even emails while you're on the go.

With a 1 gigabyte capacity, it can even handle a good chunk of your music collection, and the design means you no longer have to worry about losing it.

The *Voice* memory key has less capacity (512 MB) but the dark, flip-top design is classy enough to accompany you anywhere.

In addition, we have recently purchased some steel water bottles. With all the concerns about BPA in clear plastic, the decision was made to go stainless steel. Cheaper and more environmentally friendly than purchasing plastic bottles of water, fill up your AUSU bottle to keep thirst away no matter where you're travelling.

AUSU Lock Loan Program

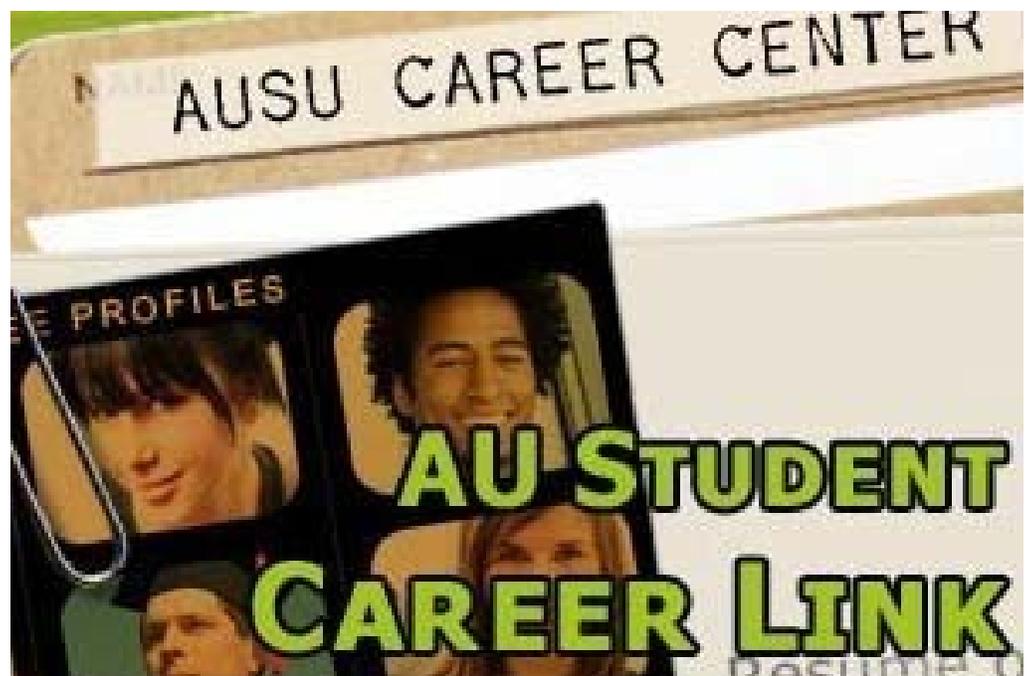
Still running, and still popular, the lock loan program can allow you to rest easy knowing your valuables are safe if you're taking an exam at the Calgary or Edmonton campus. The locks can be set to any combination, and are loaned to people without any deposit, but we ask that you please remember to reset them to 0-0-0 before returning them so that we can continue this program.

Employment Site is Here!

Many of you will already have seen the link to our new employment site on the front page, and while there are not a lot of employers in evidence yet, it's a great opportunity to get your resume, skills, and talents in there.

The Personnel Department is busily working on finding employers who could use your unique abilities as a distance education student.

Be sure yours are available to get the early opportunities!



INTERNATIONAL NEWS DESK



At Home: Gun registry data given to polling firm

Personal information from Canada's gun registry has been given to a polling firm—and some gun owners are unhappy about that.

As the [CBC](#) reports, the RCMP shared personal information from the national gun registry with Ekos Research. The data was used to conduct a research study; specifically, "to gauge gun owners' satisfaction with the RCMP's firearms program."

But when gun owners started getting phone call from Ekos, many were upset to learn that their personal details had gone beyond their gun registry file.

Greg Farrant, of the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters, noted to reporters that the move went well beyond public safety.

"What the heck a polling firm is doing with information about names, addresses and phone numbers of people who own firearms in this country so they can contact them for a poll is beyond me," he said.

Police explained the move by saying that the polling firm was acting "as an extension of the RCMP," and that personal data will either be returned to police or destroyed when Ekos is done with it.

However, concerns remain about just how secure the private details in the gun registry really are, with observers noting that the data could be a tempting target for criminals.

In Foreign News: Australia sees doubling of boys' obesity rates

In Australia, the number of "simply overweight" boys did not rise between 1995 and 2007. But the proportion of boys considered clinically obese has doubled for the same period, and that has health experts calling for action.

The [Sydney Morning Herald](#) reports that boys' obesity rates rose to 13 per cent (in the 13 to 17 age group) and 8 per cent for those aged five to 12. The statistics were released in a quarterly report from the Bureau of Statistics. Obesity levels for girls during the same period remained unchanged.

As many as 25 per cent of children across the nation are overweight or obese, according to the National Health Survey, which means they have a higher risk of Type 2 diabetes, cancer, and heart disease.

To control the rising obesity levels in boys, some experts say a broadly focused approach is needed and that other methods, "such as counselling by GPs or after-school sports groups," were not effective. One suggestion has been to ban TV ads for junk food during certain hours. The National Preventative Health Taskforce, a federal initiative, recommends banning ads for "high-calorie foods low in nutritional value at times when children were likely to be watching."

Preventing obesity in children, both in Australia and elsewhere, could have a profound effect on health care costs in the future. According to the World Health Organization, there are currently "more than 1 billion overweight adults" worldwide, with at least 300 million considered obese.

EDUCATION NEWS

Alexandria Eldridge



Students want to change Alberta's energy reputation

Alberta Solar Decathlon Project to be showcased in Washington, D.C. and at 2010 Olympics

EDMONTON (CUP) - A solar home designed and built by Calgary students has been accepted into next month's Solar Decathlon competition in Washington, D.C. and will be showcased at the 2010 Olympic games in Vancouver.

A team of 100 students, faculty, and staff from four different post-secondary institutions came together to work on the Alberta Solar Decathlon Project, in which they constructed a

fully functional 800 square foot solar home. The team consists of students from the University of Calgary, Mount Royal University, the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT) Polytechnic, and the Alberta College of Art and Design (ACAD).

The project manager, Matt Beck, is a graduate student in the faculty of environmental design at the University of Calgary. He said that the solar home will help to show that Alberta can be an innovator in alternative energy, not just a haven for fossil fuels.

"From an Albertan perspective, one of the real reasons that we as a team got involved in this was the opportunity to tell a different story. Everybody hears the story of Alberta as an oil and gas leader but we wanted to show that Alberta is a centre for energy excellence," Beck said.

The collaboration between so many students from different disciplines made the project a strong reflection of real life.

"The fact that I get to sit down at table with a business student or a tradesperson from SAIT Polytechnic or an interior designer from Mount Royal or an artist from ACAD and see how they're coming to this project . . . that's how we work in industry," Beck said.

The solar home took over two years to complete. In January 2009, the team learned that the house was accepted into the 2009 Solar Decathlon competition in Washington, D.C., which takes place next month.

The project chair is Mark Blackwell, an undergraduate student in the Haskayne School of Business at the University of Calgary. He said that he was "ecstatic" to learn that the team's project had been accepted.

"Being the first western Canadian team to ever compete in the competition is a huge feat," said Blackwell.

In order to personalize the house, the team incorporated Albertan style elements, such as Rundle stones from Canmore and reclaimed barn wood to highlight Alberta's agricultural history.

“It has a very Alberta feel to it, so we’ve stuck to our heritage there. But at the same time we ensured that we’re showcasing on an international stage what Alberta’s actually doing on the alternative and emerging technology side,” Blackwell stated.

The team is going to get a chance to show off their house to a much bigger market as well—at the 2010 Olympic Games in Vancouver.

“I think it aligns perfectly with the goals and the vision of the Vancouver organizing committee,” said Blackwell. “They have a huge focus this year on showcasing sustainability in all their operations and this house complements that vision.”

Beck commented on the importance of this Olympic showcase for creating public awareness.

“As much as the Solar Decathlon is a great opportunity to build public awareness in Washington, it is not exactly close to home. Vancouver is a lot closer to home and it’s an even bigger international stage,” Beck stated.

Both Blackwell and Beck emphasized that the goal of the project is to show consumers that they can be environmentally savvy and not sacrifice aesthetics, even in Alberta.

“We’re really excited to show people that solar power is something that can be possible here and it can look nice—it’s not just an ugly set of solar panels on a roof. It can be integrated nicely architecturally, coupled with energy efficiency, it can be market-viable,” said Beck.

The team’s progress is updated on www.solabode.ca.

DID YOU KNOW?



Parliamentary Primer

To the average observer, modern politics can seem like a confusing mix of dry-as-dust policies and sensational headlines.

It isn’t always easy to follow the action, but knowing the basics of how the system works can make a big difference. And AU’s Centre for Global and Social Analysis is part of a great online tool that helps.

The Centre is part of the Parliamentary Democracy project, an initiative meant “to foster knowledge and a better understanding of the history, principles and practices of the Westminster model of parliamentary democracy.”

It’s a good general primer but there are plenty of extra resources too, including self-tests and links to other online info.

CLASSIFIEDS

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

THE VOICE

1200, 10011 109th Street NW, Edmonton, AB T5J 3S8 -- Ph: 800.788.9041 ext. 2905 - Fax: 780.497.7003 attn: Voice Editor

Publisher Athabasca University Students' Union
Editor-In-Chief Tamra Ross
Managing Editor Sandra Livingston

Regular Columnists Hazel Anaka, John Buhler, Christina M. Frey, Barbara Godin,
Bethany Tynes, Wanda Waterman St. Louis

www.voicemagazine.org

The Voice is published every Friday in html and pdf format

Contact *The Voice* at voice@voicemagazine.org

To receive a weekly email announcing each issue, see the 'subscribe' link on *The Voice* front page. *The Voice* does not share its subscriber list. Special thanks to Athabasca University's *The Insider* for its contributions