

# THE VOICE

MAGAZINE  
Vol 20 Iss 43 2012-11-09

## Incognito

Behind the screen

## Freedom's Run

Giving thanks

## Course Exam

CLST 201

*Plus:  
The Mindful Bard  
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](mailto:voice@voicemagazine.org), and please indicate if we may publish your letter.



## FREEDOM'S RUN

E.L. Farris



I've run 11 marathons, but of all these my favourite is the Marine Corps Marathon (MCM), which begins and ends in northern Virginia. There are many things I love about this race, which we call "the People's Marathon": the crowd support; the beautiful route that winds through our nation's capital and along the Potomac River; the smell and sight of autumn leaves; and the thick, well-constructed finisher shirts and medals. But most of all, I love the men and women who make the marathon possible: the Marines.

From the first mile to the finish line 26.2 miles later, throngs of Marines in uniform handed out water, lemon-lime Gatorade, gel packs, oranges, and even donuts. Marines gave runners high-fives, manned the traffic barricades, screamed "Ooo-rah" at any runner who smiled just right, and performed a multitude of jobs unseen and unnoticed by the 23,515 finishers at this year's race. And yet as much as I appreciate the Marines who stood along the course, even more do I appreciate the ones who are no longer standing there.

At mile five, I looked around and saw a gorgeous woman named Veronica Ortiz Rivera. On her white t-shirt was a picture of her husband, Staff Sgt. Javier Ortiz, who died nearly two years ago in Afghanistan. Veronica didn't see me as she ran past me, but I saw her, and when I got home later I read that she had completed the MCM in her husband's honour.

Veronica Ortiz Rivera was not the only wife, brother, daughter, cousin, relative, or dear friend who trudged along the muddy, brown-green waters of the Potomac in honour of fallen Marines, soldiers, or other members of the armed forces. Indeed, I've often wondered if the date of the MCM is chosen to coincide as closely as possible with Veteran's Day, which always falls within a week or two of the race. Every quarter of a mile or so, I spotted yet another runner honouring a fallen comrade, and each time I saw this tribute, my eyes welled up with tears of gratitude.

Later in the race, I shed a few of these tears. At the halfway point, the course runs parallel to the Potomac River for about three miles, and for some reason there are almost no spectators here. No live ones, that is. But every few yards, we runners came across posters, each bearing the picture of a dead service man or woman. Underneath each photo was written the rank, age, and service branch. There were too many veterans to memorize, but I tried to give a silent "thank you" to each one as I ran past.

Toward the end of this phalanx of the fallen, a woman said aloud, "This is so sad."

Wiping the tears that burned hot on my cold cheeks, I murmured, "It's such an honour to run this race. It's not sad so much as it is beautiful that they gave so much, and now we can do something to remember them by."

She was looking at me funny, so I stopped talking. But before I could get a handle on my emotions, a man with one leg and one arm ran beside me, and then lope-limped past.

How do you thank someone who's given an arm and a leg to keep you safe? I tried, I guess, to do it the one way I know how. I gave that race, and all of those living and dead members of the armed forces, my best effort. After all, my freedom to run this race is something some gave all for, and for that I will always give thanks.

Writer E.L. Farris blogs at [Running from Hell with El](#).

## CLICK OF THE WRIST

## The Write Time

November's begun, which means that **NaNoWriMo**--National Novel Writing Month--is in full swing. Participants in NaNoWriMo commit to completing a 15,000-word short novel in just 30 days, and local and online support groups abound for authors attempting to work within the guidelines. But NaNoWriMo isn't the only place you'll find writers struggling to fit stories into strictures of time, space, and style. Click through these links for a few more unique approaches.

### **Book in a Minute**

If you thought writing a book in 30 days was bad, how about writing one in 60 seconds? This *Sun Sentinel* article describes the work of Dan Hurley, the self-proclaimed "60-second novelist." Several years back, Hurley conceived the notion of interviewing people and writing a quick life story—on the spot—in just one minute. You can read a sample interview and "novel" here.

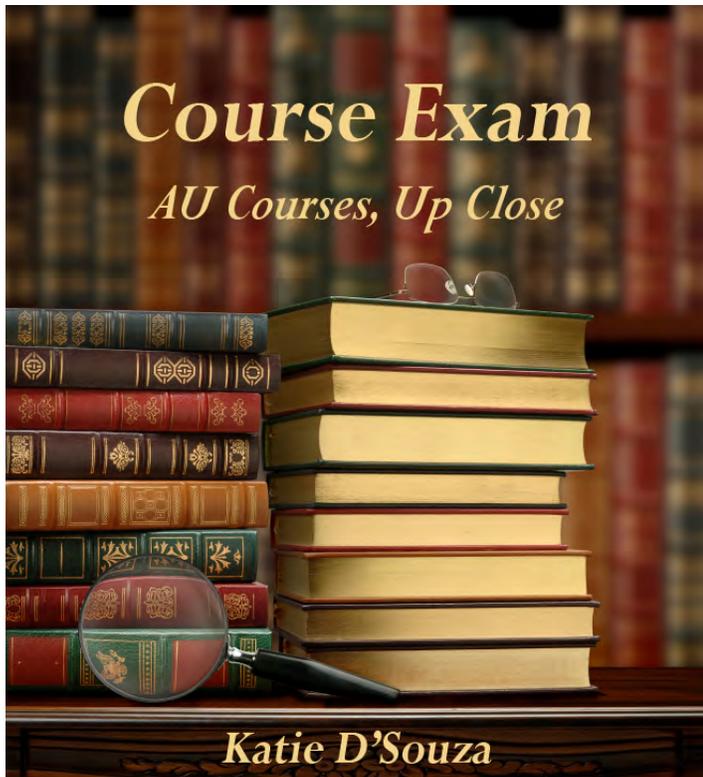
### **Start at the Beginning**

Many writers and professors insist that the opening lines of a book are among the most crucial—how else to draw the reader in and set the tone for the story? Conversely, a terrible opening line like the much-maligned "It was a dark and stormy night . . ." can turn off readers—or, in the case of the Bulwer-Lytton Contest, become an art form in itself. The contest, which has been operating since 1982, awards honours to writers who can craft the worst opening lines in a variety of genres. Be prepared to laugh—and cringe!

### **Word Count**

How short can a story be—yet still tell a tale? Taking a cue from Hemingway's six-word novel ("For sale: baby shoes, never used."), these writers participated in a Wired.com project to create the new short, short fiction. For a slightly longer take, check out the review of [this book](#), which discusses 25-word stories.





## CLST 201: Cultural Studies and Everyday Life

Athabasca University's newest course, **CLST 201: Cultural Studies and Everyday Life**, is about culture and how it affects us (and vice versa, because we can shift culture and it can shift us). Course designer and professor Dr. Patricia Hughes-Fuller says of CLST 201: "[My] intention . . . was to introduce students to the field of cultural studies by having them explore (largely via experience-based learning) the extent to which, in our everyday lives, we are immersed in culture." CLST 201 is interesting, insightful, and an amazing learning experience.

CLST 201 comprises six units. The first, "Culture is Ordinary," "introduces students to the meanings of the terms 'popular' and 'culture' and explains why studying the cultural modalities of everyday life is

an academically relevant activity," says Dr. Hughes-Fuller. Students will learn how culture and its expectations change over time, how society can shape and define culture, and how "gender, ethnicity, and class 'embody' us in ways that are cultural rather than natural."

"Domestic Cultures" is CLST 201's second unit. This unit, says Dr. Hughes-Fuller, focusses on "how we experience culture in that seemingly most private of living spaces, our homes." This involves evaluating our current translation of domestic roles in the light of cultural change.

Unit Three, "Workplace Cultures," "looks more closely at the cultural implications of alterations to the traditional ways that waged or salaried work has been organized and conducted," notes Dr. Hughes-Fuller. Additionally, she continues, this unit "explores how the changing face of the workplace is reflected in popular culture."

CLST 201's fourth unit, "Recreational Cultures," describes how the concepts of "recreation" and "play" have changed over time. Dr. Hughes-Fuller also outlines how "various scholars have analyzed the function(s) these activities have performed in our society." While the unit's "focus is primarily on the cultural significance of sports and games," Dr. Hughes-Fuller notes that the course will "also consider the importance of popular music to the culture(s) of everyday life."

Unit Five, "Culture and Community," explores the interrelatedness of culture and community. Concepts covered in this unit include the following, according to Dr. Hughes-Fuller: "what is a community, how do our communities influence our identities, in what ways do communities function to both include and exclude, and how and why have communities changed over time?"

CLST 201's sixth and final unit, "Culture, Experience, Identity," turns students' thoughts to the cultural political scheme with intriguing questions exploring the role of time and change. Is there an aspect of continuity over time, or is change the mainstay?

Student evaluation in CLST 201 is determined through four assignments. The first and third assignments, worth 25 per cent each, are essay entries in a learning journal that should outline details of the student's learning experience in CLST 201. The second assignment involves a library tutorial with an associated bibliography (worth 15 per cent of the final grade); and the fourth, and final, assignment is a "critical essay that should synthesize ideas drawn from the course materials as well as incorporating some additional library research specific to [the] selected topic," explains Dr. Hughes-Fuller.

CLST 201 course author Dr. Patricia Hughes-Fuller holds a M.Ed. in Intercultural Adult Education and a Ph.D. in Comparative Literature. In addition to CLST 201, she teaches several other AU courses.

For more information, visit the [CLST 201 course page](#).

*"[My] intention . . . was to introduce students to the field of cultural studies by having them explore (largely via experience-based learning) the extent to which, in our everyday lives, we are immersed in culture."*

*CLST 201 course author Dr. Patricia Hughes-Fuller*

## DID YOU KNOW?

## Purdue OWL



As the end of the semester approaches, odds are there's a research paper brewing at the back of your mind. Stumped on the mechanics of composition? Got a grammar or usage question? Need help with a citation?

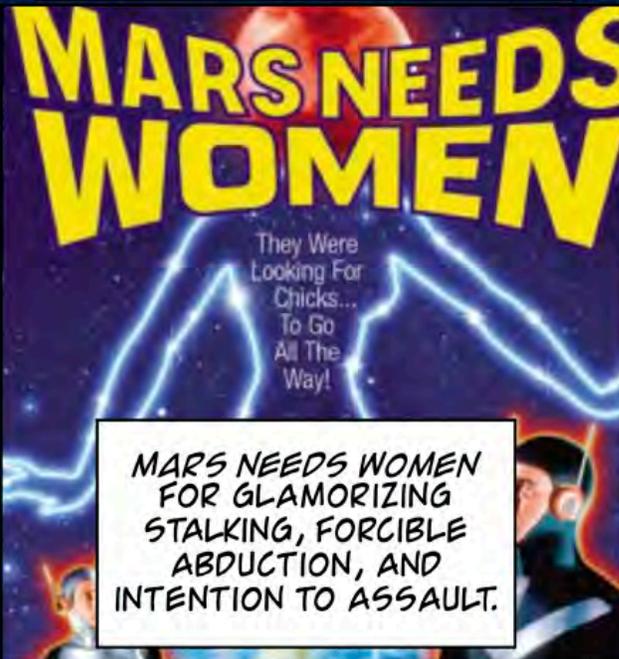
Whatever your writing-related dilemma, you're sure to find help at [Purdue's Online Writing Lab \(OWL\)](#), a fantastic resource that's freely available online. In addition to general tips, advice, and rules, it includes resources for specialty writing, including technical, medical, and engineering writing and literature and sociological review. There's even helpful information for those creating essays or portfolios for admission to grad school.

Whether you're still in the initial phases of your writing project or you're fine-tuning it for submission, the OWL is one site you'll want to bookmark--and return to again and again.

# THE TACKY CHEESE AWARDS

OR: WHY WE LOVE "B" GRADE SCI-FI FLICKS

NOMINEES IN THE  
SHAMELESS SEXISM  
DEPARTMENT . . .



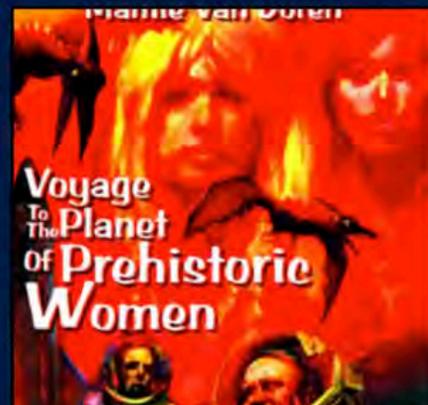
MARS NEEDS WOMEN  
FOR GLAMORIZING  
STALKING, FORCIBLE  
ABDUCTION, AND  
INTENTION TO ASSAULT.



THE HORRORS OF  
SPIDER ISLAND FOR  
THE LINE: "WOMEN IN  
A SURVIVAL  
SITUATION WILL  
BECOME LAGUID  
AND SEX-STARVED. "



SHE WAS A HIPPIE  
VAMPIRE FOR THE LINE:  
"GIVE HER ANOTHER  
HAPPY PILL. "



VOYAGE TO THE  
PLANET OF  
PREHISTORIC WOMEN  
FOR PORTRAYING  
FEMALES AS  
MINDLESS, PRIMITIVE  
SEX KITTENS.

BY WANDA WATERMAN WITH CREATIVE INPUT FROM BEN AND  
STEPHANIE WATERMAN



## Proud Mama

Here's hoping that surviving renovations is like surviving childbirth. For the latter, God gave us the gift of amnesia. When we lay our eyes on the precious life we've created, all memories of the searing labour pains vanish. We forget the weight gain, the stretch marks, the ugly clothes, the waddling gait. We forget the crippling back labour and the insensitive nurse chiding us through this scariest of events. We focus on the miracle before us and know that, for better or worse, nothing will ever be the same again.

On the renovation front we are now entering new, more intense territory. This week the taping and sanding of the drywall will begin. Is there anything more hellish than powdery-fine drywall dust? I can't believe the plastic shrouding will prevent it from covering every single thing we own.

We're down to living with only three base cabinets, one of which is the sink section. This week they, too, will need to go to make way for the delivery of the new ones. Thank God they are already assembled. Installation starts on the weekend. Can't wait to see what challenges that brings!

We've had to endure the back-breaking work of demolition and debris removal. I've made miles looking for things I boxed up in August. The floors are filthy; dust and dirt have permeated every surface. We've made purchases of building materials and supplies. We've returned others. To keep the budget from hemorrhaging, we are constantly getting quotes and shopping around.

Because we know that spending more now is the prudent thing to do, our mantra has become "While we're at it . . ." We're trying to anticipate our future needs. As consolation, we think of how when we're dead, the kids will have a nice country retreat.

Our crystal ball is covered with dust, so we can't predict an end date--but we do know that this "labour" has many, many more hours to go. *While we're at it* we're replacing all the interior doors, door and window casings, baseboards, and flooring as well as painting and upgrading the electrical.

We learned that our dishwasher had survived beyond the normal life expectancy of (today's throwaway) appliances and needed to be replaced. The new granite sink and hall light fixtures were special order items. The laminate has been sitting in a warehouse since September; one of these days we'll get the call.

Every waking moment (and a few in the middle of the night!) has been spent thinking, planning, pricing, and otherwise working on this project. Some days I feel that it's only my body's covering of skin that's holding me all together; that everything inside is mush and I would surely collapse if I had the time and opportunity to do so.

Outsiders are excited about our project, much like people anticipate a birth. A few have invited themselves over for the viewing. I haven't allowed myself to think about the Thank God It's Over celebration yet. But like any proud mama I'm looking forward to showing off my baby someday, from where I sit.

Hazel Anaka's first novel is *Lucky Dog*. Visit her [website](#) for more information or follow her on Twitter @anakawrites.

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS DESK



### At Home: What's In Your Wallet?

So what's in your wallet? If you're like an increasing number of Canadians, the better question might be "What is your wallet?"

After all, as *The Globe and Mail* [reports](#), a recent survey shows that Canadians are highly receptive to mobile payments, with 47 per cent of smart phone users open to "the idea of [using] the smartphone as a wallet" or credit card.

According to the survey, conducted on behalf of CIBC, more Canadians than ever are using smart phones. Of these, 36 per cent already use their devices for mobile banking--a significant increase from last year's 25 per cent.

CIBC is ready to "[launch] a national mobile-payments system" that will allow users to "make payments with a simple wave of their phone." Credit card information will be stored securely on the device's SIM card.

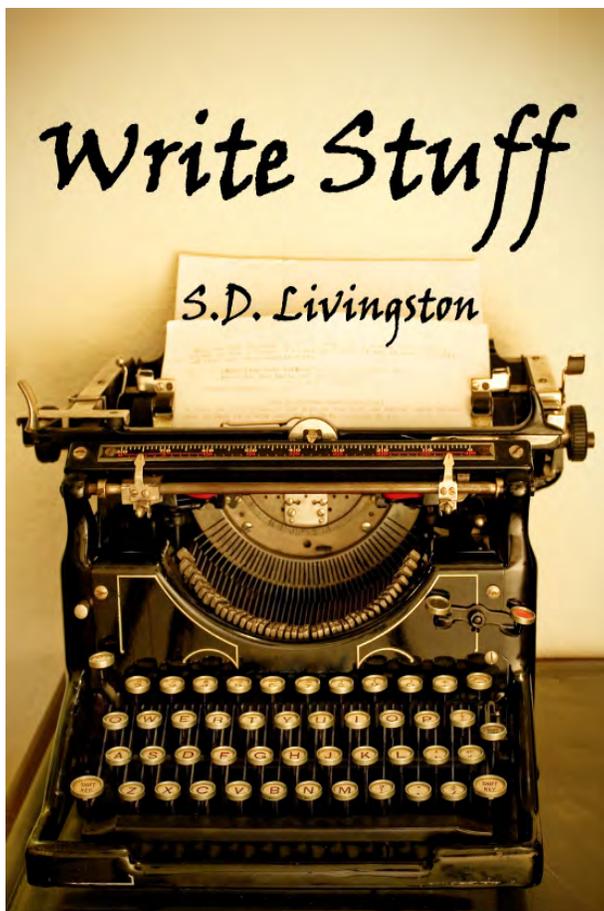
### Around the World: Bionic Climber

In recent years, there have been incredible advances in medical technology for patients missing organs and limbs. One breakthrough occurred just this past week when a Washington man climbed 103 flights of stairs using an experimental bionic leg.

As the *Huffington Post* [reports](#), Zac Vawter became "the first person to [climb Chicago's Willis Tower] wearing a mind-controlled prosthetic limb."

Bionic--mind-controlled--limbs are "designed to respond to electrical impulses from muscles" once the wearer has consciously created the thought to move. So when Vawter "thought about climbing the stairs, the motors, belts and chains in his leg synchronized the movements of its ankle and knee." During development, researchers "spent months adjusting the technical aspects . . . to ensure that it would respond to his thoughts."

Vawter's achievement is part of a research project of the Rehabilitation Institute in Chicago, which is "testing the leg under extreme conditions," the Institute's CEO told reporters.



## Anonymous, Part II

In the debate over online anonymity, there's no shortage of cases where cruel, hateful people have caused incredible harm. But anonymity is not—and never has been—a prerequisite of cruelty. In fact, remaining anonymous can sometimes protect you from it.

When we talk about the negative side of anonymous Internet use, our thoughts turn to tragic cases like Amanda Todd or [Megan Meier](#). Whether it's the use of obviously fake names on comment boards, or seemingly real personas on social media sites, there are very real dangers in letting people hide their identities.

So why open the door to that kind of abuse? After all, if you're not doing anything wrong, there's no reason to hide behind a fake name. Unless you live in a dictatorship, you're free to state your opinions. The law protects that right. No one can throw you in prison for disagreeing with someone else's political views, religious beliefs, or anything else. Your life's not in danger, so there's no reason to disguise your identity online. Or is there?

It might surprise you to know that, in Canada, owning what you say online could cost you your job—even if you simply post an opinion your boss happens to disagree with. As the [CBC reports](#), if a non-unionized employee “makes a comment online that has nothing to do with work, but which might be something the boss just doesn't like,” there's nothing stopping the boss from firing her.

All that's required is sufficient notice, and that the dismissal doesn't violate any statutes (such as a human rights statute). Unionized workplaces are different; in that case “workplace rights and obligations are determined by the collective bargaining agreement, rather than common or statutory law.”

So if you're a Toronto Maple Leafs fan and your boss loves the Ottawa Senators, you might have good reason not to comment under your real name on a sports article.

That's the example David Doorey often uses when teaching material about employment law. He's an associate professor of Labour and Employment Law at York University's School of Human Resource Management. As he [told the CBC](#), “The vast majority of people believe that what they say outside of the workplace is none of the employer's business. But that's not true. The employer can always fire you for whatever you say.”

Reasons for being anonymous online go well beyond the workplace. If you've left an abusive relationship, you might not want your ex to find out what discussion boards or media sites you visit and comment on. If

you live in a small town with a predominant political or religious view, you could face financial or social repercussions if your online opinions disagree with the majority view.

And then there are comments on health articles. Should we really force people to use their real names if they want to share information about their struggles with weight loss or mental health? It's one thing to reach out to other commenters dealing with very personal issues—to be open and forthright—when you can speak freely and anonymously. Would people be as willing to share, and possibly help, if they knew that an Internet search on their name would turn up such intimate details?

*“Should we really force people to use their real names if they want to share information about their struggles with weight loss or mental health?”*

If an anonymous commenter crosses the line into slander or does something else illegal, there are increasingly strong laws allowing authorities to uncover his identity while protecting the victim. In one recent case, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that a teenage girl could pursue a lawsuit while remaining anonymous. As the *National Post* [reports](#), the teen was “allegedly defamed on a bogus Facebook page,” and the judges “ruled 7-0 that she is entitled to anonymity to avoid her becoming a victim a second time.”

Cases like Amanda Todd's highlight the very real suffering that online bullying and harassment can cause. But before we insist that online commenters use only their real names, we need to remember that, sometimes, anonymity might just save a life too.

*S.D. Livingston is the author of several books, including the new suspense novel Kings of Providence. Visit her [website](#) for information on her writing (and for more musings on the literary world!).*

## GREEN LIGHT



It's common knowledge that our oceans have increasingly become dumping grounds for discarded plastics that make their way into floating masses miles wide. But even if it were collected, where would we put it all?

As Mother Earth News [reports](#), green-minded company Method has just begun marketing “bottles made from a blend of plastic recovered from the ocean and post-consumer recycled plastic.”

Method co-founder Errol Schweizer told reporters that “the most viable solution to our plastic pollution problem is using the plastic that's already on the planet.”

Currently it's believed that “several million tons of plastic make their way into the oceans each year,” with dangerous consequences to marine life and the general ecosystem.

## Ocean Plastic

## THE MINDFUL BARD

Wanda Waterman



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

**Film:** *Kinyarwanda* (Visigoth Pictures 2011)

**Writer/Director:** Alrick Brown

**Cast:** Edourd Bamporiki, Cassandra Freeman, Cleophas Kabasiita

**Genre:** Dramatization based on real events

*"Forgiveness is the final form of love."*

Reinhold Niebuhr

### Same Friend, Same High Place, Different Religions, Same Agenda

A group of young *menare* is gathered at an outdoor classroom, looking like a huddled flock of sheep in matching white t-shirts. Their faces are wounded by sadness; some are on the verge of tears. When they're asked their names, they appear ashamed to say them.

An attractive young woman addresses them with the steely gaze of a guard dog:

*Welcome to the Unity and Reconciliation Re-education Camp.*

*Forgiveness is not the suppression of anger. Forgiveness is asking for a miracle—the ability to see through someone's mistakes to the truth that lies within all of our hearts. Forgiveness is not always easy. At times it is more painful than the wound we suffered. Attack thoughts toward others are attack thoughts toward ourselves . . .*

*So why am I talking to you about forgiveness? You are the ones who committed the crime. You are the ones people have hatred and anger and bitterness toward.*

The National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC) of Rwanda was a development of the National Constitution adopted by Rwandans in June of 2003. The idea was gleaned from the Arusha Peace Accord that had been signed there in 1993. Sadly, one year after Arusha, an artful racist propaganda program had persuaded ordinary Rwandan citizens to chop their neighbours to death with machetes.

The radio had convinced many Hutu that the Tutsi were a plague on their country and that true democracy could not be achieved without annihilating them. Hutu were also killed just for being married to Tutsi or for protecting them.

The racist tensions were long-standing, said to have been introduced by Belgian colonists who on first occupying Rwanda measured the physical attributes of the tribes then living there and judged that the Tutsi were more suitable for working in offices and the Hutu were better suited to working in the fields. This racial stereotyping quickly infected the native culture and naturally erupted in chronic inequality and a growing resentment.

*“Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.”*

*Martin Luther King, Jr.*

At the beginning of the genocide the Mufti of Rwanda, the man responsible for issuing laws and decrees for Muslims, issued a *fatwa* ordering the slaves of Allah not to take part in the killing of the Tutsi. Many Tutsi, including Tutsi Christians betrayed by their Hutu priests, took refuge in the mosques. In *Kinyarwanda* we hear six stories based on true accounts of survivors who found protection in the Grand Mosque of Kigali and the *madrassa* of Nyanza.

The tragedy of the Rwandan genocide was brought to international awareness by the excellent film *Hotel Rwanda*. What was not made clear in the film was the motivation behind the protagonist’s actions. As a Hutu married to a Tutsi, hotelier Paul Rusesabagina could have stopped at saving his family, but he went on to shelter large numbers of other Tutsi in his hotel.

Perhaps to promote the kind of hero-worship for which Hollywood is so famous, *Hotel Rwanda* neglects to mention that Paul Rusesabagina was a Christian, a Seventh Day Adventist. He was simply one of the few Christians ready to follow the mandate of his master.

In *Kinyarwanda* the religious impetus is granted recognition; Muslims and Christians join hands to protect the Tutsi from annihilation. As stated by Symon Hill in *The No-Nonsense Guide to Religion*, as often as we



proclaim the harm done, the fact remains that more good than ill has been done as an outpouring of religious conviction.

Two priceless scenes. In the first, the priest is leading his kneeling flock in the Lord's Prayer while in another section of the mosque the imam is leading the prostrate Muslims in *salat*. And in the second, Jeanne, the shy girl from a mixed Hutu-Tutsi marriage, forgives the young man who killed her parents.

Rwanda is a stunning model of what is possible in response to the horrors of human cruelty when perpetuating cycles of fruitless violence isn't on the agenda.

*Kinyarwanda* manifests eight of the Mindful Bard's criteria for films well worth seeing: 1) it is authentic, original, and delightful; 2) it poses and admirably responds to questions that have a direct bearing on my view of existence; 3) it is about attainment of the true self; 4) it inspires an awareness of the sanctity of creation; 5) it displays an engagement with and compassionate response to suffering; 6) it gives me tools of compassion, enabling me to respond with compassion and efficacy to the suffering around me; 7) it renews my enthusiasm for positive social action; and 8) it makes me appreciate that life is a complex and rare phenomenon, making living a unique opportunity.

*Wanda* also penned the poems for the artist book [They Tell My Tale to Children Now to Help Them to be Good](#), a collection of meditations on fairy tales, illustrated by artist Susan Malmstrom.



## AUSU UPDATE



### AU Students urge candidates to improve university funding

AU students are concerned about the financial health of Athabasca University and the effect of recent news stories on the reputation of the AUSU membership.

A recent CBC report notes that in recent years the university has made a series of reserve draws to cover budget shortfalls, draining the once \$30-million reserve fund.

Tuition and fees at AU, meanwhile, continue to increase despite the concerns of AUSU that education is becoming increasingly unaffordable in Alberta.

“I’m very concerned about AU’s financial situation,” says AUSU President Bethany Tynes. “AU is increasing student fees, observing hiring freezes, denying sabbaticals, delaying projects, and downsizing their offices due to a lack of available funds. We don’t want to see the quality of our education diminish.”

“At the same time,” Tynes continues, “I am confused by AU Board Chair Barry Walker’s comment to the CBC that AU is ‘in a very sound financial position,’ as the concerns we’ve noted do not support the notion that we’re financially sound.”

Chronic underfunding of public post-secondary education is a factor in AU’s financial stress. AU students have lobbied Alberta in recent years to address the shortfall; our members call on the candidates in Alberta’s provincial election to make post-secondary funding a priority in their platforms and to ensure that all Alberta universities are funded equally and sufficiently. Public post-secondary institutions need a reliable, predictable funding model that provides sufficient base operating funds to support a world-class education.

Athabasca University Students' Union is the largest students' union in Alberta, representing nearly 40,000 undergraduates annually.

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*This column is provided by AUSU to facilitate communication with its members. The Voice does not write or edit this section; all content has been exclusively and directly provided by AUSU, and any questions or comments about the material should be directed to [ausu@ausu.org](mailto:ausu@ausu.org).*

# CLASSIFIEDS

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Classifieds are free for AU students! Contact [voice@voicemagazine.org](mailto:voice@voicemagazine.org) for more information.

## THE VOICE

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