

THE VOICE

MAGAZINE
Vol 18 Iss 29 2010-07-23

Mind games

Inspiration strikes

Musical Pleasures

A star is born

Magical Mushrooms?

Kombucha and cancer

Plus:

*The Mindful Bard, Sister Aurora,
From Where I Sit, and much more ...*



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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.



BATTLING YOUR MUSE

Maxie van Roye



Writing coaches advise their students to gently and deliberately facilitate the flow of ideas. We're encouraged to maintain a level of openness to inspiration, to cultivate our surroundings so that they'll bear rich fruit. To handle inspiration with care. To "fondle our muse," so to speak.

Apparently, they haven't met *my* writing Muse. She needs a firm hand, not kid gloves. I've long suspected that I'm not equal to the task.

When I first began writing, I assumed that the Muse and I would maintain a certain professional relationship. My job would be to write, and hers to provide the story behind

the story. She would remain my devoted assistant, the inspiration behind my big plans, the hardworking backbone that would give my writing strength and stamina.

Unfortunately, my Muse is highly ambitious. From very early on, she made it clear who should be running the show. I was ten typing fingers doomed to anonymity; any talent was her exclusive domain.

Witness, for example, this article. I started out on an entirely different tack, but the Muse refused to entertain my wishes, and began directing the piece as she herself saw fit. Now normally, a little bit of inspiration is never a bad thing. But what do you do when inspiration tries to overthrow common sense, personal boundaries, and the strictures of time, place, and duty?

Well, you can try to throw up fortifications. You can seek out boring environments, like the kitchen table (the Muse starts your mind thinking about articles on the condition of your refrigerator) or the bedroom (the Muse reminds you of the benefits of sleep).

Then you try to shake her off your tail by bringing your writing elsewhere. The coffee shop, the outdoors, or the art gallery: these are hotbeds of inspiration on their own. In such an environment, surely no muse is needed to unlock the wells of creativity deep inside!

My Muse disagrees.

I set up my laptop amidst the sunny bustle and cooling breezes of an outdoor coffee shop. Surely, here, at last, self-made inspiration will hit? But it appears as though I've failed again. Far from being subdued, the Muse is in her element. People, places, sights, sounds: how can she contain her excitement at the literary possibilities? Becoming frustrated by the blinding montage of thoughts and ideas thrown at me by my Muse, I move my laptop to the sterility of a doctor's waiting room.

My mind is at peace. I think that I've finally prevailed, and miserably contemplate a life spent writing in doctors' offices and hospitals while I settle down to work.

Then the receptionist picks up the telephone, and a broad smile spreads over the Muse's face. It pains me to admit that my Muse is a nosy gossip, but it's true; she simply lives for others' stories, and the more dramatic, the better. My work is left neglected as she eagerly listens to the details of the receptionist's recent divorce. By the time the Muse decides to mind her own business and let my creativity flow, I'm

called back to the examination room, where the Muse stores away medical knowledge that I don't even understand.

If I ever write a novel about a recently divorced woman with strange medical issues, I'm covered. I suppose I should be grateful, but I'm not so inclined, particularly as the deadline looms and the Muse is focusing on Chapter 1 of her latest foray into fiction instead of the article I'm supposed to be writing.

It gets worse. The Muse is fickle, fragile, and prone to sulks. If I neglect or insult her, she'll give me the silent treatment, and my computer screen will remain empty while my frustration level elevates and the Muse snickers over my shoulder at my predicament. Experts call it "writer's block," but it's more like "writer's blank." For a delicate creature, the Muse is very talented in the art of revenge.

We certainly have our problems. Despite our differences, though, I've secretly grown to enjoy the vigorous back-and-forth arguments that form the core of our writing sessions. And although she usually navigates my reluctant tap-tapping fingers down vague paths and along uncharted waters, the Muse's sense of direction is keen. I might disagree with the route she's chosen, or even the destination, but I have to hand it to her. For all her inconsistencies and mind games, the Muse seems to know what she wants and where she's going with it. She got me to the end of this article, didn't she?

CLICK OF THE WRIST – Off to the Beach

Ocean, sea, lake, or even river: the beach becomes a favourite, cooling destination as July wears on. This week's links take us beachside for fun in the sun, sand, and water.

Sunbather

It's always a dilemma: work on the tan, or stay sun-safe while outdoors? The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's report on sun safety, ultraviolet light, and the role of the ozone layer just might sway your decision.

Castles in the Sand

Even adults can't resist the artistic call of wet sand, a pail, and basic carving tools. But professional sand sculptors across the world take their craft very seriously—and produce incredible results. This blog post showcases some of their truly breathtaking work.

Beach Body

Got beach body envy? This series of exercises, designed by trainer Craig Ballantyne, is ideal for those who want to sculpt a better beach body in a short period of time.

Beach Scene

If you can't physically visit the beach, a good film is your next best bet. Here, the *Daily Telegraph* has compiled a countdown list of the 50 best movie beach scenes. Break out the umbrella and shades, and enjoy.



HEALTH MATTERS

Katie D'Souza

**Kombucha**

“Dear Dr. Katie,

A co-worker gave me a jar of kombucha tea and it looks pretty weird ... almost like it’s not safe to drink! What is kombucha? She said it’s a mushroom with amazing anti-cancer benefits. Is this really true?”

Sarah

Dear Sarah,

Recently, there has been much interest in kombucha in the natural health world.

And you’re right, it really does look weird! This is because kombucha is actually a fermented product, a conglomeration of acetic acid bacteria and yeast. From a scientific standpoint, it’s not a true mushroom, although it’s often referred to as one.

Essentially, the original kombucha culture, called the “mother culture,” is grown in a black or green tea base, covered with a cloth, and allowed to ferment. The acetic acid bacteria in the culture ferments in the same manner as the apple cider vinegar that you use in cooking. After one to two weeks, depending on the temperature of the fermentation area, the kombucha culture will be mature. Once it’s mature, you can sample off a “daughter culture,” and either consume it or use it to start a new culture. The daughter culture is probably what your co-worker gave you.

So where does this unusual drink come from? The history of kombucha is uncertain. Some claim it originated in Russia, as a fermented tea drink similar to the Russian *kvas*. Others say it was first made in China, years before the popularity of regular black tea. (Note that the Japanese also have a tea called kombucha, but it’s entirely different; it’s made from seaweed.) Regardless, it was traditionally believed that those who drank kombucha had the chance to live forever, or at least live longer.

What’s it made of? Scientific analysis has revealed that the main ingredient is acetic acid (vinegar), complemented by a host of other organic acids, including malic acid (found in apples), oxalic acid (found in rhubarb), enzymes, and B vitamins.

Kombucha’s health flag began flying when people noticed changes in liver and kidney function after drinking the tea. Why? On a daily basis, your liver is busy filtering your blood and eliminating toxins by breaking down hormones, drugs, and other chemicals. Studies show that kombucha contains glucaric acid (also found in many fruits and vegetables), which helps the body break down the by-products that the liver produces during the detoxification process.

What about the anti-cancer claims? True, glucaric acid is being currently studied for its potential anti-cancer benefits. However, it's important to note that glucaric acid is being studied on its own, as an independent compound. Because the glucaric acid found in kombucha is not being studied, there's no way of knowing whether the amount of the acid in the fermented tea is enough to even affect the body, let alone prevent cancer.

Currently, there's simply not enough published research on kombucha, glucaric acid, and cancer to be able to say anything definite.

Is it safe to drink? Probably. If the culture has been grown properly, there seem to be few documented negative health effects. One study did claim liver problems in rodents following kombucha supplementation, but other studies didn't find the same results. Unfortunately, kombucha is a natural health remedy that hasn't been studied accurately, or in enough detail. However, since it is a fermented food, and if the kombucha sample is uncontaminated, the fact that the drink is fermented may have a positive effect on digestive issues, such as gas and bloating.

A warning, though: the culture must be grown properly. Otherwise, you need to be concerned about contamination from mould and other spores. If you attempt to grow your own kombucha culture from your co-worker's, you need to ensure that the pH of the liquid remains acidic (below 4.6). Less acidity (in other words, a higher pH number) means there is a greater chance of contamination spoiling your kombucha.

Kombucha that is spoiled will often be black, green, or blue in colour and may have mould spots on the surface.

Stay tuned to discover the next current health fad ... and, of course, whether you should incorporate it into your lifestyle!

There's no way of knowing whether the amount of [glucaric] acid in [kombucha] is enough to ... prevent cancer.



Dr. Katie D'Souza, B.Sc., ND

Katie D'Souza is an AU graduate and a licensed naturopathic doctor. She currently lives in Ontario.

The information contained in this article is for personal interest only; it is not intended for diagnosis or treatment of any condition. Readers are always encouraged to seek the professional advice of a licensed physician or qualified health care practitioner for personal health or medical conditions.

IN CONVERSATION WITH . . .

Wanda Waterman St. Louis

Janet Klein, Part II

Janet Klein has amassed an international cult following by singing little-known songs of the 1910s, '20s, and '30s in period dress with the mannerisms of a Betty Boop with an art degree. Her repertoire includes Yiddish tunes, Tin Pan Alley, early hot jazz, ragtime, vaudeville, and novelty tunes. Janet recently took the time to chat with Wanda Waterman St. Louis about her band, her custom ukulele, and how she found her true calling. See the first part of this interview [here](#).



My Own Curious Pleasures

I came up through school set on becoming a painter or fashion designer. When I went to UCLA, I was in the art department, but I spent a lot of time in the music library there with the headphones on. I found some great treasures. I was a very enthusiastic student and just couldn't believe my great luck in being able to poke around all the libraries of departments I wasn't even in; I just wanted to soak it all up.

This was before the days of the Internet, so you really had to work hard to find things. I used to find things in the record library like German records, and I would call the state librarian to get translations. They were so helpful; I could ask any darn question and they'd call me back!

But I was only collecting things for my own curious pleasures; I hardly had anyone to sit down and listen to these recordings with, so I just kept them to myself.

Polishing Small Gems

During my time at UCLA, I dabbled with performance art. I felt like I had a little bit of the ham in me, and had to experiment with things a little bit. I wanted to be a chanteuse, but I figured that would never happen. So I decided that I would try poetry recitation, because the lyrics of the old songs were so inspiring. I started writing poetry and I came up with my little presentation: I'd have candelabra and wear really fancy dresses and recite my poetry. And people liked it!

Little by little, I added musical aspects to my act. My favourite thing about poetry is that it's all about thinking small. I wasn't about writing something that was bigger than myself; I wanted to write something that I could polish up like a little. I wanted to be sure of what I wanted to say and how I wanted to say it. Short and sweet.

I added a little bit of triangle here and there, and then I picked up the ukulele. And that got me into a lot of trouble. People told me, *Janet, your life is not going to be the same.*

Developing a Persona

I grew up thinking that you were an artist because that's what you had to do, and it was only after I came to LA that I saw how the celebrity went with it, and realized all the things that you had to do to have a career.

I wrestled with that; I was never very good about talking about my artwork. But when I discovered the wonderful world of LA poetry, it was really inspiring. I felt at ease with the poetry world and really loved the attitude of people there.

Assembling the Parlor Boys

I was playing some of my collected songs on my ukulele. One of my first great hits was a song called “Love is a Boomerang.” I had a recording of it by Edith Wilson, who is probably my polar opposite in the land of vocal stylings. It was a really cute song, and I sang it here and there and people always asked me to do it again.

So I learned a few more of these songs and worked a song or two into my poetry readings. Along the way, I met this fantastic record collector who introduced me to Brad Kay, a great ragtime pianist. Brad had a little trio that he was working with at the time, and I asked him to play some music at one of my poetry readings.

That was probably the first night when I read my poetry and added a couple of songs on the ukulele from the 1910s and '20s. It felt pretty great. I loved to share these great musicians, and my motto at that time was *Even if I blow it, even if I'm not so hot, I feel like I'm doing a public service by sharing some of these great songs I've been collecting.*

A Ukulele Unlike Any Other

Then I met a luthier in Santa Cruz who was making these beautiful ukuleles. He had a black lacquer ukulele in his studio, and I couldn't get over how wonderful it was. I realized that I could actually afford a custom ukulele! So I went home and started drawing my fantasy ukulele. If I could afford a custom ukulele, I was going to have something unlike anybody else's ukulele.

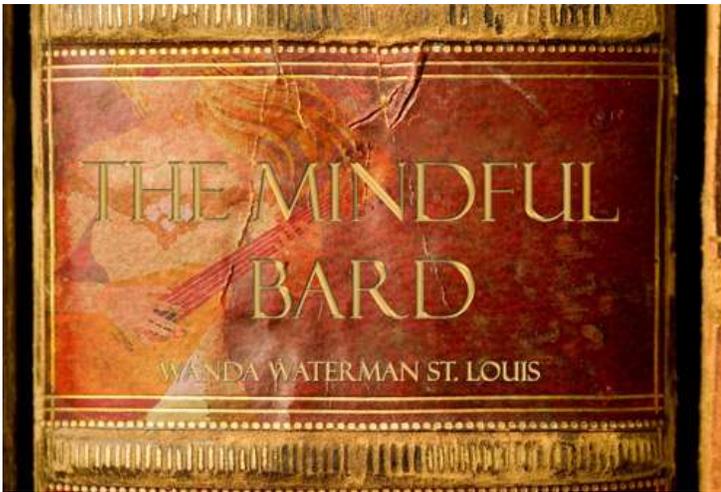
I had been to a wonderful museum of musical instruments in Europe, where I saw gorgeous things from the baroque period: mandolins and lutes with all kinds of inlay work. I had never seen a ukulele that had inlay work—was that even doable? I sent my design to the luthier and he said, “I can do that!” When I got it, it was March, 1996.

A Heaven of the Likeminded

Shortly after that, I got invited to a party. I brought my ukulele, and it turned out to be one of the most extraordinary evenings I've ever had. I somehow ended up in a room full of illustrators who did work in period style. The host was a Betty Boop expert, and he'd written books on the history of graphic design. I told him I'd been collecting these beautiful sound sheets from the 1920s, and I opened up my trunk and showed him these sheets. And not only was he familiar with all this music, but he started to croon away...

To be continued...





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

Book: Lorcan Roche, *The Companion*

Publisher: Europa Editions, 2010

Waltzing With Despair When Truth Cuts In

“I got to the point of feeling a sort of secret abnormal, despicable enjoyment in returning home to my corner on some disgusting Petersburg night, acutely conscious that that day I had committed a loathsome action again, that what was done could never be undone, and secretly,

inwardly gnawing, gnawing at myself for it, tearing and consuming myself till at last the bitterness turned into a sort of shameful accursed sweetness, and at last—into positive real enjoyment!”

Fyodor Dostoevsky, *Notes from Underground*

According to the archetype so well fleshed out in Irish film and literature, the Irish are mostly one of two things: they’re either so sweet sugar wouldn’t melt in their mouths, or they’re so bitter and angry that they’re spitting nails. And some are both at once.

Take our man Trevor, for instance, an Irishman gifted with sensitive insights, a rage that sometimes debilitates him, a volcanic but poetically experienced lust, and a deliciously macabre sense of humour that’s as honest as it is politically incorrect.

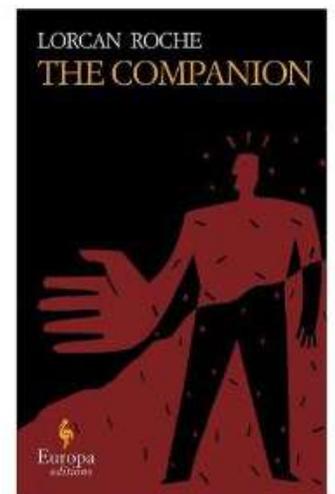
Like Dostoevsky’s hero in *Notes from Underground*, Trevor is an existential hero who prefers raw, ragged truth to candy-coated contentment. He bravely faces down the illusions that can keep us functioning as human beings but which always turn hostile, or which at the very least keep us from experiencing life fully.

Following the death of his mother, Trevor repeatedly finds himself in the position of caring for the sick and dying. Like many of us, he’s doomed to repeat the first great hurt of his life until his heart is strong enough and wise enough to make sense of it.

After a string of nowhere jobs in which he can’t seem to realize that his lack of career success is due to a refusal to toe the line, Trevor lands a position in New York City as a companion to a dying young man from a wealthy family. Ed suffers from skin hunger, the longing experienced by the severely disabled to be touched tenderly, as human beings. Trevor gets this, as he has seen evidence of this in former clients.

In examining via Trevor the marginalization and resulting angst of those with severe physical disabilities, Roche illuminates the human condition in a highly original way, delineating our unbelievable vulnerability.

There is a beautiful passage about a homeless Muslim man—a former medical student and one more victim of the spiritual wasteland of western affluence—who offers Trevor a priceless insight into himself and the very nature of being.



Roche juxtaposes rich metaphor and belly laughs, soul-piercing tenderness and joyous debauchery. He removes the oppressiveness from our morally bankrupt society by pointing out the hypocrisies of the icons we both cherish and hate and by pointing the way to a radical new experience of life.

This is the first item in Mindful Bard history that has fully manifested *all* of the Bard's criteria, and if I hadn't seen it with my own eyes I'd never have dreamed it possible. Roche has managed to be compassionate but not patronizing, socially conscious but not self-righteous, and has provided a road map to a way of living that involves humility, reverence, and abiding love. And he has achieved this through the creation of a work of art that is beautiful, meaningful, and rational.

The Companion fully manifests all of The Mindful Bard's criteria for books well worth reading: 1) it is authentic, original, and delightful; 2) it confronts, rebukes, or mocks 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 which 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 provides respite from a sick and cruel world, a respite enabling me to renew myself for a return to mindful artistic endeavour; 11) it harmoniously unites art with social action, saving me from both seclusion in an ivory tower and slavery to someone else's political agenda; 12) it stimulates my mind; and 13) it poses and admirably responds to questions which have a direct bearing on my view of existence.

DID YOU KNOW?



MIT OpenCourseWare

If you're seeking supplementary material for your courses, familiarizing yourself with background subjects, or considering studying a new topic for personal enjoyment, you'll be excited to learn about Massachusetts Institute of Technology's ("MIT") OpenCourseWare initiative.

The donations-funded online resource, which is free and requires no registration, includes materials from two thousand courses previously taught at MIT. Course topics range from aeronautical engineering to music and theatre to women's studies—and everything in between. New

courses are constantly being added, and older courses are frequently updated to reflect new studies and information available.

Materials available depend on the course: there are lecture notes, online textbooks, image galleries, and audio and video lectures. Many of the courses also include assignments, quizzes, and exams along with solutions and sample answers for students who want to check their learning progress.

Students can access the courses online, or download the relevant files for offline use (video components must be downloaded separately).

You can't earn credit for courses completed here; MIT OpenCourseware "is not a credit-bearing or degree-granting initiative." However, it is a fantastic resource for teachers, students, graduates, and all those with a love of learning.

Sister Aurora

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

#50

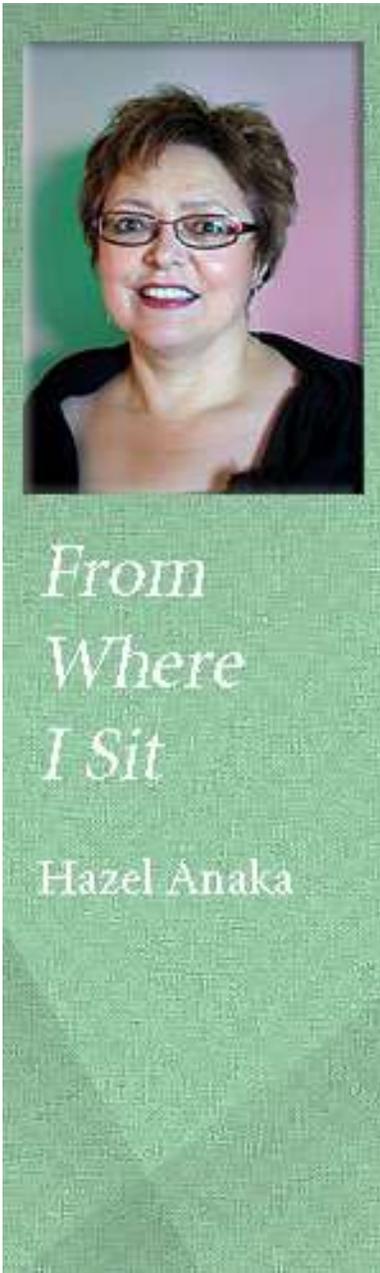
I can't believe you, Lynn!
Get with the tour! We're
plotting a murder here!

Murder? All we're doing is
drowning the person who's
been drowning Bert for
years. It's poetic justice.

Yes.

Poetic justice.





Small Treats

Is there anything quite so lovely as a bowl of freshly-washed cherries? Go ahead; pop one in your mouth. Savour the cool droplets of water on the dark burgundy skin just before your teeth cut into the rich, juicy flesh. Hang on to the stem as your tongue works the treat off the stone. Discard pit and stem. Repeat the process until your tummy hurts. Leave the bright red (and sourer) ones for someone else.

If your regular life doesn't afford you the chance to see wildlife up close, plan to visit a national park or other such area this summer. During a weekend trip to Hinton, we drove the 75 kilometres to Jasper to check out the sights. On the way into the park, we saw two deer soaking in a pool of water, with only their heads visible. At the Jasper Park Lodge, Greg, Carrie, and Hilary went canoeing on the exquisite teal-blue lake it overlooks while Roy and I babysat Grady. The only sign of wildlife at that moment was hundreds of goose droppings, but fortunately they have staff assigned to scoop up the mess.

On the way back out of the park, we came across a herd of mountain goats along the side of the road. The adults looked like they were wearing ancient, moth-eaten coats, but their young were incredibly cute. Dozens started across the highway, thought better of it, and returned. Vehicle traffic backed up in both directions. A female stopped on the shoulder to nurse her young, and we waited. I didn't see any road rage or impatience there; maybe every city needs to import some wildlife to appear each afternoon during rush hour to help us all chill a bit. I also caught a glimpse of some elk, but had no chance to stop for photos.

Summer is likely to include weddings, parties, and family gatherings. Despite all the stories from hell from past shindigs, try looking at that group of relatives with a less-jaundiced eye. Maybe they (we) aren't quite as annoying as we think. Aunts, uncles, cousins, siblings, and parents have all shaped us for better or worse. So unless you completely hate who you are,

some of the credit must be shared with these "peeps." Embrace their weirdness. Appreciate their finer points. Give thanks for their presence.

With time and finances seeming tighter than ever, many Canadians are opting for staycations this year. To help make that reality more palatable and satisfying, it's essential that we look for and cherish the little things, the small treats that sometimes are overlooked or taken for granted: cherries, a brush with nature, and goofy relatives, to name a few. My hope for you is a succession of sweet surprises, unexpected blessings, and reasons to smile this summer and all year long. From fairs to festivals, books to barbecues, road trips to chaises longues, I see something affordable and special awaiting each of us, from where I sit.

AUSU UPDATE



Convocation 2010

AUSU wishes to congratulate this year's graduates, whether attending Convocation in person or by distance. We wish you the best of luck in your future pursuits. You are an inspiration to all AU students!

AUSU Executive Election

AUSU has recently held its internal election for the Executive. We wish to congratulate Barbara Rielly (President), Bethany Tynes (Vice President External and Student Affairs) and Sarah Kertcher (Vice President Finance and Administration) on their election and thank those that ran for their willingness to serve.

Internal elections are being held to determine committee membership and we expect that all will be in place shortly. Our new Council is taking its bearings and has already begun to set the direction for this term.

Student Issues

AUSU recently completed a compilation of reported student issues covering a two year period; all issues were recorded in such a way as to ensure that student information remains protected and private. This effort confirmed what we long suspected; that tutor problems were the single biggest issue faced by our students (56 of 120 complaints).

Outdated course materials and errors in texts continue to be reported as well as were exam issues, slowness of the transfer process, and the scantiness of information in School of Business FAQs. Over that two year period there was a decrease in the number of complaints about student financing, exam request problems, difficulty registering in more than six courses, and materials shortages for courses. Kudos to AU for improving in those areas. Now if we could only get the Tutors' Union to the table . . .

New 2010 AUSU Handbook/Planners – Arrived!

Finally! People have already started receiving the new planners in the mail, and we're currently shipping them out as fast as the orders come in. Full of useful information about AUSU, writing styles, course grading, great finds online for your studies that you may not have known about, as well as having places to write down your phone numbers, keep track of your assignments, and, oh yeah, a year's worth of calendar to plan out your schedule too. We'll give one free to each AUSU member just for the asking.

Remember, though, we only print a limited number of these each year, so when they're gone, they're gone.

Let 'em Know who Represents for You!

AUSU logo mugs, hoodies, USB keys, and much more are all available for sale from our office. Also, used locks can be purchased at half price! Check out our merchandise catalog on our front page. You should

check out our hoodies in particular—made in Canada and 100% bamboo, we're offering them for just barely over our cost, and they're both durable and comfortable.

And if you have new little ones in your family, or know somebody who does, check out our baby onesies. Made by American Apparel, these onesies are high quality and let folks know your kids are growing up to great things as a "Future Graduate of Athabasca U"

AUSU Scheduling Meeting with Tutors' Union – Not really an Update

Some things resist change. We're still waiting for a response from the Tutor's Union as to when we might be able to meet with them to discuss ways that AUSU and the Tutor's Union can work together to ensure that students are getting the contact they need. Unfortunately, they haven't yet replied, so we're stepping up our campaign to get in touch with them. If you want to help, the next time you're talking to your tutor, ask them if they know when the Tutor's Union will meet with AUSU so that the groups can work together on common issues.

Our statistics we've been collecting from the forums and your calls show that issues with tutors - specifically the amount of time taken for marking assignments and exams are your number one concern. Help us help you.

SmartDraw Program Renewal

Some of you who took advantage of our program to provide SmartDraw software to members have been getting notifications that your software license will soon be expiring. Fortunately, AUSU will be continuing this program, so if you haven't already, go to the AUSU home page to download the newest version.

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.



INTERNATIONAL NEWS DESK



At Home: New Island

Erosion by weather and water are expected in Eastern Canada, but sometimes the results are particularly drastic. This was the case at Blooming Point, Prince Edward Island, part of P.E.I. National Park.

As the [CBC](#) reports, local fishing boat captain Randall Clow recently discovered that a new channel had formed, separating approximately two and a half kilometres of sand dunes from the rest of Blooming Point. It's believed that the split was caused by a "wild storm" that blew through the area last winter.

While the creation of the new island seems insignificant, it could have longer-term effects on the local fishing industry. Previously, Blooming Point "almost closed off the mouth of Tracadie Bay," and locals are divided over whether the 100-metre-wide channel is a positive development.

Some will appreciate the easier "access to the Gulf of St. Lawrence." In addition, as Clow told reporters, the improved water flow is "good

for the mussel industry." On the other hand, Clow is concerned that Tracadie Bay has lost some of its protection from winter weather: "But if the sea ice comes in, that can cause a lot of damage," he explained to reporters.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada plans to "monitor" the new channel for possible damage from sand clogs and sea ice.

In Foreign News: When Knights Were Bold

Recently, legend was transformed into reality thanks to a fascinating discovery in northwest England. By combining early literature with modern anthropological techniques, researchers have determined what they believe to be the original location of King Arthur's court.

As the [Daily Mail](#) reports, "Camelot could in fact have been Chester Amphitheatre, a huge stone-and-wood structure capable of holding up to 10,000 people." The evidence: a shrine recently discovered within the amphitheatre's ruins appears to be the same one described by Arthur's first biographer, the sixth-century monk Gildas.

Although Camelot is popularly thought of as its own city, researchers reason that Arthur would "logically" have used the existing Roman structure to "create an imposing and well fortified base."

And what of the Round Table, the place where Arthur's court gathered and created strategies to ward off the Saxon invaders? Historians now believe that the Round Table was not actually a table, but "the circular space inside [the] former Roman amphitheatre." As historian Chris Gidlow told reporters, "The first accounts of the Round Table show it "was a venue for upwards of 1,000 people at a time." In keeping with the legend, historians believe that "the king's regional noblemen would have sat in the central arena's front row."

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THE VOICE

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