

# THE VOICE

MAGAZINE

Vol 22 Issue 34 2014-08-29

## Candidate/President

Interviewing Jason Nixon

## On Your Own Time

Distance Ed Strategies for Success

## It's All Right

But it's not alright.

*Plus:*

*Chazz Bravado  
The Study Dude  
and much more!*



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# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

*On "Free at Last?"*

Dear Editor:

This is a very basic article that is only the tip of the iceberg with little historical data or much to the piece.



Although I commend the author for bringing this topic to readers attention it would serve a greater purpose to use the data [here](#) and discuss the similarities in the top 10 offending countries while delving deeper into the cultural fabric and reasons why these countries feel they have valid reasons for slavery because in the end the slave "owners" all feel they are serving some purpose.

I am familiar with these practices in India where children are enslaved and have to work in squalor. Some fundamental facts are lack of government funding in education, housing, social assistance, a lack of pensions, family structure that pushes girls into slavery because they are an expense to families that can't afford a dowry. Cultural acceptance of slavery (one can see the laymen and how they treat servant children in establishments, the police turn a blind eye and all that oppose are threatened or corruption simply silences the neigh sayers)

Larger than simply saying there is slavery is to go deeper into WHY, as these children grow into adults and continue to be owned, bought and sold.

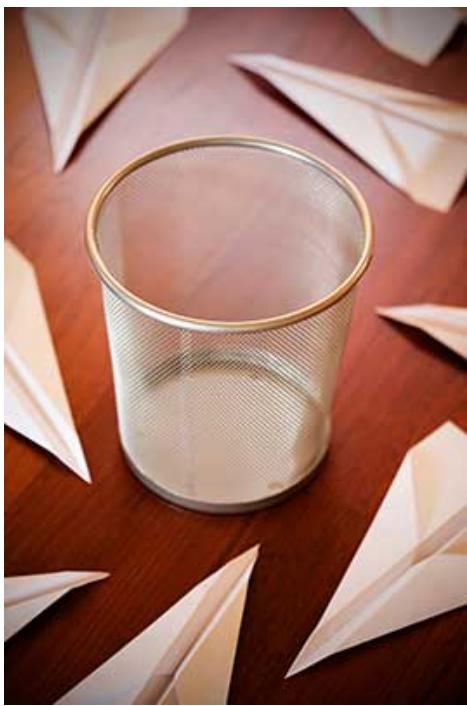
If we are going to discuss slavery these slaves deserve more than simply saying they exist. We need to understand the systems that bring slavery into the sphere of acceptance and question deeper the cultural malaise of at least the top 10 offending countries to better understand how to affect this terrible act in a very real way to bring about very real changes.

For the greatest change has to come from within and from there can we truly empathize and bring about serious and lasting change. My prayer is that at least some of the current slaves find a means to escape and go on to live a life that supports their highest dreams; if not to at least sleep, eat, dream and breathe in peace.

Blessings, Gaurang @ DestinationOM.com

*Ed: Nothing I can add here except "I agree."*

**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.**

**EDITORIAL****Karl Low****Back At It**

Welcome to the end of August. For most students, this signals when it's time to pick the books back up and head back into class. For AU students, of course, we never really stopped.

Still, every September, Athabasca University gets a flood of new students, many of whom are trying to pick up one or two extra courses that they can't fit into the schedule at their regular university, some of whom simply weren't able to get one of the seats at a brick-and-mortar institution, and a few who've looked at AU and thought, "Hey, this is perfect, I can do all the other things I wanted to and still get my degree!"

For those new students who happen to be poking around the AU site just before their courses start and have stumbled on The Voice Magazine, welcome! Here you'll, hopefully, find a number of things to help you out, make you think, and keep you informed about issues that matter to you.

Of course, figuring out what matters to you, the readers, isn't an easy job, so to help us a long with that, The Voice will be putting out a survey to all of our potential audience in the very near future, along with a contest to win a new e-text capable device. I won't tell you what the device is just yet, because I haven't yet finalized that, but I want to make sure to get something that makes taking the survey worth your time. Like our last survey, I'm thinking something in the mini-tablet range would probably be the most useful to people, but if you have some ideas, feel free to send them in to [voice@voicemagazine.org](mailto:voice@voicemagazine.org).

Also, one or two readers have already noticed that The Voice Magazine has now joined the twitter age, and you can follow @AUSUVoice if that's your preferred way to get reminders about when the magazine has come out each week. And while I'm still not a fan of social media for all things, or even most, I'm willing to give this a try to see if it gives people any benefit. Of course, if you're a Facebook junkie, you can find us at <http://www.facebook.com/ausuvoice>, and get the same updates, albeit with better spelling.

Now, what's going on this week? Well in this issue, we have an interview with Jason Nixon, president of AUSU and also nominated to be the candidate for the riding of Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre for Wildrose. It's a short interview, but we dig into the policies of Wildrose for post-secondary education and what having both positions means, both for AUSU and for him.

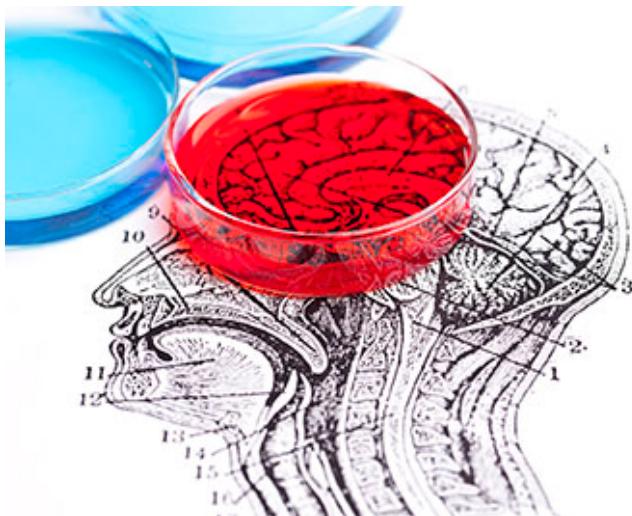
We also have The Study Dude giving us some tips on speed-reading, advice from Barb Godin on personal situations, Barb Lehtiniemi's article on strategies that can help you take on distance learning courses, and The Writer's Toolbox letting us know that it's not alright. It's really not. Which means that, all together, this is probably a great issue to start off the school year with, and that's not even everything in here.

Enjoy the read!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Karl Low". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized 'K' at the beginning.

## Primal Numbers

### When I'm 64



S.D. Livingston

In the world of the future you can forget your passwords. In fact, you can probably forget all about passwords themselves. That's because biometrics are quickly replacing them. But as we hand our security over to machines, there's a very human fly in the ointment: we won't look the same when we're 64.

At first blush, biometrics seem like the foolproof answer to that annoying problem of fallible human memory. Instead of remembering passwords for our computers or PINs for our bank cards, we can simply forget all those numbers and let the digital scanners read our palms and irises.

After all, hackers can't trick you into giving up your palm scan the same way they can steal a password, right? And that iris scanner to unlock your front door is far more secure than a key that might be lost or copied.

Well, not exactly. There are plenty of security issues with biometric security (including the ease of lifting someone's fingerprints, as this *Guradian* [article](#) reveals). But let's set those arguments aside for a second and look at the real number that could cause you some biometric headaches: your age.

Suppose you're a 20-something university student. Your library has a scan of your iris, making it easy to use the latest tech to check out your books. At your favourite restaurant, the fingerprint scanner lets you pay without digging through your pockets for cash or a credit card. And grabbing a coffee or hitting the ATM is fast—just let the palm reader verify the pattern of veins in your hand and you've got access to your accounts. (Yes, vein recognition is a real thing. As *LiveScience* [reports](#), banks in Japan have been using it for years.)

All's well in the land of biometrics as you ease into your thirties and maybe even your forties. But then nature starts catching up with you. Your skin gets thicker. Veins become pronounced. That record of your vein pattern at the bank? Maybe there are enough differences between the original version and your current scan that it shuts you out of the ATM.

But surely, you think, your eyes haven't changed since you got that iris scan done. Surprisingly, they probably have. That's because, just like the rest of your physical self, your irises change over time. As *Nature* [reports](#), there will always be a small probability of error in readings. Assuming that an iris hasn't changed since it was first scanned, the probability is about 1 in 2 million of getting what's known as a false match.

However, during a three-year study, researchers found that the false-match rate "increased by 153% over the three years." That's probably not a big deal when you're checking out library books. But some countries, including the UK and the United Arab Emirates, use iris scans as part of border security. And that could turn out to be a much bigger deal if a scanner decides you're not who you say you are.

There's no denying that biometric security features are useful tools. In some ways they're far superior to passwords and traditional identification methods. But we need to remember that, just like machines, the human body alters in countless subtle ways over time.

For the system to work well, it needs to account for that before we allow machines to lock us out of libraries, smartphones, or foreign countries. A reasonable guideline might be that a fingerprint, palm scan, or retina image expires after 10 years. There could even be a scanning centre where you update your profile just like your driver's license.

Otherwise, the tricorder at your doctor's office might not recognize you by the time you're 64.

*S.D. Livingston is the author and creator of the Madeline M. Mystery Series for kids, as well as several books for older readers. Visit her [website](#) for information on her writing.*

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS DESK

### At Home and Abroad



#### **At Home: Wildrose Promises Forgiveness of Half of Student Loans.**

In Alberta, the Wildrose party is promising to forgive 50% of student loans for post-secondary grads in high demand fields in Alberta. However, rather than being based solely on inflation, tuition policy would now cap tuition based on inflation and population growth.

Wildrose leader, Danielle Smith, says about the governing Progressive Conservatives "They talk about having a cap on tuition increases relative to inflation, but then all of these additional fees have popped up," referring to the province telling universities that they were willing to look at one time "market modifiers" to allow post-secondary institutions to increase tuition in specific programs to better match their competitor's tuition. This could mean an increase of up to 58% for Alberta Law students.

#### **Around the Globe: UK Public Supports International Students**

The PIE News is reporting that a recent study done in the UK has indicated that the public there overwhelmingly supports allowing international students to remain in the UK and take up employment there after they graduate. Almost 60% of the UK public has said that the government should not reduce international student numbers, as they recognize that these students contribute to the local economy through having to purchase rent, food, transportation, and entertainment in the community. They also recognize that the higher fees paid by international students benefit the university with a similar percentage agreeing that without the fees from international students, universities would have less funding to invest in top quality facilities and teaching.

While the Conservative Party, lead by UK Prime Minister, David Cameron, has placed immigration control high on its platform for next years elections, statistics from the report reveal that support for allowing international students to remain in Britain is highest among Conservative voters.

The report goes on to recommend that the government remove international students from any net migration targets and launch, and invest in, an international student growth strategy for the country.

## AUSU President, Wildrose Candidate

Karl Low

### An Interview with Jason Nixon

If you were in Alberta several weeks ago, you may seen some news [articles](#) about Jason Nixon unseating Wildrose Candidate Joe Anglin for the riding's nomination. For those who don't follow Alberta Politics, the Wildrose Party is widely viewed as the party most likely to be able to take power from the Alberta PC's, which have been in power continuously for over 40 years now.

Jason Nixon also happens to be the current president of AUSU, and I was lucky enough to be able to get our schedules to synch up for this brief interview about what his new role in the Wild Rose Party means.

#### **Which came first, AUSU or the Wildrose?**

Well, I was a member of the Wildrose party before I was ever an AU student, and I've been volunteering with them for some time now.

#### **You were working for the party as the constituency association's president, and, because of an earlier disqualification, Mr. Anglin was running unopposed for the nomination. What made you decide to run for the nomination yourself?**

I'd been involved for years as a volunteer with the Wildrose constituency association for the riding, and there had been a lot of frustration in the community with Mr. Anglin, neighbours had been suggesting I run for the nomination for the past couple of years. This time, they came forward with 400 signatures out of the 800 constituency members supporting my nomination. Given that large show of support for change I felt that it must be something I should do.

#### **Mr. Anglin claims in the paper that he was surprised by the nomination, but party officials said you had support of about half the constituency to run, and when the vote was held, you captured almost two thirds of it. The statements seem to be at odds with one another.**

I don't think there's any way he was as surprised as it was made out in the press, as there were many conversations that were had in general with Mr. Anglin, both with his board members, the community, and myself, who had spoken with him at various times in regards to the frustration and concerns.

#### **So what effects do you think being the current nominee for the Wildrose candidate in your riding has on your work for AUSU?**

No effects at all. The nomination's over, and I'm not a public candidate yet as any election is probably a couple years out. I just won the election in what is essentially a private club. I compare it to a local mayor winning a nomination. My job and my priorities right now are serving the AUSU membership and that is where my focus is.

I'm not concerned about a conflict of interest between the two as AUSU has very strict policies in place that we would follow if any conflict were to arise. Essentially, if there was a vote that might be a conflict for me and my position in Wildrose, I'd recuse myself from it, and the rest of Council would decide. We are not aware of any such conflict now, but are ready if one were to arise.

#### **Shifting gears a bit, I noticed that the Wildrose Party has no platform plank about post-secondary education, and no mention of it in their constitution, where even Alberta Heritage gets a brief nod. I think it's safe to say that post-secondary education isn't a priority issue for the party. Do you think it needs to be, or would that be spreading the party's efforts too thin to be effective?**

Post-secondary education needs to be a priority issue as far as I'm concerned. It's very important in my life and something I value very much. Specifically my passion is adult and rural post-secondary education, and I think those need to be made an issue along with all post-secondary education.

**So you're aware of the Statistics Canada report that showed the greatest determinant of whether a person undertakes a college or university degree is how close they live to one? More than parental schooling or even family income?**

Yes, and that's exactly why I think rural post-secondary education needs to be an issue, and where AU can fit into the mix.

Wildrose's next election platform and policies are being developed, and I think it'd be a benefit both to the party and to AU students if I can participate in the development of those policies. Any platform definitely needs to say something about post-secondary education.

**Now, I did notice that in Wildrose's member passed policies, there is a section for post-secondary, but the very first policy there, about funding being prioritized for Alberta students, seems to go directly against AUSU's very first position policy, which states that AUSU "strongly opposes the exemption of any aspects of distanced education from the Province of Alberta's Tuition Free Regulation", or in other words, from being eligible for public funding. Do you agree more with either one? How do you balance between these two policies? Or is it something you're going to have to deal with as it comes?**

When it comes to funding non-Alberta students, nobody has properly educated elected officials and political parties on why this is important and how it benefits Albertans. And it does benefit Albertans if you think about it.

Three of the main benefits are that, first, out of province students are investing in Alberta by bringing their money in to Alberta and into an Alberta PSE institution; second, out of province students, by increasing income and student numbers, provide a way for Alberta universities to provide more content and course and improved content and course to Albertans through Alberta PSE institutions, and third, that by providing a world-class high quality education to out of provinces students we are able to help with recruiting skilled people to fill labour shortages in our province.

So my views are the same as AUSU on this issue, and my balance is all on that side. When I get the chance, I try to educate my colleagues on it. But the problem is that I don't think any of us here have done a very good job of making these benefits known, and we need to start doing that.

*When it comes to funding non-Alberta students, nobody has properly educated elected officials and political parties on why this is important and how it benefits Albertans ... we need to start doing that.*

## On Your Own Time

### Solid Strategies for Online Study



**Barbara Lehtiniemi**

Online education brings both exhilarating freedom and sobering responsibility. On one hand, you're the master of your time. You can study when you want, if you want. You can work on your courses over early morning coffee, during your lunch break at work, or late at night after the kiddies are in bed. There's no dress code; you can study in your yoga pants, your ratty jeans, or your underwear.

On the other hand, online studies have a bit of a downside. It's all up to you—nobody is coaxing you along. Nobody is checking to see if you read the textbook. Nobody is forcing

you to get assignments done. Nobody's monitoring your ability to complete each course within the allotted time. Of course, you have a tutor (or that AU-equivalent, the call centre.) But they're not going to mommy you along. They'll help you if you ask for help, but you can't rely on them to contact you out of the blue to see if your studies are on track.

So, how do you make yourself do the work? How do you avoid the end-of-course crush or the extension fees? How do you plan around all of life's tempting diversions? What you need is a bit of discipline and a good plan.

**Start early.** You can usually access your course online a couple weeks before the start date. While you can't submit assignments or contact your tutor before the course start date, you can preview your course texts, read through the study guide, and create a study plan. On the first of the month, you'll be ready to plunge right into the course itself.

**Forget the sixth month.** A three-credit AU undergraduate course generally must be completed within six months. Pretend the sixth month does not exist. Plan your studies as though you only have five months—or fewer. If life sends you a surprise during those months, at least you'll have a cushion to fall back on instead of a nasty extension fee or an incomplete course.

**Over-schedule.** Determine the number of hours you need to work on your courses each week to meet your planned completion date. Then bump that number up 25%. Something always seems to interfere with a certain percentage of study time. If you have to work late at the office, tend to a sick kid, or watch Season 5 of *The Walking Dead*, you'll be able to manage the situation more calmly if you know you've still got enough study time planned.

**Set interim targets and meet or beat them.** Before your course starts, take a look at how it is structured. If your course is organized into units, divide the number of units by the number of weeks you want to take to finish the course. For example, if your course has ten units of study, and you want to be finished in five months, you've got about 20 weeks. So, that's two weeks per unit. Write down the dates you plan to have each unit completed. Meet or beat those dates without fail.

**Keep momentum.** If you finish a unit ahead of time, reward yourself but move on to the next unit immediately. Study will be easier—and more effective—if you do it regularly, and you will come to no harm if you finish your course earlier than planned.

**Guard your study time.** Treat your planned study time as though it were as important as in-person class time. Be firm with family, friends, and employers if they try to lure you away. Just say, "No, I'm working on my course that evening; we'll have to do it another time." They will respect your study time only if you do.

Whether you're taking one course at a time, or a full-time course load, starting off with good study strategies means a greater likelihood of finishing successfully. Don't leave your study schedule to chance. Put in a small investment of time now and you'll reap the reward later.

*Barbara Lehtiniemi is a writer, photographer, and AU student. She lives on a windswept rural road in Eastern Ontario*



## Writer's Toolbox

### It's All Right



**Christina M. Frey**

All right? All right! It's time to tackle that one little word that comes with all the problems. Well, not *all* of them, but many, and it's found in words and phrases like *all right* and *alright*, *all together* and *altogether*, *all ready* and *already*, and *all* and *all of*. This week and next, it's all about *all*.

Enough already! Let's get started.

#### All Right Is Two Words

Whether you're talking about a state of being or giving an exclamation or agreeing with someone in conversation, it's always two words: *all right*. Always. *Alright* is incorrect, though it's such a frequent error that it looks perfectly normal.

You can remember the rule this way: *How right?* *All right*. Both sentences have two words.

*Example A: All right! We're going to Canada's Wonderland!*

*Example B: I was sick yesterday, but today I feel all right.*

*Incorrect Example C: Alright, I'll sign up.*

*Corrected Example C: All right, I'll sign up.*

#### All Together, Now!

Another somewhat related pair of words is *all together* and *altogether*. Unlike *all right* and *alright*, both words here are valid spellings, but they mean different things.

*Altogether* is an adverb and means "in total" or "completely."

*Example D: That session was altogether a waste of time.* Here, the speaker is saying that the session was totally, completely a waste of time, so "altogether" is correct.

*All together*—two words—means "everyone/everything together" or "all of us/them/you together." If you can substitute "everyone" or "everything" or "all of us/them/you" for "all," then use "all together."

*Example E: Let's sing the anthem all together.* Here, "everyone" or "all of us" can replace "all," so we use "all together."

Now for a few more confusing examples:

*Incorrect Example F: We attended that session altogether.* This is incorrect because the sentence is trying to say that multiple people attended the session—"all of us"—together. Therefore, "all together" is the correct choice, not "altogether."

*Corrected Example F: We attended that session all together.*

*Example G: We avoided that session altogether.* This sentence seems similar, but the meaning is different. It is correct because the speaker is saying that the group totally or completely—"altogether"—avoided the session. Because the meaning is not in the sense of "everyone together," the use of "altogether" is appropriate.

In next week's Toolbox we'll look at two more phrase pairs that are commonly confused: *already* and *all ready* and *all* and *all of*. In the meantime, a quick summary. *Alright* is not a word; use *all right*. *Altogether* should only be used when you mean "totally" or "completely." If you're talking about a grouping, use *all together* instead.

Happy writing!

*Christina M. Frey is a book editor, literary coach, and lover of great writing. For more tips and techniques for your toolbox, follow her on Twitter (@turntopage2) or visit her [blog](#).*

## DID YOU KNOW?



## Your 15 Minutes Awaits!

Every AU student has a story, and we want to hear yours! *The Voice Magazine* will be publishing profiles of AU students from across Canada and around the globe. Being at a distance doesn't mean we can't help other students be inspired, and maybe your story is the one that will give somebody else the motivation they need.

If you can spare 15 minutes for a telephone or e-mail interview, contact *The Voice* at [voice@voicemagazine.org](mailto:voice@voicemagazine.org). Also, we'll make sure to get you some nifty *Voice* swag just for participating!

## The Mindful Bard

### Homecoming



freer I felt to take liberties."

- Nicola Benedetti

### The Violin: The Great Isthmus

The violin is the isthmus between high culture and low culture in Scotland, its vitality the footing of the folk and the art song tradition, and its beauty and range making it the perfect vehicle for classical scores. Besides this, the classical tradition, deeply inspired by the melodies of shepherds, farmers, and working people, has reflected to an enormous degree the folk canon.

But Nicola Benedetti wasn't permitted to play Scottish folk music during her early training; the rhythms and techniques were considered too complex and "other" than the classical repertoire to be of benefit to a classical violinist, and so her recent decision to take on this body of Scottish traditional tunes required a leap of faith even for this young maestro.

She did well, as all will attest; with *Homecoming* she's now the first Scottish classical artist ever to have broken into the UK Top 20. Thanks to the invaluable aid of Shetland fiddler Aly Bain, Benedetti has interpreted these pieces with sincere passion and the traditional techniques necessary to their performance, and without a hint of highbrow condescension.

### The Seam of Gold in the Craggy Rock

Traditionally Scots have come across in literature and film as rather cold and prickly creatures. (I wish I could remember the name of the comedian who compared the stereotypical Irish to the stereotypical Scots: "We Scots drink 'til we're bloody drunk, and we drink alone because we have no friends . . ."). And anyone who's heard Ivor Cutler's monologue series "Life in a Scottish Sitting Room" can never forget the repressive grandfather traumatising the poor frightened children.

## Wanda Waterman

**Album:** *Homecoming: A Scottish Fantasy*

**Artists:** BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Rory MacDonald, with violinist Nicola Benedetti

### The Musical High Roads and Low Roads Converge in "A Scottish Fantasy"

"My heart's in the Highlands, my heart is not here;  
My heart's in the Highlands a-chasing the deer;  
A-chasing the wild-deer, and following the roe,  
My heart's in the Highlands wherever I go."

- Robert Burns

"The classical and folk story is one of endless collaboration and crossover, shared material and playing techniques. Our education categorises and separates traditions that were never that far apart. The more connections of this nature I discovered, the

But all the pastiche goes out the window when we read the poetry of Robert Burns, that glittering seam of gold in all the craggy Scottish stone. True, he was pretty much abandoned by his neighbors, who looked down on him for some odd reason, but since his death he's been adored by Scots the world over for speaking on behalf of their covert tender side.

It's thus a meaningful coincidence that violinist Nicola Benedetti, the smoldering warmth of her Scottish blood given license on one side by an Italian father, was born and raised in Ayrshire, Burns's home county and attended the Wellington School in Ayr, Burns's birthplace. A child prodigy, she sailed through this school and later the Yehudi Menuhin School (under the teaching of Menuhin himself), emerging with an extraordinarily polished yet deeply sensitive and expressive style.

She also networks with musical education providers to promote and enhance musical training for youth. She's an active role model in Scotland's support of Venezuela's Big Noise project. In addition, she recently put together her own education and outreach project—The Benedetti Sessions—helping many young string players to take part in master classes and eventually to perform with her. So she gets an extra bravo from the Mindful Bard for so zealously supporting and inspiring young musical talent and musical education.

### The Line-up

The title track is a concerto written in 1880 by German composer Max Bruch and inspired by Scottish folk tunes, and the remaining lineup is representative of the music for which Scotland is universally known, including its best-loved songs (three are based on Burns poems—"Ae fond kiss," "My Love is Like a Red, Red Rose," and "Auld Lang Syne").

Each song is addressed with great discipline and rigour by soloists and orchestra; no attempt is made to rough them up for authenticity, yet they sound terribly authentic as Benedetti does some masterful double-stringing. At times you want to sit and listen quietly with your hands folded, and at others you want to get up and dance a jig.

The highlands are as well represented on this album as the lowlands. Julie Fowlis's tongue trips deftly over the dense consonants of Scots Gaelic in the songs "Bothan a bh'aig Fionnghuala" and "Coisich a Rùin" while delivering the slower songs with a heartfelt reverence.

The high point of the album would have to be "My Love is Like a Red, Red Rose," which redefines the words "rhapsodic." If ye've but a wee drop o' Scottish blood in ye, I challenge ye not to weep like a bairn.

*Homecoming* manifests four of the Mindful Bard's criteria for music well worth a listen.

- It's authentic, original, and delightful.
- It provides respite from a sick and cruel world, a respite enabling me to renew myself for a return to mindful artistic endeavor.
- It inspires an awareness of the sanctity of creation.
- It makes me want to be a better artist.

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.

## In Conversation With Fierce Bad Rabbit, Part I



**Wanda Waterman**

### Cool, Upbeat, and Not So Fierce as All That

*Fierce Bad Rabbit* is an indie folk-rock quartet comprised of Chris Anderson (lead vocals, guitar), Alana Rolfe (viola, vocals), Max Barcelow (drums/percussion/vocals), and Dayton Hicks (bass guitar), who've been playing together since 2009. Their latest album, *Living Asleep* (out September 23), is a spirited call-to-arms, the soundtrack for an examined young life ripe with initiative—it's like the kind of friend who picks you up and reminds you that you can make it if you try. Recently lead vocalist and guitarist Chris Anderson took the time to answer Wanda Waterman's questions about musical

*beginnings as well as onstage events that can lead to unaccountable hysteria.*

"You've got to fall down, you've got to get hurt,  
But you've just got to get up and kick off all of that dirt."  
- From "Everything's Alright" by Fierce Bad Rabbit

#### A Musical Childhood

"I was a pretty happy kid. I grew up in a very loving and nurturing family, and music was very much a part of our lives. All of us kids were required to take piano lessons from our grandma, who every two weeks would teach the three of us kids as well as my four other cousins. Music didn't really ever seem very important—I guess cause it was always around, but over time I grew to realize that I was gravitating to it more than the other kids were."

"My best friend had a guitar and knew how to play 'Santa Monica' by Everclear. I went home and learned to play the guitar that day. A couple of months later I had my first band."

"Later I was in a band with a much older and very experienced bass player who kind of taught us all the ropes of booking gigs, playing live, and touring. I would say that touring, as a whole, has taught me, for better or worse, the bittersweet side of the musical life. I started touring in my early twenties and after that music became a balancing act—a way of holding yourself up on a daily basis while remaining triumphant in your purpose to share the music. It can either wear you down or lift you up each day."

#### Creating Fierce Bad Rabbit

"We all knew each other from other bands and eventually all ended up making music together. I had some songwriting project I wanted to get some musicians behind and it all just clicked and kept clicking, and then we became like the family we are now."

"Coming up with the name was last minute. We needed a name and Dayton saw a friend's figurine or book called 'Fierce Bad Rabbit.'"

### **A Typical Rehearsal**

"I'll wake up at 6:00 a.m., leave Boston, and get on a southwest flight to Colorado. Once picked up from the airport I usually head to rehearsal for a couple of hours, we work out the set list for the next day's show, and that's about it. We trade stories about whatever is happening in our lives since we don't talk too much between rehearsals and shows—not cause we don't like each other, but because we all have a lot going on in our personal lives. We just pick up where things left off."

### **Inside Jokes and Hilarious Low Points**

"A whole lot of weird stuff goes on; I don't know where to start because most of our 'inside jokes' are probably too inappropriate or crude to share. But there was a time I farted in Brooklyn while playing a really slow, quiet song. I'm pretty sure the five people at the show heard it, because I think it was picked up by the microphone. I couldn't stop laughing and I had to sing this really heartfelt song."

"That was a pretty low point in our lives. Very Low. Straight-up hysteria. But funny stuff happens all the time. Nobody respects a guy for telling fart jokes—except us, I guess."

*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.*

### **Click of the Wrist**

### **All About September**

In September it's all about back to school and back to reality—which means the month itself can get lost in the hustle. But September has its own place in history, literature, and mythology. Here's what it's been up to all these years:

#### **Inspiring Poets**

Maybe it's the way it transitions between summer and winter—and the way this mirrors our own lives—but the month of September has inspired poets for hundreds of years. The Poetry Foundation links to over 700 poems inspired by the season (including one of my favourite [poems](#) of all, Wordsworth's "Composed upon Westminster Bridge, September 3, 1802").

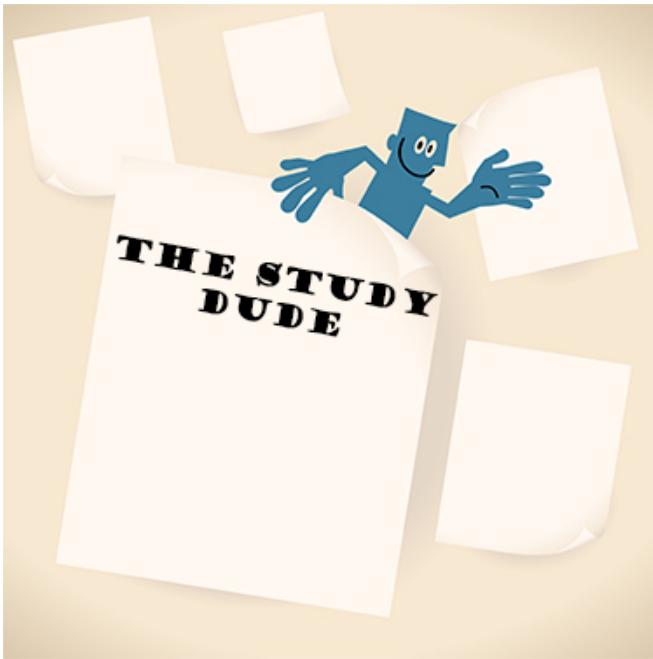
#### **Emboldening Goddesses**

Demeter is the Greek goddess of the harvest, traditionally worshipped around September. But she's more than just the source of earth's bounty. Read her story for a deeper understanding of how she was linked to the seasons—and to what lengths a mother will go for her daughter's sake.

#### **Confusing Historians**

"Thirty days hath September..." goes the old saying. But in 1752 it had only 19 days! The Connecticut State Library has a brief summary of calendar history in Western Europe and North America—along with an explanation of what happened in 1752, and why it can be so confusing to historians and researchers.





## Study Tips from a Semi-Anonymous Friend

*There is nothing more that The Study Dude wants than for you to have the ability to skim any document with better comprehension than had you read it with the painstakingly slow process that most overloaded students selectively avoid.*

*Well, in these articles, as The Study Dude, I'll try to give you the study tips you need to help make your learning easier. I'll also give you straight and honest opinions and personal anecdotes—even the embarrassing ones that you wouldn't ever dare read about from any other study tip guru.*

Today's study tips are based on a reading of Arthur Bell, Ph.D. and H. Bernard Wechsler's *Ultimate Speed Reading*

### Speed Reading: Several Methods

The Study Dude took up speed-reading in graduate studies when overwhelmed with readings that were superfluous to the material needed for class performance. Instead, I shot through the articles at lightning speed, picking up the pace with each reading and seeming to comprehend more than the small time span could seemingly offer. However, when it came to reading essential works, like chapters of a book or an article that held primacy to the subject matter studied, speed-reading was not an alternative.

Some people, like Kevin Paul (2009), the author of *Study Smarter, Not Harder*, insist that you should read carefully and deliberately everything for study purposes, while never at all taking up speed-reading. Study tip author Cal Newport (2007) as well as authors Jonathan Mooney and David Cole (2000), on the other hand, think that skimming has its place when overloaded with academic readings.

Yet, Arthur Bell, Ph.D, and H. Bernard Wechsler (2013) suggest that not only speed but also comprehension increases dramatically with a polished speed reading method. They say that speed-reading comprehension goes up by 15 to 20 percent, while the speed itself can increase tenfold. The Study Dude has yet to confirm this in practice, but perhaps with the following advice, it can be achieved.

Here are some of the approaches Bell and Wechsler (2013) use:

- Spend thirty minutes per day for three weeks honing your speed reading skills
- Pretend to underline the text with a pen or pencil tip held slightly above the paper, or with your thumb. Prior to each paragraph, remind yourself to "go faster"
- Omit the text on the endmost two words of the line in the underlining process (so, omit the first and last two words of each line); instead let your peripheral vision capture that text while speed-reading.
- Let your peripheral see what is to the right and to the left as well as what is above and below the text as you speed-read.

- Focus on the left, then middle, and then right side of each line. Take it further by mentally dividing the paper into three parts with two vertical lines and focusing on the point where the vertical lines intersect the text—allowing your peripheral vision to pick up the rest.
- Graduate to a z-pattern in speed reading where you speed read to the end of one line and then let your vision do a diagonal downward to the start of the third (or fourth or fifth, if you wish) line below, thereby creating a "z" pattern. Your peripheral is intended to capture or glean the missing material.
- The Study Dude's favourite is doing the reverse "S" pattern, which is like a z-pattern but less rigid, forming a backward "s" that keeps looping. The aim is to make the loops tighter during the more difficult parts of the material. Just let your eyes follow the fast moving "s" patterns you make down your page, allowing your peripheral to pick up a good portion of what is not directly covered with the "s" pattern.
- A final strategy is to make "fist notes", where each digit of your hand, starting with your pinkie, is associated with the following question words in order: "who" for pinkie, "what" for ring finger, ""when" for middle finger, "where" for index finger, and "why" for thumb. Then, "simply tuck a finger or thumb toward your palm as soon as you've answered the question it represents" (Bell & Weschler, 2013, p. 126).

One consideration for speed-reading is that the eyes need to be trained to take in peripheral information, and Bell & Weschler (2013) recommend such an eye exercise. The Study Dude read a good book on training the eyes through exercises such as eye rolling and working the peripheral. The book, *Improve Your Vision Without Glasses or Contact Lenses*, by Steven M. Beresford, outlines many eye exercises that you could do for, say, fifteen minutes to half an hour a day that would not only strengthen your eyes for speed reading, but strengthen your eyes in general so that your eye prescriptions will be less likely to worsen each year (at one point, we didn't brush our teeth, and they worsened over time; now, we don't exercise our eyes, and they worsen over time, but don't tell your optometrist that: he or she's in the big industry of eye care that will oust any such threats to its supremacy).

Also, The Study Dude had learned a different speed reading method which involved doing an initial large "s" pattern rapidly through the material and revisiting the material with tighter and tighter "s" patterns with each pass through. That approach seemed viable for a novice speed-reader, and may have implications for getting started with the above method.

So, there's nothing to fear. The Study Dude is determined to make right for you all the wrongs I made in grad school—one A+ at a time.

#### References

Bell, Arthur & Wechsler, H. Bernard. (2013). *Ultimate speed-reading: The skills you need to succeed in the business world*. Hauppauge, NY: Barron's.

Paul, Kevin. (2009). *Study smarter now harder*. Vancouver, BC: Self-Counsel Press.



*Dear Barb*

*Barbara Godin*

## A Tryst and the Bush

**Dear Barb:**

*I am in my early thirties and have been married for three years. My husband and I are really happy, get along great and enjoy being together. The problem is I met this single guy at work and we really seemed to connect. Unfortunately we connected too well. Last week we went out for lunch, had a few drinks and ended up at his place. I can't believe I was unfaithful to my husband! I feel so sick every time I look at my husband. Ken, my co-worker, says that I'm overreacting and it was just a onetime thing and happened because we were drunk. He says not to tell my husband and to just let it go. Not sure what to do! Should I tell my husband, or do as Ken says and just chalk it up to a foolish mistake and move on? Shameful Sue.*

**Hey Shameful Sue:**

I find it hard to believe your marriage is as good as you say. I doubt you would be so willing to cross the line and put your marriage in jeopardy if that were the case, even if alcohol was involved. For the most part, honesty is the best policy, but in this case you need to be very careful how you handle this truth. Perhaps you need to discuss this situation with a counselor. After a few sessions I'm sure the counselor will bring your husband into the sessions. If you really want to save your marriage you need to be honest with yourself before you can be honest with your husband. The first step to moving forward is to begin looking for new job. If your marriage is to survive, it will not have a chance while you are still working with this fellow. It is possible for a marriage to survive an affair, but often it depends on the situation surrounding the affair and how it was discovered. Thanks for your letter, Sue.

**Dear Barb:**

*My 15 year old son wants to attend a "bush party" I don't really know a lot about them. I am reluctant to allow him to go. He says all his friends go and there is no drinking or drugs. What do you think?*

*Jill*

**Hey Jill:**

A bush party is held in a farmer's field or vacant lot. A group of teenagers get together and party. Drinking alcohol and using drugs is definitely a part of bush parties. This is not the place for a 15 year old. Sometimes the alcohol is stolen from parents or an older teen will purchase it for the younger ones. A combination of young teenagers, alcohol, and drugs could be a lethal combination. Also they are trespassing on someone else's property. Bush parties can easily get out of hand, where hundreds of teenagers end up attending. Consequently, if the police are called charges may include trespassing, underage drinking, and drug use, at the very least. Undoubtedly a fifteen year old does not need to be attending a bush party. Instead offer your son the option of having a small gathering at your home or throw up some tents in the backyard for them. Try to maintain control of your son's activities for as long as you can, because at some point he will not be asking your permission. At that point you can only hope you have given him a good foundation to make the right decision.

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

## Comic

Wanda Waterman

# CHAZZ BRAVADO INC.

## Beauty Pageants Are Empowering!



My feminist friends say beauty pageants are sexist. Well I beg to differ! Beauty pageants are empowering!

Beauty pageants encourage girls to compete with each other for our attention!



Beauty pageants encourage girls to get their little minds off serious things and focus on being popular!



Beauty pageants offer girls opportunities to get ahead—opportunities they wouldn't have if they weren't hot, which means they have to really WORK at being hot! It's win-win!

BY WANDA WATERMAN



This space is provided free to AUSU: The Voice does not create this content. Contact [ausu@ausu.org](mailto:ausu@ausu.org) with questions or comments about this page.

## IMPORTANT DATES, AUGUST

- August 4: AU & AUSU closed – Civic Holiday
- August 10: registration deadline for a Sept 1 start date
- August 13: AUSU Council Meeting
- August 31: extension deadline for a Sept 30 contract date.

## Featured AUSU Member Service

### Smart Draw

AUSU has partnered with Smart Draw to provide members with their award winning business graphics software. This is a \$297 package is free for one year, only for AUSU members.

Smart draw allows users to create a wide range of charts, diagrams and other business graphics that can be dropped in to Microsoft Word or Excel files. This makes it easy for students to include professional diagrams in their assignments for AU classes.

To get more info on how to get this software for free, visit AUSU's website at [ausu.org/services/smardraw.php](http://ausu.org/services/smardraw.php)

Note: SmartDraw CI is the latest version. If you are upgrading an earlier version, email us for instructions.

## AUSU Featured Groups & Clubs

Group Name: Athabasca University

Where: Facebook

Members: 1211

About: Members are all types of students taking all types of AU courses. The members of the group seem to support, encourage, and give advice to each other on course content, study tips, and other AU topics.

Activity: multiple posts daily with lots of replies and discussion

## Great AU Finds Online

**Open AU** – AU's student-focused magazine is distributed through various national daily and regional weekly newspapers in Canada. This publication is no longer available online, but has been replaced with a news link through the banner at the top of the AU home page. You'll find more AU news in the News and

Announcements feeds at the bottom of the home page, and AU will continue to publish Open magazine, in print form, for the AU community, once a year.

<http://www.athabascau.ca/>



### This Week at lynda.com

lynda.com experts have curated playlists to help you get started. With hundreds of playlists in a variety of subjects, there is something for everyone. **Check out the playlist center for more information and enter the playlist title.** This week's featured list:

### Go Job Hunting

AU lacks a career services department, and there is no indication one will be provided in the near future.

Fortunately, lynda.com has training on a wide range of career and business skills. The Go Job Hunting list is ideal for new grads, or anyone seeking employment while they study. This stream of courses will teach you:

- job-hunting strategies, the use of popular employment sites like Monster and Indeed;
- how to create an effective resume that is tailored to a potential employer's needs;
- networking skills, including techniques for in-person and social media relationship building; and
- how to ace an interview, and answer the most difficult questions with confidence;

Additionally, career coach Valerie Sutton provides tips on everything from finding your passion, to maintaining a compelling on-line presence.

Courses: 7

Duration: 11h 12m

Skill Level: Appropriate for all

**Have you signed up for lynda? It's free for AUSU members. To learn more, check out [ausu.org/services/lynda.php](http://ausu.org/services/lynda.php)**

# CLASSIFIEDS

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

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