

# THE VOICE

MAGAZINE

Vol 21 Issue 09 2013-03-15

## Stick Out Your Tongue

Picture of health

## Speak

Booker's voice

## AU 2012

Annual report

*Plus:  
From Where I Sit  
Antboy  
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.



**Re: “Editorial: Post-Secondary Blues” by Tamra Ross, v20 i08 (2013-03-08)**

Thank you, Tamra, for bringing a voice of reason to the discussion of Athabasca University's woes.

Best wishes

Audrey O'Brien

### What does it say about AU?

AU recently released its annual report for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2012. I always dig into this report as soon as it's available, because in my job it's important for me to know as much as I can about our students and the University. Each year the AUSU handbook/planner contains a page or two of demographic information, and students seem to really enjoy it. This year we opted to make the stats page a retrospective, comparing last year's stats to those from 20 years ago, when AUSU was formed. Some of the differences were staggering (i.e., an AU course in 1992 was just \$238, and the number of degrees awarded per year has risen from 115 to 1,508 in that timeframe!).

For those who want to know more about the sprawling AU student demographic, here are some highlights from the 2011-12 AU Annual Report, some comparisons with the past, and my thoughts about the future.



### The Students

The total student headcount broke 40,000 in 2012; that's about 30 per cent more than the U of C, and about 10 per cent more than the U of A, making AU both the largest university and the largest research institution in the province. AUSU's sources at AU predicted that growth in 2012 would be minimal – perhaps less than 1 per cent—but the report shows an actual growth of a whopping 3.9 per cent. This is the highest growth rate since 2008 and a significant increase from 2010-11 (1.8 per cent) and 2009-10 (0.6 per cent). Clearly, interest in AU course and programs is strong and growing fast! We do not yet know which provinces or country account for the most growth.

Enrolment demographics by course are always particularly revealing: the report shows that huge increases in the B. Commerce program, AU's highest enrolment program (recent growth is perhaps in reaction to the new CMA accreditation, described below.) and the B. Human Resources and Labour Relations, which is one of the newer AU programs. Enrolment in the B. General Studies has decreased nearly 10 per cent while the B. Science has seen over 7 per cent attrition. The highest growth overall is in the AU nursing program which grew more than 20 per cent in 2012.

I've been told by some AU personnel that the growth in business and nursing programs has been largely attributed to the robust marketing and retention practices of those programs. It's difficult to say for sure, but I can't help but notice that those programs have also been cited for enhanced communication with students via regular newsletters and email lists. I'd like to know what voice readers think; send us a note!

## Courses and Programs

AU offered 852 courses in 2012: it's an astonishing number for a university of its size. That works out to around one course for every 45 students. Going forward, students should expect this number to shrink. AU has many courses on the roster that have gone more than a year without a single enrolment, and the cost of ensuring there are materials and tutors available for these courses is significant (for the record, tutors are only paid when they have students and only hired when there are sufficient students to trigger it; if a single student enrolls in a low enrolment course, they will be assigned to a tutor who also teaches other classes). In the coming year AU will assess its course catalogue and retire courses for which there is little interest. We have been assured that no required courses will be affected, and that some faculties may offer alternatives, such as increased options for project courses that might include reading topics from retired courses.

It is not clear if programs will be affected (in 2012 AU offered 22 undergraduate credentials and 12 graduate programs). No programs closures are being considered at this time, but last week's Alberta budget announcement has certainly raised concerns. As of this week, Mount Royal University in Calgary has announced the suspension of its Bachelor of Engineering–University Transfer Program, and critics expect to see similar cuts at other Alberta schools.

## Financials

Nothing at AU has been more heavily scrutinized in the past year than its financial position. Curiously, none of the media coverage has included any hard numbers, though this information is readily available in on-line annual reports.

Comparing AU's position from March 2003 to March 2012 indicates that its total assets have grown from \$49 million to \$106 million (the addition of new buildings and infrastructure is likely part of this), though liabilities have also grown from \$32 million to \$94 million. This tells us nothing about the cash flow and income of the university, however.

AU brought in just over \$61 million and spent just under that amount in 2003, for a total surplus of \$1.14 million. In 2011 revenue had soared to \$124.5 million but the university showed a year-end deficit of \$3.8 million. 2012 showed evidence of correcting this trend with a deficit of \$0.8 million. With only \$5 million in cash assets at 2012's fiscal year-end, it's clear that AU cannot absorb ongoing losses. Cash assets are down overall from \$21 million in 2009, prior to the development of the new research centre.

One expenditure that cannot be ignored is the salary paid to AU executives: high executive salaries at Canadian schools have been subject to media scrutiny in past years, and have been a controversial topic at AU as well. AU's exec salaries are listed in the Annual report and much has been made of the increases over the last five years: in 2007 the AU president earned (numbers in thousands) \$326, compared to \$540 today. The VP academic salary increased from \$227 to \$339, and the salary for the other VP positions increased by 15 per cent to 40 per cent. In the wake of budget cuts, this issue continues to be raised;

ironically, AU will likely save on executive salaries this year due to vacancy in a number of key positions (it is not believed that this is in any way a factor in the personnel changes).

### Accomplishments

The new (and somewhat controversial) Academic and Research Centre at AU opened on the main campus in July of 2011. As one of only four Comprehensive Academic Research Institutions (CARIs) in the province, AU has focused on providing office space for research staff and administration. The new building addresses that need, which may become increasingly important as Alberta schools jockey for limited educational funding.

AU also secured accreditation by the Certified Management Accountants of Canada for the B Comm accounting major. It is the first on-line accounting program to receive CMA accreditation and one of few overall in the country.

Other AU annual reports can be found [here](#).

### DID YOU KNOW?

### A Visit with TED



Bored? Stuck in a rut? Maybe you just need an influx of something fresh and new. Look no further than [TED](#), a “global community” created by non-profit organization TED, whose singular mission is to propagate “Ideas Worth Spreading.”

The organization sponsors conferences and prizes, but its website is accessible to all. It hosts nearly 1,000 (and counting!) interesting, entertaining, inspiring, and/or informative talks by experts and thinkers in all fields and from all corners of the globe. Some talks were given at TED conferences, while others were created expressly for the organization. All the talks are published under a Creative Commons license, which means that they may be downloaded and shared freely (with certain limitations as to use).

The site can be searched by category, but viewers can also browse the most popular talks, as well as those rated by other viewers as high-ranking in certain descriptive categories (most inspiring, most ingenious, etc.).

A sampling of what’s awaiting you: a talk profiling someone who treats cancer through dance, an education and creativity expert’s thoughts on why traditional education stifles creativity, and a Harvard political philosophy professor’s discussion of the “lost art of democratic debate.” From AIDS research to artificial intelligence to Google to sustainability, you’re sure to find something

## HEALTH MATTERS

Katie D'Souza

**How Healthy Is Your Tongue?**

Chinese medicine is an ancient medical system, with descriptions dating back to the birth of written language during the Shang Dynasty starting in 1766 BC. As such, it has a fertile history in treating many health conditions. Treatment in Chinese medicine involves discussion of an individual's signs and symptoms, in addition to employment of adjunctive diagnostic methods that examine the tongue and pulse.

***The Magical Tongue***

How does the tongue offer clues to an individual's state of health? Chinese medical experts liken the tongue to a map, with organ-specific sites located on both sides. The colour, texture, moisture content, presence of swelling, and quality of veins are all scrutinized, and help define this snapshot of basic health. Let's look at the organs associated with the tongue's surface.

***The Tip***

The very tip of the tongue correlates to the Heart. Organs in Chinese medicine do not necessarily mirror the actions and functions commonly known in Western medicine: energetically, the Heart in this instance refers to stress and emotional output. If an individual has been under significant stress, or has experienced a period of emotional burnout or heartache, the tongue tip will often appear bright red or exhibit small heat spots (whitish spots amid the red, different from the rest of the tongue). Someone with a significant heart condition, such as a heart attack, will also have a red tongue tip.

***The Sides***

The right and left sides of the tongue correspond to the Lung. If you have a lung condition like asthma or a chronic cough, this area may be redder, or darker, than surrounding areas. Emotionally, the Lung in Chinese medicine is associated with grief, which could be the cause of a darkened Lung area on the tongue.

***The Middle***

The middle of the tongue (flanked on both sides by the Lungs, and the tip by the Heart) corresponds to the Spleen and Stomach. Although the Stomach has functions similar to our Western knowledge of the organ, the job of the Spleen is entirely different. By Western definition, the spleen manages the

production of blood, while in Chinese medicine, it is thought to manage nutrient assimilation and play a vital role in overall health and vitality.

### ***The Underside***

The underside of the tongue tells a story as well. In Chinese medicine, the veins visible under the tongue represent the state of blood flow in the body, in energetic terms. Dark, blackish, or turgid-looking veins may indicate blood stagnation, a Chinese medical condition where blood is not flowing evenly to all organs. This can result in conditions like severe PMS, and fibroids, for example.

*In traditional Chinese medicine, the tongue is like a map that offers a picture of general health.*

### ***Final Words***

Can the tongue be used as a sole diagnostic agent in determining an individual's overall health? As is evident, the tongue can provide useful information from a Chinese medical perspective, but it provides a basic “overview” of general health, rather than a clear-cut diagnosis. Thus, Chinese medicine combines analysis of the tongue and pulse, with information about signs, symptoms, and intake to determine a successful treatment plan for an individual.

*Katie D’Souza is an AU graduate and a licensed naturopathic doctor. She currently practices in Ontario.*

*Disclaimer: 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.*

### **WRITE FOR US!**

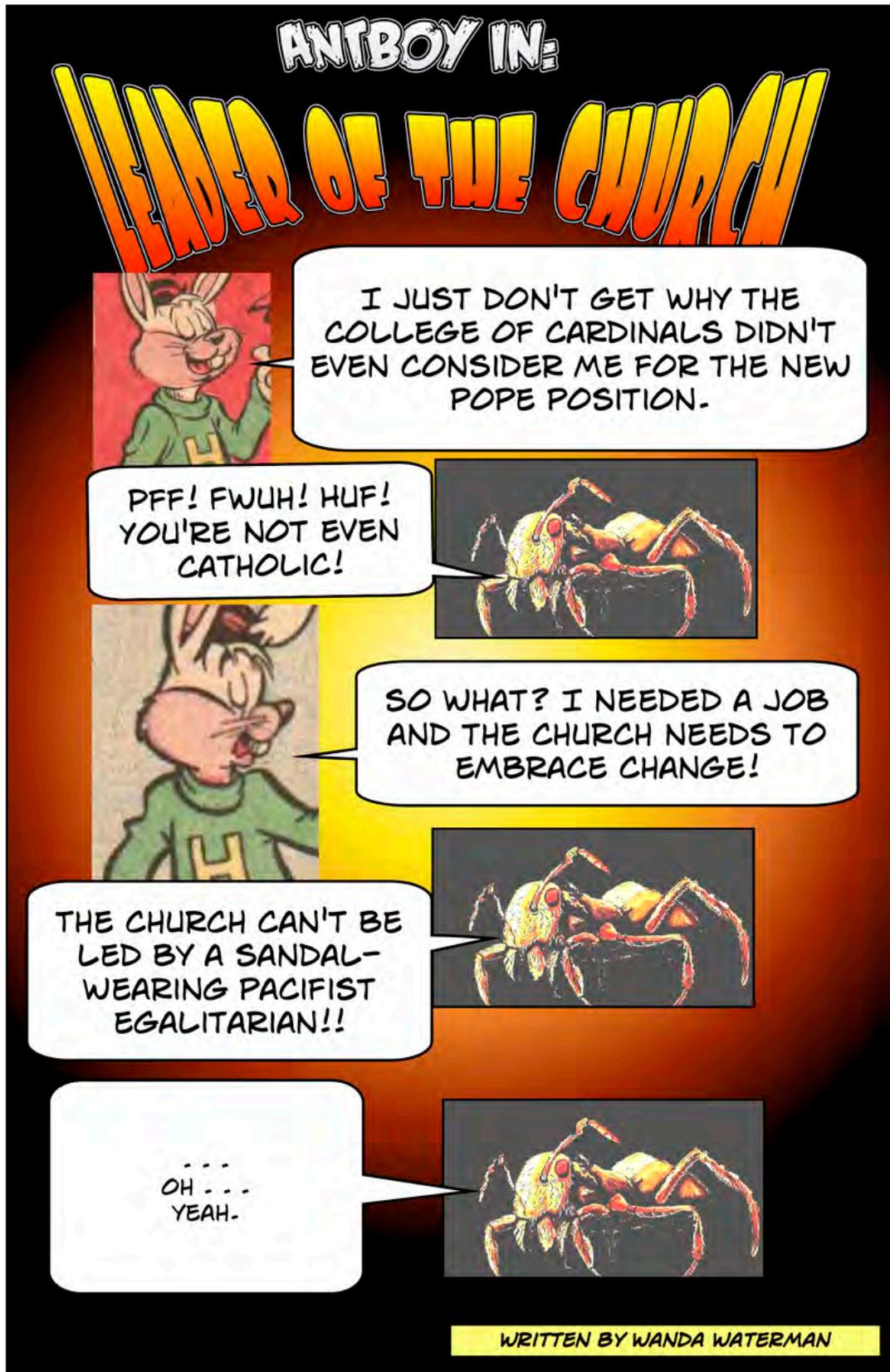
What topics and issues do you want to see covered in *The Voice*? What type of features do you like best? *The Voice* wants to hear from you! Email us at [voice@voicemagazine.org](mailto:voice@voicemagazine.org) with your ideas, letters, and suggestions.

And if you’ve got something to say about university life, or life in general, consider writing for *The Voice Magazine*. We’re always seeking new voices and fresh perspectives—and submissions from our readers are welcome! To find out more about becoming a *Voice* writer, email the editors at [voice@voicemagazine.org](mailto:voice@voicemagazine.org).

All accepted submissions are purchased as freelance pieces and cannot have been published elsewhere (including online in any way) or written as academic papers.

## ANTBOY IN "LEADER OF THE CHURCH"

Wanda Waterman





## And We Will

The weeks since my medical emergency during our Mexican vacation have been interesting indeed. Regular readers may remember I passed out at a restaurant and was treated by the resort doctor, ambulance crew, and two docs at the hospital. I signed myself out with the promise to seek medical care when I got home.

In a healthcare system where waiting is often the name of the game I've been shocked at how quickly things have happened. Unfortunately it's also a reflection of how serious my problem is. Here's the chronology of what happened.

February 4: Visit my doctor, who immediately orders blood work to be repeated two days later and then a week later. Finds my hemoglobin (or red blood cell count) has dropped nearly 30 points in about as many days. Refers me to a surgeon for endoscopy (scope of the upper GI tract and stomach).

February 19: Wake up from procedure to have surgeon tell me that the colonoscopy was fine but she wasn't able to complete the endoscopy. She explains that I have a paraesophageal hernia, which means the stomach has bulged above the diaphragm beside the esophagus.

February 20: Return to same hospital for a barium swallow. Radiologist tells me my stomach is entirely in my chest cavity and has flipped.

February 21: Surgeon calls me (who ever heard of that happening?) to tell me results, and to ask for permission to refer me to another surgeon who has more experience doing the laparoscopic surgery I need. I ask how long before I see him. She says surgeon to surgeon referral should be faster than GP to surgeon, so not more than a month or two.

February 28: One week later I'm listening to the surgeon explain the procedure and risk factors. Because of my age (I'm so young! Yes!) and the repeated bouts of anemia, I'm a candidate for surgery. The potential for a life-threatening emergency exists if the stomach flips again and becomes "strangulated" (blood supply to the organ is cut off and it dies), in which case there are literally hours to react, and about half the time the patient doesn't make it.

So, planning for a scheduled surgery seems so much wiser. Before hearing this I was envisioning asking for it, if necessary, to be done after harvest. Uh, no.

Hospital stay is usually two days if there are no complications. A collapsed lung and/or pneumonia are quite common because they "peel the hernia sac off the lung and there's often a tear and the carbon dioxide they inflate the area with" does something or other and blah, blah, blah. There is risk of early re-

herniation. My surgeon does 80 per cent of these surgeries in Edmonton, which only amounts to about 20 a year, so it's uncommon. He's only lost one patient, who was elderly with other health/heart issues.

The surgery should end the anemia/transfusion drama and allow me to throw away my meds. I say, "Okay, let's do it." And we will, March 27, from where I sit.

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

## CLICK OF THE WRIST

## Crypto-whatsits

Though nearly two million species have been described and catalogued by scientists, *National Geographic* reports that up to 86 per cent of the world's species remain uncatalogued. While many of the undiscovered are likely tiny and hard to find (fungus, insects, etc.), it's no wonder that enthusiasts of cryptozoology maintain the belief that we might yet find a living humanoid snow beast or titanic lake monster. Here are a few sites devoted to the search.

### Nessie Cam

The quintessential species of cryptozoology may be Nessie, the Loch Ness Monster. First reported nearly 100 years ago, she's got a devoted following who continue to investigate sightings and evidence around Loch Ness with increasingly advanced technology. The latest weapon in the arsenal is the lowly webcam. Got a little extra time? You too can become part of the worldwide Nessie-watch. It's way cooler than looking for Waldo.

### Woodboogers

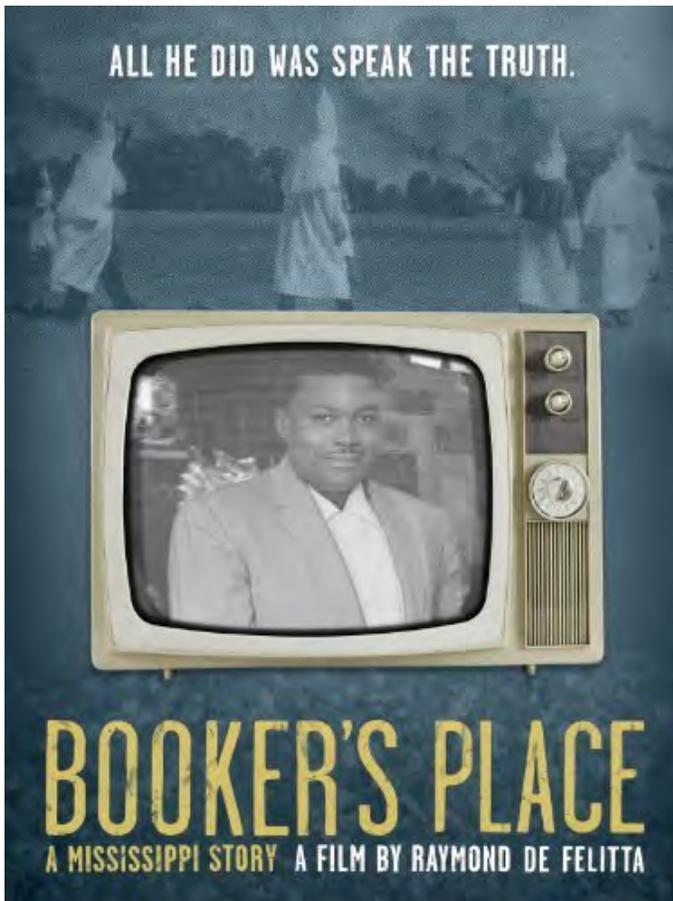
Cryptozoology has had plenty of press in recent months due to the popular Discovery reality show, *Finding Bigfoot*, which follows members of the Bigfoot Field Researchers Organization (BFRO) as they investigate sightings across America. The best revelation about the big hairy ones so far? In some parts of the US they are known as "woodboogers." Makes you want him to be real that much more, doesn't it?

### Myth no more

Mariners have told tales of the Kraken for as long as ships have sailed the seas, but the existence of a truly massive giant squid species (*Architeuthis Dux*) had long been met with scepticism—that is, until a Japanese research team filmed a 24-foot monster brought to the surface in 2006. Six years later, the Discovery Channel has obtained footage of a 30-foot specimen south of Tokyo. A 43-foot specimen is on record. The squid's habitat is in ocean depths that manmade submersibles cannot access, so we've only begun to understand what might truly lie beneath. Now you have another reason to be afraid of the water . . .

## THE MINDFUL BARD

Wanda Waterman



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

**Film:** *Booker's Place*

**Director:** Raymond de Felitta

**Genre:** Documentary

*"I believe that man will not merely endure: he will prevail. He is immortal, not because he alone among creatures has an inexhaustible voice, but because he has a soul, a spirit capable of compassion and sacrifice and endurance."*

...

*"To understand the world, you must first understand a place like Mississippi."*

William Faulkner

### They Took My Mom—What More Do I have to Lose?

*It's 1964 and Frank de Felitta is filming a Ku Klux Klan rally in Mississippi. He's filming for NBC, which back then had just enough integrity to foot the bill for footage about the plight of the southern negro, something the white South considered a sore point because it directly contradicted all the teary claims about how they loved their negroes.*

*Before de Felitta went south the FBI had given him the number of their secret plant in the town he was visiting, warning that divulging this number would surely mean the man's death.*

*Without warning, the audience starts throwing soft objects at the film crew. They start throwing hard objects. When the camera man threatens to high-tail it, Frank calls the number. The man's wife answers, explaining that the man is in the audience, helping de Felitta and keeping him from danger by heckling and mocking those who are throwing objects.*

.....

Frank de Felitta shot a lot of documentary footage in Mississippi that summer, but the most memorable features black waiter Booker Wright giving gentle explanation of the daily humiliations facing him in his job at a whites-only restaurant. The footage was aired a couple of times on the news and seen all across the South. *Booker's Place*, a documentary created by Frank's son, Raymond, explores repercussions of Wright's candour.

## Aftershock

World War II scarred Frank de Felitta with firsthand sights of concentration camp victims. Instead of burying his shock, he decided to transform it into something that might transform his society and warn against the horrible fruits of cruelty born of greed.

“Every Mississippian talks about how much they loved their blacks,” says Frank, now retired.

In *Booker’s Place*, we hear moving testimonies from white folks about love for their black “mothers,” but also from the grown black children from whom these black mothers had been taken.

This oft-avowed “love” may be deemed deeply hypocritical for two reasons. The first is that black children were often left to fend for themselves while their mothers coddled the white children. (The significance of this loss is a recurring theme in *Booker’s Place*. In the wake of mother loss, a society can never placidly accept the daily insults of racism.)

The second is that all this avowed love for blacks was just a whitewash for a deep-seated hatred. As much as one might profess to love one’s black Mammy, we all know how easy it is to hate our mothers, especially when they dare suggest that they’re real people with their own agendas and not just placed on God’s earth to cater to our every whim.

## Prepare to Have Your Faith in Universal Human Goodness Ground to Grits

It’s still the mid-60s in lynch-happy Greenwood, Mississippi and we’re following Frank’s camera as it documents Old Man Louis visiting the shacks of his tenant farmers. Louis is rude and patronizing to the gentle black families, snarling subtle insults at them as their tortured gazes crucify their polite smiles.

Mack “Booker” Wright grew up in Greenwood. As a boy he was forced to work in the fields while his mother worked in a distant town. When she came back to get him the plantation, the owners refused to let him go until she brought them money. When she got money from her boss and came back they threatened to whip her: they wanted Booker in the fields, and that was that.

Booker grew up filled with a sense of profound abandonment, not knowing until years later that his mother had tried to so hard to get him back.

## “Best Food in the World is Served at Lusco’s”

At the age of 14 Booker got a good job as a waiter at Lusco’s, where he became a superlative waiter, rattling off the entire menu in one breath for customers (there were no written menus), finishing with, “Best food in the world is served at Lusco’s.”

It was highly unusual for a TV news reporter to gain access to

*“World War II scarred Frank de Felitta . . . Instead of burying his shock, he decided to transform it into something that might transform his society and warn against the horrible fruits of cruelty born of greed.”*

someone like Booker and even more unusual that Booker was willing to have his comments broadcast across the South. Unfortunately, this led to tragic consequences.

The film presents the writer with an important question: *If my words will put someone else in danger, should they be voiced?* Back then Frank's decision was yes, but he didn't know the danger; respecting Booker's desire to expose the truth, Frank decided to go ahead.

In retrospect, Frank regretted his decision. Booker's daughter also regretted that her father's outspoken courage led to his demise. At the same time, she's grateful for his courage:

*"The film presents the writer with an important question: If my words will put someone else in danger, should they be voiced?"*

"What he did, at the time that he did it, was spectacular."

After rattling off his waiter spiel for the cameras, Booker quickly explains how to treat white customers, revealing the daily humiliations to which he consented to submit for the good of his family, to give them a life he had never known.

"But remember, you have to keep that smile."

*Booker's Place* manifests eight of the Mindful Bard's criteria about for films well worth seeing: 1) it poses and admirably responds to questions that have a direct bearing on my view of existence; 2) it harmoniously unites art with social action, saving me from both seclusion in an ivory tower and slavery to someone else's political agenda; 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 kindness, 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.

*Booker's Place: A Mississippi Story* is also the subject of a full Dateline NBC broadcast hosted by Lester Holt and scheduled to air May 20, 2012, at 7pm.

*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.*

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS DESK



### Around the World: Today's Parking Lot Put Down on Top of Knight

Not terribly long ago, archaeologists were transfixed by the finding of Richard the Third's body under a parking lot in England. Not to be outdone, Scotland has found its own bit of medieval nobility under a parking lot in Edinburgh.

The excavation first found a sandstone slab with carvings of an ornate sword and the Calvary Cross, which the Edinburgh Centre for Carbon Innovation has indicated means it belonged to a high-ranking knight or noble. An adult skeleton was found upon further investigation, and will be analyzed to learn more about the deceased and how he died.

Saying that this "has the potential to be one of the most significant and exciting archaeological discoveries in the city for many years," Councillor Richard Lewis is excited that this might give clues as to how life was lived in medieval Edinburgh.

What this does tell us right now, however, is that it is not just Paradise that gets paved for parking lots. Nobility burial grounds seem to be a strong contender as well.

Of course, that probably wouldn't scan as well in Joni Mitchell's song.

### At Home: The Price of Dating

A woman in Laval, Quebec has lost over \$40,000 in an online dating scam. Thinking she had found her match in a person who purported to be a US soldier serving overseas, the woman began sending him money to help him pay bills for his son. Unfortunately, she's not alone, as Daniel Williams with the Canadian Anti-Fraud centre says that more than 140 Quebecers have reported on-line dating fraud since the beginning of this year alone.

It is estimated that Canadians lost over \$17 million dollars to this type of fraud over the last year.

On the other end of the scale, a woman in BC held a gigantic yard sale last weekend selling basically everything that her husband owned. On learning that he was cheating on her, she decided to sell everything, including the house, and file for a divorce from their marriage of 10 years.

Family and estate attorneys say that any proceeds from the sale will become assets to be divided during the divorce proceedings.

## AUSU UPDATE



*Dear Members,*

*You may have recently seen information on the internet speculating about the future of Athabasca University. These reports suggest that the Alberta government may broker a merger between AU and University of Alberta, and that this may result in drastic changes to the services and programs offered to students AU students.*

*We want you to know that AUSU is aware of these rumours and is actively investigating the source – we will keep you informed as we know more.*

*We can tell you that AU is governed via a bicameral structure with two main governing bodies: the General Faculties Council (formerly Academic Council) and the Board of Governors (formerly Governing Council). AUSU has representatives on both of these governing bodies and we can confirm that there has been no formal discussion of a university merger among these groups. The AU president, Frits Pannekoek, has also assured the press that there is no truth to the rumour. On behalf of our members, we are seeking more information from the Board of Governors, the minister, and AU executives.*

*At this time we simply have no evidence that a merger is being seriously considered by AU, the U of A, or the Alberta government, and we note that among the many committees and working groups of AU, planning and development for the future continues as usual.*

*We know that our members are worried and want more information. We will update you as soon as we know more. At this time we do not feel there is any reason for students to worry or make changes to their study plans.*

*Do not hesitate to contact our office if you wish to talk about this or any other issue affecting AU students.*

*AUSU.*

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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