

# THE VOICE

## MAGAZINE

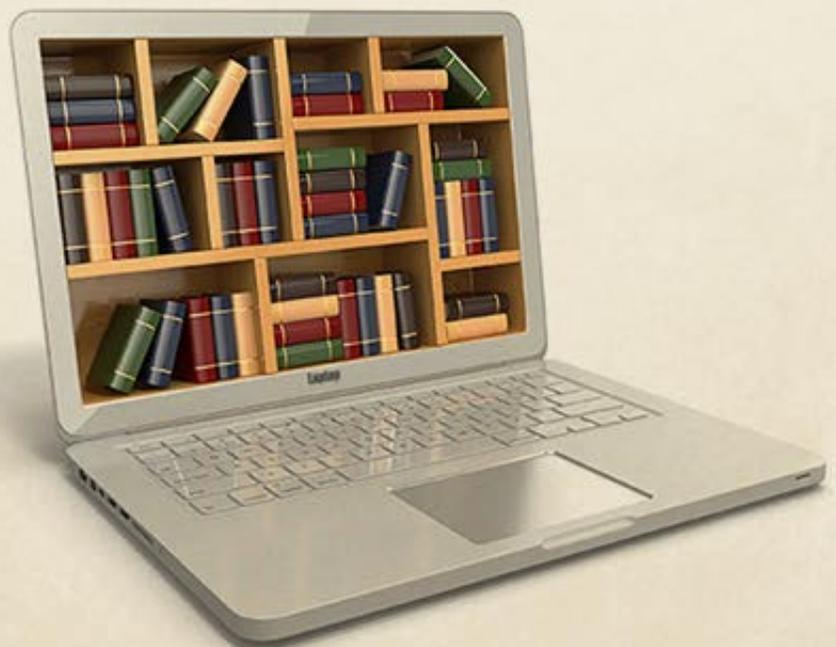
Vol 22 Issue 41 2014-10-17

**Mea Maxima Culpa**  
Dealing with Mistakes

**The AU Library**  
Tutorials and Guides

**Minds We Meet**  
Students Like You!

*Plus:*  
*Student Sizzle*  
*Did You Know? Extended!*  
*and much more!*



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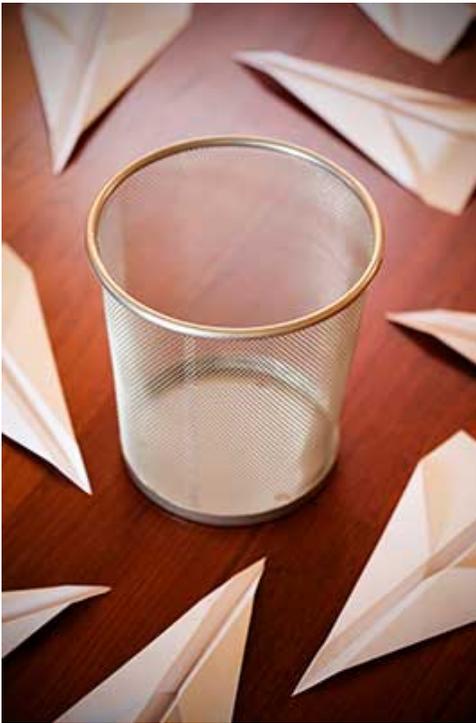
# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



**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.**

## EDITORIAL

Karl Low

**Mea Maxima Culpa**

If you read last week's issue after Friday evening, you likely would have noticed my correction to the Council Connection article that I wrote. As it turns out, that started a cascade of events which have lead eventually to this week's editorial where I want to take the opportunity to clear some things up.

First, I have to point out that although I did correct the mistakes, I didn't do so because a councillor told me to. Although it was a councillor who told me about them, I would have done the same thing if it had been the other observer at the meeting, or one of the AUSU staff. I don't like to let mistakes stand, and, in a long meeting like that, my own memory and notes were fuzzy enough that I could easily imagine that I might have made mistakes on those small details, so I corrected them.

And that, as it turns out, was my second mistake.

One of the more unusual things that correction caused is a call from our Editor-in-chief, Tamra Ross. Usually she's too busy wearing her AUSU Executive Director hat to bother watching over *The Voice Magazine* (which means I get a lot of free rein) but, as ED, she expected the article wasn't going to be too flattering to AUSU and so wanted to see what I said. Her argument had two points, the first being that if a councillor provides me with any direction as to what is published in the Voice Magazine, I'm to ignore it. While I, personally, don't have any issue with ignoring a councillor if I don't think the instruction is a good one for The Voice, there may be other editors who are not so sanguine about ignoring the people who have the ability, at the end of the day, to fire them. So the policy is that councillors don't instruct the Voice editor on anything, just to avoid any potential conflict.

The second was that if we make corrections after the issue is published, how can people trust that what they see is what is really the truth, how can they trust that we aren't modifying things after they're published and we get reaction from the readers, or council, or AU, or whoever. While I generally agree with this point, that's why I put the correction notice down below, and you readers do have my promise that any changes to Voice material after publication will be noted so that everybody knows what's going on.

However, it occurred to me that there's a third point. What if the person who told me I'd made a mistake was wrong? Or lying? I'm not saying that that's happened. Certainly not that it happened here. But the possibility exists, and if I change an article based on a lie, then that can make things even worse.

All of which brings me to the point of this article. I'm not perfect. And neither are our writers (though I expect they're closer than I am), so sometimes there will be mistakes. If you see them, point them out, I'll be happy to correct them—in the next issue. But what do you think? Should I correct articles that are already published with a note as to what's been done? Or should I just leave it and point out the correction in the next issue of *The Voice Magazine*? I know which way I'm leaning now, but I can still be swayed.

P.S. The survey is done, the contest drawn. If you haven't received an email from me, you haven't won, so sorry. If you didn't fill out the survey? Don't complain when we start our nine-part review on the cultural significance of Borscht. You had your chance.

# MINDS WE MEET

## A NEW VOICE COLUMN



*Allison Stewart is an AU student who lives in Edmonton and is the director of the public library in nearby Stony Plain, AB. She's working on her Communications Degree at AU and, once done, will begin her Master of Library and Information Studies (MLIS) at University of Alberta.*

*Allison was recently interviewed by The Voice Magazine about school, work, and long journeys.*

**Describe the path that led you to AU. What was it that made you realize you wanted to go back to school, and what pushed you into the program you've signed up for?**

I really got started on my education late in life. In was

in my 30s when I took Information Management and Library Technology at Grant MacEwan College. My kids were young, so I studied part-time in the evenings and online; I attended full-time later on. It took me four years to complete a 2-year program. I had intended to go on to get my masters, but study for that wasn't available online, and I still had to have a degree to get into that program.

After college I got a job as a school librarian. That worked out great because it meant I had the same hours, and the same holidays, as my two daughters. I was a single-parent at the time, so that was critical. As my kids got older and I was ready for new challenges, I accepted a position as the assistant director of the Stony Plain public library. Last year, I became the director. A condition of that position is a masters degree, so I had to start working toward my MLIS in order to accept the position.

**What do you do like to do when you're not studying?**

I'm a runner but I'm sidelined with an injury right now. I can still bike, though, and I belong to a women's mountain biking group called "Dirt Girls." I bike with them once a week but I don't have time to go on their weekend trips. In the winter I cross-country ski. My husband is a runner too, so some weekends we'll head to Banff, Jasper, or Canmore for running events.

**What are your plans for this education once you finish? How does it fit in with where you want to go?**

I love my job and this community, but I would never say that this is what I'm going to do for the rest of my life. Right now, my masters is a hoop I have to jump through. The library is required to employ someone with an MLIS so, in order for me to be director, we had to fill the assistant director's position with someone with a masters. There's really nowhere for someone with a masters to go in our library, but it's said we're a "farm

team" for the Edmonton library. That's where our previous director went. But I'll be at school for another 7 years, finishing my degree at AU then on to get my masters from UofA, so I'll be here for a long while yet.

**Who in your life had the greatest influence on your desire to learn?**

I would have to say some of the teachers I worked with in high school. Some of them were so passionate about teaching and instilling a love of learning. I always enjoyed school. I'm really knowledge-driven. Learning is a real priority for me.

**What famous person, past or present, would you like to have lunch with, and why?**

I would love to have lunch with Queen Elizabeth I. It wasn't easy at that time to be a female ruler. She resisted pleas to wed and produce an heir. She inherited an impoverished reign and rebuilt England into a strong country with a mighty navy. Strong women have always fascinated me.

**Describe your experience with online learning so far. What do you like? Dislike?**

I like that I can go at my own pace. And everything is right there when I need it. The downside is less involvement with other students. I miss those in-class discussions, which give you better insight into a topic. Online, you can't bounce ideas off each other like you do in class. I find the lack of student activity on the *AUSU Forums* disappointing. It's such an important tool but many posts go unanswered. I understand we're all busy, but that student-to-student contact is so valuable.

**When was the point where you wavered the most about whether it was worth it to continue your schooling, and what made you decide to keep going?**

Never. I am knowledge-driven and I find it exciting to be learning. What makes it work is that I have a supportive husband. It makes a difference to have someone helping with essential household chores like laundry and vacuuming.

**What's your most memorable AU course so far, and why?**

Without a doubt it was *Critical Reasoning*, PHIL 252. If I could talk to new students I would tell them, "take this course first!" It's so useful—the skills you learn in this course will help you in every other course.

*I miss those in-class discussions, which give you a better insight into a topic. Online, you can't bounce ideas off each other like you do in class. ... I understand we're all busy but that student-to-student contact is invaluable.*

**Describe the proudest moment in your life.**

I have a couple. The first one was having the courage to leave my dysfunctional first marriage. It was incredibly difficult, but nothing I did since that would have happened if I hadn't left. The second was getting my Library Technician diploma. Okay, one more: getting the director's position at the Stony Plain public library without having my masters. It felt great that they recognized that I would be right for the position.

**What have you given up to go to AU that you regret the most? Was it worth it?**

I've given up most of the vacuuming at home, but I confess I don't regret it! Seriously, what I miss most is just having casual time to spend with my daughters. Time is so restricted—I have to make a conscious decision to make time for them. They're both older now, 19 and 17, but I think time with them becomes even more precious as they get older and develop their own lives.

**If you were the new president of AU, what would be your first project?**

I think I would ask, "what are we not doing that we could be doing to better serve our students?" I'd want to talk to the students to find out. I'd also want to talk to staff to find out what their challenges are.

**If you were trapped on an island, what three things would you bring?**

I would bring a magnifying glass so I could start fires. And a knife. That would be a useful tool for cutting wood and making fishing lines. And a tarp for shelter. No! Scratch the tarp—I think I would want a survival guide.

**Describe one thing that distinguishes you from most other people.**

I have never learned how not to act like a 6-year-old when I'm excited. Honestly, if I'm excited or happy about something, I jump up and down and clap my hands. I'm in my 40s, so that sometimes takes people aback. I'm just very enthusiastic and I don't think it's wrong to show passion or excitement.

**What is the most valuable lesson you have learned in life?**

You're never too old to have fun! You have to look for positive things.

**What do you think about e-texts?**

I do lots of online reading for my courses already. I also have access to a lot of electronic reading through the library, so I don't really have any issue with e-texts. One thing I like is that, with my tablet, I can do electronic reading anywhere.

**How do you find communications with your course tutors?**

It's been very good for the most part. I think AU needs to review turnaround time for the marking of assignments. Is seven days realistic? I think I only got one back in that time. I don't think it's the fault of the tutors, or of the university—it's just the system. It really needs to be looked at. By saying seven days they create expectations in students that are often not fulfilled.

**Where has life taken you so far?**

In 2011 I went to Greece to run my first marathon. I started running in 2009, and, given my romantic soul, wanted to make my first marathon meaningful. What more fitting place to run my first marathon than where the first marathon took place—from Marathon to Athens?

I was born in Zambia, in southern Africa. When my family moved to Canada in 1976, we took a cruise ship from South Africa to England, then another ship to Montreal. From there we took a train across the country to Edmonton. I've also been to Whitehorse, in the Yukon.

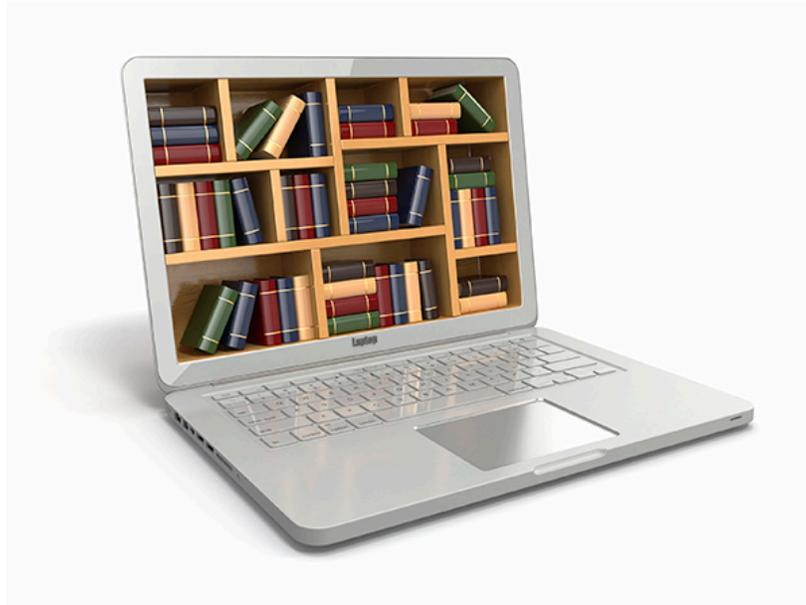
**What (non-AU) book are you reading now?**

Well, being at the library I do a lot of book-club reading. I just finished *Mercy Among the Children* by David Adams Richards. It's a gritty book about poverty in the Maritimes. I'm looking forward to reading *The 100-Year-Old Man Who Climbed Out the Window and Disappeared* by Jonas Jonasson. My daughter read it and laughed all the way through it, so I think it will be more uplifting than the previous book.

*Editor's Note: Allison also wanted to point out that she's a football fan as well, as you can see by the jerseys in the picture she sent us! -Karl*

## Welcome to the AU Library, Part II Tutorials and Guides

Barbara Lehtiniemi



Last week's article introduced the AU Library and its website. Check out the new look! The library's new website was launched October 15 and has the same URL: <http://library.athabascau.ca/>.

Using a university library for research requires some creative search strategies, according to Elaine Fabbro, Acting Director of Library Services at Athabasca University's library. Students need to think of the best way to narrow down their search criteria in order to return the most relevant results, Fabbro says. "If students are having trouble tracking down

resources," she says, "they can contact us."

As well as books, the AU Library has a "huge collection of online resources that students can access at home," says Fabbro. Students should not feel shy about contacting the library for assistance in tracking down resources for any reason. E-mail the library at [library@athabascau.ca](mailto:library@athabascau.ca) with your question, or phone them (toll-free in Canada and the United States) at 1-800-788-9041, ext. 6254, or locally at 780-675-6254.

We online learners can sometimes be an independent lot. It's often difficult to ask for help, or even to acknowledge we need it. Recognizing this, AU Library has several tutorials and guides on their site to support those who can't bring themselves to ask for assistance. Here are a few to check out:

### **AU Library Catalogue (AUCAT) Tutorial**

Start with the basics. This tutorial will take you through the steps to find books, audio-video materials, course materials, and e-books. The library catalogue (AUCAT) can be accessed from this webpage. The tutorial is a series of pages that describe how to: navigate the AU library catalogue; search using keywords, title, author, for example; access and use your library account; request a single item; and request multiple items.

Only physical items need to be requested—electronic resources are linked directly from the library catalogue. For physical items (books, A/V materials, etc.) once the library has received your request, they will mail available items to you. The parcel you receive will include a return mailing sticker (postage-paid for Canadian students.) When you are finished with the materials, pack them up in the same package you received them, apply the return mailing sticker and drop it off at a postal outlet.

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Students outside of Canada should contact the library for details on how to order/return library materials, and they'll need to add postage for the return.

### **Guide to the Research Process**

Even if you think you know how to research, your first step in the process should be AU Library's *Guide to the Research Process*. This guide will take you through the research process, step-by-step. First it describes how to size up your assignment, select a topic, and develop a search strategy. Then it demonstrates how to choose your research tools, search for information, and request materials. Finally, the guide walks you through evaluating your results, writing your research paper, and citing your sources.

The *Guide to the Research Process* demystifies the stages of a research paper and will help put you on the right track. Even experienced students can benefit from a review of research strategies. As always, students can contact the AU Library for assistance with any stage of the research process.

### **Tips for Searching (Boolean Search Guide)**

Subtitled "Learn how to develop effective search phrases" this guide helps students develop research strategies that bring the most relevant results. Boolean searches employ the terms "and," "or," and "not" to refine their searches for relevant information. This guide goes much further and describes nesting to use alternate terms that explain the same concept (for example, youth, young adult, and teenager are different terms for similar concepts.) The guide also covers phrase searching and truncation, the latter employing wildcard characters so that a search for teen\* would broaden to search for teen, teens, teenager, and teenagers. Finally, this guide wraps up with choosing a search tool and conducting a comprehensive search.

The *Tips for Searching* guide is an invaluable resource. Consider it an investment: the time you spend reading the guide will save you time that you might have spent wading through results that proved to be too broad.

### **Google Scholar**

This tutorial gives you a less-than-four-minute walk-through on how to perform scholarly research using *Google Scholar*. Because it draws from academic articles online, you may find more current information than those returned in print resources. You can access *Google Scholar* at [scholar.google.ca](http://scholar.google.ca). This quick tutorial also includes instructions on how to import your search results into *RefWorks*. We'll take a closer look at *RefWorks* in next week's article.

Students can find these and other tutorials on the AU Library's *Get Help* page, which is available from the horizontal navigation menu of the Library's site.

An essential resource for AU undergraduate students, the AU Library is here to serve you. If you have any questions, you're welcome to contact the library directly by e-mail at [library@athabascau.ca](mailto:library@athabascau.ca) or by phone at 1-800-788-9041, ext. 6254.

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

**DID YOU KNOW? Extended Edition****AUSU Health Care Plan**

You may not have noticed it yet, because they're trying to do a "soft launch" just to get the bugs out, but the AUSU Health Care plan, as provided by Gallivan & Associates, is now up and running. So, *The Voice Magazine* is here to give you some facts about how the plan works and stacks up to other plans you may have access to.

**Does it cover as much as my private plan?**

Probably not. If you already have a private health care plan, it probably covers more than the AUSU plan does. But it probably also costs a lot more.

As a comparison, I currently have a health care plan that's quite good, but it costs me close to \$175/month. The AUSU negotiated plan will cost you only \$325/year, which is just over \$27/month.

**Is it as cheap as the plan provided by other Students' Unions at campus-based universities?**

No. But it's close. By comparison, the plan offered at the University of Calgary (also run through Gallivan & Associates) will cost you 95.50 for four months. That's just under \$25/month. But to get coverage for the full year, you'd also have to sign up for eight courses over the year; three in each of the fall and winter terms, and two during the spring/summer term. Plus, the plans at campus-based universities tend to have strict opt-out policies, where you have to demonstrate that you have other insurance already, and then provide that proof within a single month during each term.

**So what's the big deal, then?**

The big deal is that this plan works for the majority of AU students. Whether you take two courses or ten during the year, you qualify for the AUSU plan. If you took one course six months ago and you're just signing up for your second course now, you qualify for the AUSU plan. If you don't want coverage for some reason, opting out is easy and requires no proof of other insurance. If you already have coverage, say through your work or your campus-based institution, this plan can go on top of that to supplement it. So if you have the plan at the U of C, you'll get 80% coverage of your prescription drug costs up to a max of \$3000 over the term. If you then top that up with the AU plan, you'll get coverage of up to 70% of the total cost, up to a max of \$1000 for the year. Put those two together, and they'll cover the full cost of the prescription, meaning you don't have to pay a cent. And when your U of C coverage expires in the summer, you'll still have the 70% coverage from your AUSU course the next time the doctor sends you to get some antibiotics or other pills.

**Are there any other benefits?**

The full list of benefits can be found at <https://www.mystudentplan.ca/athabasca/en/home> and you can use their live help function if you have specific questions about the coverage, but one of the more important things to know is that Gallivan & Associates will help you to find low cost options for doctors, physiotherapists, prescriptions, dentists, or whatever it is you need so that you can maximize your benefit coverage.

**When I go to that site, it says that it doesn't start until December 1, 2014. What gives?**

Because of how the timing for contracts and that kind of thing has worked out, these first few months are going to be a little bit different, with coverage starting as of December 1, 2014, although you can enroll for it right away. Once the program has started, then students who register by the 10<sup>th</sup> of a month for their second course in a twelve-month period will have coverage start at the beginning of the next month, typically when their course starts. If you're one of those rare people who like to pre-enroll several months in advance, your coverage starts in the month following when you pre-enroll, no matter when your course actually starts.

**What if I finish my course early? Or take extensions?**

The coverage lasts for a year from when you enroll. When you finish doesn't matter.

**I have kids. Can I get them covered too?**

Yes. But there are extra fees to doing so. Enrolling one extra member of your family, a spouse or dependant, will cost an additional \$325/year. If you have even more children in the family, then a final additional payment of \$325/year will cover all of them. So a total payment of \$975 will provide coverage for all of your dependants and your spouse, no matter how big your family is.

**I can only afford a single course per year, and I could really use some help with physiotherapist bills, can I get coverage?**

Unfortunately, no. You need to have registered in at least two courses over a 12-month period. That's as low as the insurer was willing to go to provide a student rate. When you consider that for most universities insurers simply don't allow part-time students to participate at all this seems an excellent deal for AU students.

Also, remember you don't have to take the two courses at the same time, so long as both enrollment dates are within a twelve-month period. This means that if you last enrolled in January of this year, then so long as you manage to enroll for December of this year, you're eligible for coverage under this plan.

**How long will this plan be offered for?**

It's hoped that it will be offered for the foreseeable future. In many ways this is going to be a testing period for Gallivan & Associates to see if they can generate enough interest to make money from it. They realize that not just Athabasca University, but a lot of schools are starting to look at distance education, and currently there aren't really any good plans out there that can handle the variety of students, locations, and options that distance education students need. If this goes over well, you can expect that the coverage may improve and the costs come down as they roll it out to other institutions as well.

**Is AUSU leaning on you to advertise this for them?**

Nope. I mean, I know they want to see it succeed, but this is something I genuinely think is a good deal for students. Good enough that I'm seriously considering enrolling in it myself, just to top up my current insurance.

## Music Review

### EP NY 5

Samantha Stevens



**Album:** *EP NY 5*

**Artist:** Stereo Off

Five piece electro-rock band Stereo Off released their new album, *EP NY 5*, this past January, which was recorded in their own studio in New York City. Formed in 2012, Stereo Off has played some of the city's top venues. Stereo Off's music is alluring, entrancing, and all round enjoyable, and they combine the rock music found in venues around NYC with the electronic music found in the dance clubs of London. Their style is a direct reflection of the band's personal

history, and together they have proven that, no matter your musical background (which, for this band, happens to be everything from classical to electronic and hip hop) great music can come from anywhere.

Influenced by classic rock bands, 80s music, and electronic and dance music, Stereo Off's new album is sure to appeal to a wide range of listeners. Their sound reminds me of The Clash, Arctic Monkeys, Buggles, Daft Punk, and David Bowie all rolled into one with a sprinkle of alternative rock for good measure.

I really enjoyed their album, which is available on their [website](#), but I was a little disappointed that it was so short. With only five tracks on the album, it is typically difficult for bands to demonstrate their skills, especially with such a complicated sound like Stereo Off's. Yet they were able to showcase their talents, and prove that not only are they musical masters, but they are comfortable with such a diverse genre like electro-rock.

"Photographs" is the first track on the album. The song is dominated by the impressive guitar playing, sensual vocals, and rhythmic drums. This song immediately captured my attention and I was eager to hear more.

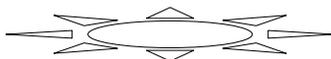
Accompanied by a fun and imaginative [video](#), "Bullet Time" is the second song on the album. The video is more of a movie which casts the band members, captures picturesque shots of New York City, and an interesting story. However, I found that the video detracted from the song. The song is beautiful with entrancing vocals and killer keyboard playing. The addition of the strong bass gives the song a suspenseful feeling.

In the song "Effectual" the band focuses on their combination of classic rock and electronic music. It's followed by the song "The Thrill", which starts off like a classic 80s song. In fact, the song reminds me of the Buggles's classic "Video Killed the Radio Star" but this song is much slower, with David Bowie-like vocals.

The final song on the album, "Mi6", switches the sound so that the song comes across as an alternative rock song with 80s singing. As well, like most older music, the lyrics tell an imaginative story that draws in the listener.

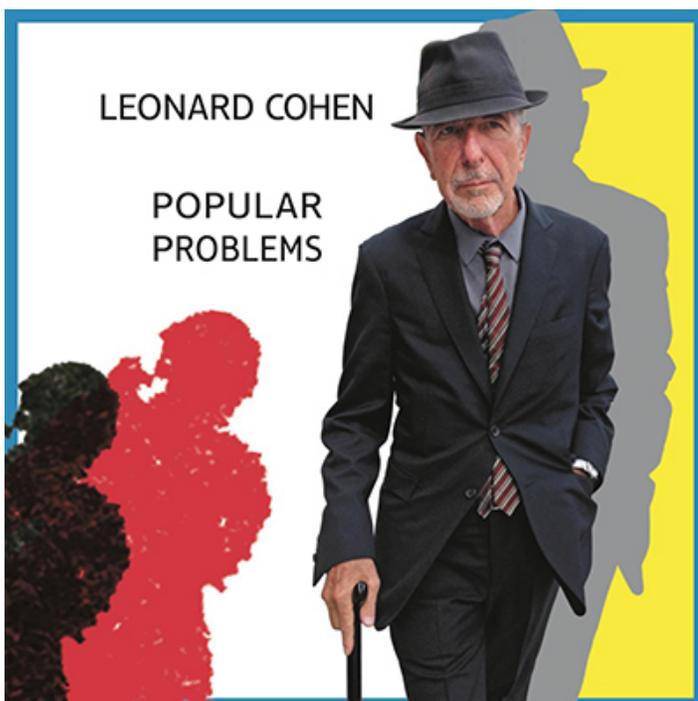
Overall, I really enjoyed this album and I think it is perfect to play at any time, for any occasion. Although, I think it would work best in a social setting, like a pub or bar, or when having a few friends over. If you are in the mood for something different that is true to the classics from which it draws its inspiration, then be sure to check out Stereo Off's *EP NY 5*.

*Samantha Stevens is an aspiring writer who loves combining her love for literature with photography, painting, music, and all creative pursuits.*



## The Mindful Bard The Sound of a Soul Unfolding in the Chambers of Longing

Wanda Waterman



**Album:** *Popular Problems*

**Artist:** Leonard Cohen

"I saw some people starving  
There was murder, there was rape  
Their villages were burning  
They were trying to escape  
I couldn't meet their glances  
I was staring at my shoes  
It was acid, it was tragic  
It was almost like the blues"  
- Leonard Cohen, "Almost Like the Blues"

It's refreshing to find humour in a Leonard Cohen album right from the clever title, not just because his songs have long been couched in a kind of nihilist twilight but also because, contrary to expectations, the humour actually works—it's dark, dry, and never awkward or silly. *And* it does much to lighten the deeply serious subject matter that comes in its wake.

Humour is an effective buffer for the content of this album, which perhaps more than any other Cohen disc examines his personal take on his Jewishness and manifests an honest but cavalier stance toward anti-Semitism—both the anti-Semitism of history and the anti-Semitism that's been burgeoning lately in response to the Israel-Palestine conflict.

What's always been so wonderful about Cohen is his sincerity. Just when you think he's posing he shows that the elegant, romantic, poet-lover is the real McCoy and not just a media invention (an image with which he's sometimes amused but which he's never disputed).

In "Almost like the Blues" he makes a typically oblique reference to what it's like to be a diaspora Jew today; heir to a rich but painful history, and now blamed for the sufferings of the victims of the Zionist agenda.

There are many sides to this dilemma. If I understand "Samson in New Orleans" right, it's an expression of the Jew's bitterness and rage at having been "captured" by an enemy society and shorn of his strength.

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"Nevermind" seems to be the offhand end-of-life remarks of a Nazi, minimizing and undermining truth even as he seems to want to come clean. He reveals his own callous hypocrisy as well as the hypocrisy of those, including his former victims, who chose to follow in his footsteps.

With "Born in Chains" Cohen lifts the tragedy of his existence to lofty heights.

"I've heard the soul unfolds  
In the chambers of its longing  
And the bitter liquor sweetens  
In the hammered cup  
But all the Ladders  
Of the Night have fallen  
Only darkness now  
To lift the Longing up"

And thus we're left with the kind of hope and transcendence that only darkness can bring.

Cohen loses points for using the same type of rather insipid female backup singers he's always used, but hey, he's already done it this way, and he gains the points back for hiring a great sound engineer.

It's also a huge plus that the website gives you the lyrics of each song, because they're all worth contemplating at length, as I did as a teen with his early albums over crackers and chamomile tea.

If anything, time and experience have made this wonderful poet even better equipped to bring us meaning and delight in this vale of tears.

*Popular Problems* manifests six of the Mindful Bard's criteria for albums well worth hearing.

- It's authentic, original, and delightful.
- It poses and admirably responds to questions that have a direct bearing on my view of existence.
- It's about attainment of the true self.
- It inspires an awareness of the sanctity of creation.
- It displays an engagement with and compassionate response to suffering.
- It makes me appreciate that life is a complex and rare phenomena, 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.*

## The Travelling Student A Night in Montreal

Philip Kirkbride



*My name is Philip Kirkbride. I'm a college graduate from Ontario studying at AU. I always wanted to do an exchange program or study abroad but never found the right time to do so. This is part three in the story of how Athabasca University has allowed me to create my own study abroad program.*

*In part two we continued driving down the 401 highway towards Val d'Or but a last minute text message caused us to change directions towards our new destination, Longue-Rive in the Cote Nord region of Quebec.*

We drove to Montreal and decided to call it a night. I had done some research and found a good deal on a hotel as we drove into the city. It wasn't until we arrived that I realized I had stayed at the exact hotel 4 years prior, during my only visit to the city.

We arrived at the Sandman hotel in Longueuil, and, after a quick check in, took the elevator to the thirteenth floor where we sunk into our beds. Likely where we would have stayed for the night had it not been for our lack of snacks and beer. After going through two cans of Pringles we grudgingly left in search of food. Going mainly on memory, I quickly navigated us to the subway station heading downtown. Good food seemed scarce in the area and Matt and I have a habit of making every meal count (in my case, while sticking to a student budget).

Several stops later, the subway had cleared out when we arrived at the downtown station. Four floors of the concrete maze that is the Montreal subway system now had to be navigated through and we expected to emerge downtown, but instead ended up in a sort of underground mall. After a quick realization I explained to Matt that we were in the famous Montreal Underground, a long underground mall in downtown Montreal. Unfortunately all the stores were closed or in the process of closing. No food here.

Turning a corner and going up a set of stairs, we opened doors leading us out into the bustling downtown of Montreal. In about a block or so we saw and entered a shawarma place. I've often had good luck with shawarma places in terms of quality versus price, and this place was no exception. The quality was excellent (though not recommended for those on a diet). My chicken shawarma, for instance, came with a side of home fries, smothered in the optional mayonnaise.

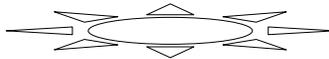
A few hours later we found ourselves regretfully leaving two lovely ladies we had met at nearby bar. The last subway was heading back to Longueuil and we didn't want to miss it. Before entering the stairs down into the subway, though, we came across a homeless man who was repeatedly punching a car window. Not just punching. The man would run from across the street at full speed and smash his fist into it.

The police soon arrived to, I assume, stop to the guy. They talked to him for a bit and then looked like they were ready to take off when Matt started yelling at the cops "What the hell do you think you're doing, that guy should be arrested!" I'm not sure if the cops were just taking their time or if Matt's comment had an effect but they got out of their car and arrested the man. (I like to think we had an impact)

One stop before our destination, I decided we should get off so I could give Matt a quick tour of Saint Helen's Island. It's a small island, packed with attractions, between downtown Montreal and Longueuil. The island includes a theme park, casino, The Montreal Biosphere, as well as The Concordia Bridge (where a great view of the city can be seen).

We soon found ourselves at the Montreal Biosphere where Matt's interest of the sphere's architecture greatly exceeded mine. Having worked on construction sites Matt explained how he imagined it was constructed. We walked right up to the structure where Matt asked me if I thought we were allowed to climb it. By the time I finished explaining how this was certainly illegal and that security likely patrolled the area Matt was already two levels up and climbing.

I found myself drafted as the lookout for security as Matt climbed higher onto the Bio Dome, and I was just hoping our arrival back at the hotel wouldn't be by cop car or ambulance.



## Maghreb Voices

### The Famished Roots of Violent Extremism

Wanda Waterman



**Film:** *Horses of God*

**Director:** Nabil Ayouch

**Writer:** Jamal Belmahi, based on the book by Mahi Binebine

"I was very interested in violence itself because I believe violence has a source. It has a reason why; it doesn't come from the sky. I was interested in the genesis of violence."  
- Nabil Ayouch

"The name that can be named is not the eternal name."  
- The Tao Te Ching

On the 16th of May, 2003, 12 suicide bombers set off explosions in five different locations in Casablanca, Morocco—locations chosen for the number of Jews and Christians expected to be present—killing forty-five people. *Horses of God* is the imagined backstory of this shocking event.

Most North Americans know little about the city of Casablanca other than its having been the setting of the classic Hollywood film set there and named after it. But let's imagine that just as Ingrid Bergman and Humphrey Bogart are reuniting over the dulcet tones of Dooley Wilson singing "As Time Goes By," a group of dour young men stroll into the bar and blow up the joint. You may have some idea of the shock caused by the terrorist act of May 16, 2003.

Backtrack. Brothers Yachine and Hamid are a couple of street urchins growing up in in Sidi Moumen, a slum outside Casablanca. Their mother is a shrew, their father seems to be suffering from PTSD, and their older

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brother appears to have suffered some kind of drug-induced brain damage. They struggle to help their families survive—even though there appears to be no future worth surviving for. Like so many of their peers, they're learning how to drown their misery in violence, drugs, and alcohol. And these are the smart ones.

As counterintuitive as it seems, suicide bombers and other terrorists are no more likely to be stupid or mentally ill than you or I. It's tempting to dehumanise terrorists by thinking of them as either simpleminded or criminally insane, but the research is clear: the only things that distinguish the terrorist from everyone else are their special circumstances and their willingness to follow orders.

*Horses of God* forms a very clear picture of the conditions that lead to terrorist acts. One has only to do a short study of martyrs from the history of any religion to see that those willing to martyr themselves were generally humiliated, hopeless human beings looking for some way to escape their wretched lives with a shred of dignity and the hope of a reward beyond the grave.

Although it doesn't come across as preachy, *Horses of God*, in its roundabout way, suggests a solution. The German psychoanalyst Karen Horney wrote that a neurosis could only be cured by removing the conditions keeping that neurosis alive; the same might be said about stopping terrorism: remove the conditions that make religious extremism attractive, and you just might prevent acts of terror.

So what are the conditions that lead these young men to commit this crime? Poverty, poor education, social marginalisation, hopelessness, television images portraying a prosperous life in the west, and an astonishing ignorance of those elements within their own culture and religion which might have pulled them out of the morass.

In comparison with the slum's poverty, debauchery, ugliness, vulgarity, and churlishness, the world of Islamist devotion is an oasis— clean, neat, orderly, respectful, polite, disciplined, calm, and ripe with a sense of divine purpose.

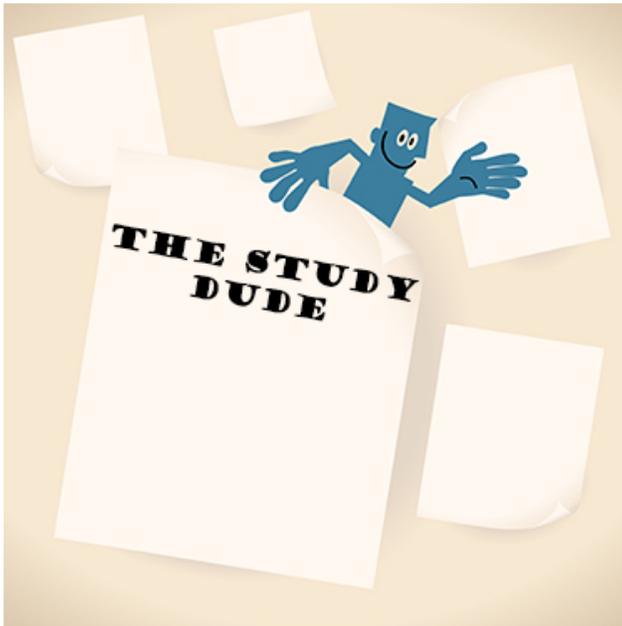
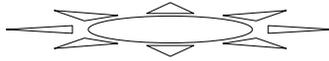
You want to believe that it's the smart ones who resist the call, but not so; in fact it's the most dissolute young men who reject the Salafists' program and the smartest ones who accept it.

Entering a terrorist ring is for these young men simply the lesser of two evils; like it or not the world of religious zeal looks better in every way than the lives they're abandoning; among the pious brothers they're fed, clothed, taught, and granted a sense of belonging and respect. You can see how such deprived young people might be attracted to this kind of life. By the time Yachine dons his *djellaba* and joins the well-dressed men and boys headed to the mosque, you're ready to cheer even though you know full well where all this is headed.

What looks to be devotion eventually shows itself to be a persecution complex complete with violent revenge fantasies. The brothers spout doubtful *Hadiths* and quote scripture out of context to justify the pain and destruction they wreak on innocent human beings.

The message can easily be extended to the bigger picture. The leaders of this cell demand martyrdom of the young men under them (as opposed to sacrificing themselves) in the name of the higher good they claim to love; it's all part of a sick power game, a ploy used by tyrants to exercise an unnatural power over others. But are the brothers so different from nations that send young soldiers to war, reeling them in with nationalist propaganda?

The cinematography is dark, yet detailed. A zenith of gritty realism in which nothing sensational distracts from the film's power to lead us into a state of empathy. We see a lot of long tracking shots of the slum, showing the ugliness of the poverty there. The acting also is formidably good, particularly that of Abdelilah Rachid in the role of Hamid; his steady gaze encompasses good and evil and begins to take on the will to good, as if to say that even within this cesspool of human ignorance and confusion there exists a redeeming radiance that can reverse the tidal wave of extremist violence.



### Study Tips from a Semi-Anonymous Friend

*There is nothing more that The Study Dude wants for you than to be selected as the next Ted Talk presenter—fully furnished with Study Dude tips on how to make a dazzling presentation.*

*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 a reading of the book *Resonate: Present Visual Stories that Transform Audiences* by Nancy Duarte.

#### Key Tips for Making Slides

The Study Dude made slides and even multimedia presentations for school that involved long and tiresome bullets of texts—hogwash in short. But now, I want to make and submit a course on study tips for an online course provider, and the passé approach of making PowerPoints streamlined with text just won't make the cut. So, how are you supposed to prepare PowerPoint presentations in the 21<sup>st</sup> century? Nancy Duarte (2010) has advice that will make you a model presenter:

- See audience members as the heroes of your presentations and see yourself as the mentor.
- Make sure slide contrasts between what is the present situation to what could be the potential situation. This is a primary theme in all of the speeches and presentations that Duarte analyzes.
- Make use of excellent contrast between emotion and logic, between the visceral and cerebral, between information and story by using facts offset with stories. However, it is important to keep in mind your audience, lest you stray too far into the emotional realm when speaking to a scientific study or vice versa.
- Use sound bites, or memorable little slogans or tidbits that you can repeat for impact, if you wish.
- Limit each slide to one idea.
- Storyboard your presentation on sticky notes, as the limited space on the sticky notes will limit the wordiness of your slide.
- Better yet, reduce large phrases to a single word.
- Use as many slides as you need. As Duarte (2010) states, slides are free, so use them to your advantage. Plus, the changing visuals add intrigue. This way, you can ensure that you limit slides to one idea each—I repeat, one idea each.

- As Hollywood often changes the visual every three seconds or so, change up your visuals as often as possible. It maintains viewer intrigue.
- Use your computer as a teleprompter and use a different computer for projecting your slides on a screen.

The Study Dude has learned that there are teleprompter apps that connect with your iPad that are brilliant for substituting as a teleprompter.

### **A Summary of the Process for Making Slides**

The Study Dude made multimedia presentations that took many hours of analyzing the music to accompany a speech, modifying the speech so that it fit precisely within each beat and each measure, preparing visuals that were timed at precise points for visual effect and contrast, and selecting sound effects at certain points for impact. Those were the days!

However, Duarte demonstrates that the process for creating PowerPoints should be no less laborious, no less thought through, no less meticulous than those presented by some of the top presenters in the history of the world. Before we look at the process used by composer Leonard Bernstein, let's examine the summary of the process for making slides as outlined by Duarte (2010):

- Brainstorm and generate as many initial ideas as possible, getting inspiration from a variety of resources.
- Begin to selectively remove some of the ideas, which Duarte (2010) refers to as "murdering your darlings." Stick to only those ideas that reflect the big idea and dispose of the extraneous material.
- Start to group your ideas into logical topics, ensuring that each topic does not overlap the others. Make each topic heading mutually exclusive.
- Now that you have, say, a single word topic for each grouping, turn each of those topics into a sentence-long message.
- Order your messages into some structure that adds clarity and pizzazz. The structure could be chronological, in order of relevance, etcetera, not at all dissimilar to the orders you might find common to an essay structure.
- Each message should have sufficient supporting slides as evidence.
- Make your messages stronger with effective turning points.
- Ensure your messages have the contrast spoken about earlier, by fortifying your facts with emotional points and stories and by using non-traditional means for presentation intermittently, such as video, role playing, props, and so forth.
- Turn your slides into simple pictures or large single words (or small sound bites). The idea of storyboarding on sticky notes mentioned earlier would help to ensure that you limit the images and texts in the larger PowerPoint slide format.

### **Leonard Bernstein's Technique Capitulated**

At last, we get to study the technique of the incredible composer Leonard Bernstein who made the Young People's Concerts presentations so enticing, so inspiring that they have left a legacy. His lecture concerts were the product of painstaking planning. The Study Dude is in awe of such detailed planning made by creative geniuses such as Bernstein. What follows is part of the legend's process for making memorable presentations:

- He compiled notes upon notes of script ideas for the presentations, which he and his team would purview in detail.
- Metaphors and allegories would be examined to ensure appropriateness with the audience
- The editing process would be continual, right up to the point of performance, but wouldn't stop there. The actual presentations would be video recorded and further studied (such as is done by top athletes), so that Bernstein could make further refinements and adjustments along the way. Conductors are known to video record performances and study them, so doing this for a presentation came naturally to Bernstein.
- "He planned every word and audience reaction carefully" (p. 189). He had scripts modified for every possible audience reaction, such as a specific script to be used if the audience laughed and an alternate one if the audience stayed silent.
- Bernstein even planned how and where he would stand on stage. Every detail was primed for quality presentation.

(Duarte, 2010)

In Duarte's (2010) book, she does similar case studies of the meticulous care taken with presentations made by people like Alfred Hitchcock and Steve Jobs. Why shouldn't your presentations be any less stimulating? The Study Dude believes that, perhaps with some refining, your presentations could be part of the next generation of memorable world moments. As Duarte (2010) says, "All of us are unique. We each have our own pattern of creativity, and if we do not express it, it is lost for all time" (p. 213). I want to hear what you have to say. The world needs your voice.

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

Duarte, Nancy. (2010). *Resonate: Present Visual Stories that Transform Audiences*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

## Student Sizzle

## AU's Hot Social Media Topics

Following what's hot around AU's social media sites.



### AUSU Student Forums

In the *Psychology Forum*, "Jofe" seeks advice about PSYC 323's final assignment and exam. Meanwhile, in the *General Student Chat Forum*, "DeaDot" tracks down an older post with inspiring advice from a graduating student.

Other topics include courses NURS 328, MKTG 396 and ECON 249.

### AthaU Facebook Group

Mohamed seeks advice from others who have graduated from BSc - Computing and Information Systems. Rose is trying to organize a Nov 2 get-together for Ottawa-area AU students.

Other postings include how the lab component for CHEM 217 works, and courses LGST 390, MKGT 396, and WGST 400 and 401.

### Twitter

@AthabascaU retweets @TopMBA's post that AU graduates are on average Canada's highest-earning MBAs.



## Something to Show

This fall, because of a convergence of incredible weather and no breakdowns, we were able to finish our harvest in one week. Yeehaw. A lot of the subsequent weather has been cool, wet, and unsettled. Anyone with standing crop or swaths on the ground has been unable to get back out there. So we are elated and grateful that we're done.

Aside from the relief that comes with finishing we find ourselves with all this extra time. This fall we have the luxury of time that allows us to do more. I can't count the number of times we've eaten a Thanksgiving meal, prepared by others, on the tailgate of a pickup. Or parked the combines and driven to town to gobble the meal down.

We've also used the bonus time to pour the concrete slab for the new garage. That will allow construction to begin. If the weather holds it should be possible to close it up before the snow flies. Frankly, it can't happen fast enough for me, but I'm trying to be all mature about this lesson in patience.

We spent time over several days picking up stuff in the yard that unfortunately was left where it was dropped or stuff that we thought we'd use again someday. The load I took to the landfill was far from pretty. I knew some sorting was required, but had no idea I'd spend an hour there separating wire from metal from paint and caulking from tires from appliances from what remained as household garbage. The next loads will be better sorted at home.

In the house, I'm ferreting through cupboards and closets looking for garage sale items and things to donate or consign or sell on Kijiji. I'm also winding up the work of the festival I coordinated and am trying to box up what is not immediately necessary but essential to keep year over year. Unfortunately, all this creates a number of boxes of disparate stuff that may have to be stored awhile.

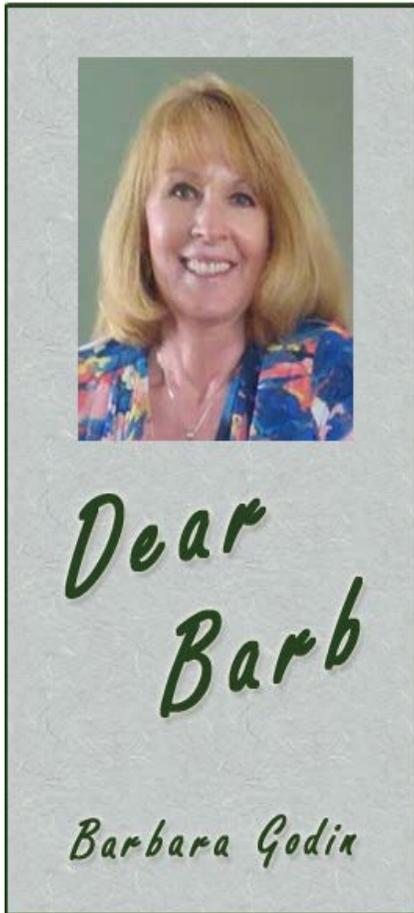
There's been time to clean the eaves troughs. I even tackled the garden shed, that repository for Grady's sandbox toys, empties, garden tools, lawnmower, and assorted crap. I'm just grateful I didn't see a mouse through it all.

But there's always more to do no matter where you turn. Nowhere more so than in the flowerbeds; cutting perennials back, watering in amongst the trees. One of my beloved Therese Bugnet shrub roses, an easy grower and fragrant beauty, is sick. She needs to be put out of her misery and yanked out.

There was even time to wash the windows. Let the sun shine in, baby. In the midst of all this activity we had to replace our tub surround.

Tackling lots of new and overdue projects is exciting. The usual feeling of overwhelm is reduced. Now, if only our energy holds out as long as the weather, we may have something to show for it, from where I sit.

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



## Changing Troubles

**Dear Barb:**

***My boyfriend and I have been together for over a year. When we got together, I was aware that he had a drug problem, but I thought I could help him. Initially Jed assured me he would stop using drugs, which he did. Unfortunately it didn't last long. He stays clean for a while, but ultimately ends up back on drugs. My family has been a great help to us in many ways, plus my uncle helped Jed get a job. Regrettably, the job didn't last long. Jed worked a few days then, unfortunately, was injured at work. Consequently, he was put on pain pills and this seemed to retrigger his addiction, and he lost his job. This cycle has repeated itself many times and I'm running out of patience with him. When he's not using drugs we get along great and really love each other, but the good times are short lived. While he's using he becomes paranoid, angry, and threatening, and I'm fearful of what he may do to me, or himself. I just don't know what to do. Am I just wasting my time? I feel like such a failure. Should I just let him go and move on? Looking forward to your advice. Jamie***

Hi Jamie:

Addiction is a terrible disease, not only for the addict but for everyone around them. You should be commended for what you are doing, but ultimately your boyfriend is the only one who can help himself. He has to truly want the help and be willing to do what is necessary to achieve that end. He most likely needs professional help. Suggest a visit to your family physician, who will be able to direct you both to the resources available in your area. If he doesn't

agree to go, there is nothing you can do. Don't see yourself as a failure, you did your best. If he refuses help, you need to move on with your life, as he will just drag you down with him. Be strong!

**Dear Barb:**

***I have been married for 10 years. My marriage has changed over the years and now my husband and I don't seem to have anything in common. My friends are doing things with their husbands and I wish we were like that. I wonder if there is someone else out there who I am meant to be with and I'm just wasting my life with my husband. Feeling sad and lonely! Mary***

Hi Mary:

I'm not sure there is someone out there that you were meant to be with, that's idealistic thinking. Ten years is a long time, you must have had some common interests throughout those years? Did something occur that changed your interaction? Relationships are *works in progress*, as many couples go through changes at various points and have to reassess their situation. It sounds like you are in a rut, so infuse some new stimulation into your marriage. Create some mutual interests. Discover a new sport, perhaps one that is new to both of you. For example, if you have never golfed, sign up for lessons. Golf is a great way to get some exercise and have fun. If you like to read, join a book club. Take tennis lessons, learn to ski, the possibilities are endless. Hope this information helps.

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 BRAYADO: WORLD PEACE



World peace today?  
It's all so simple, really.



I propose we round up all the  
religious extremists and give  
them decent shaves and  
haircuts.



IF they follow the chick-baiting  
grooming habits of yours truly,  
For example, they'll be so busy  
fighting off babes they won't  
have time to think about apple-  
pie-in-the-sky-by-and-by! HYUK!

There are no  
bad guys—  
just bad facial  
hair!



WRITTEN BY WANDA WATERMAN



**AUSU**  
ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY  
STUDENTS' UNION

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.

### Featured AUSU Member Service: Awards

AUSU offers a variety of scholarships, awards, and bursaries for members. Here are some with a pending application deadline of **November 1**:

**Academic Achievement Scholarships** reward scholastic excellence. The applicant with the highest GPA over the last thirty credits will receive the award.

**Overcoming Adversity Bursaries** help students in financial need. Special consideration is given to those who have other challenges such as disabilities, single parenting, and extraordinary financial concerns.

**Returning Student Awards** recognize the commitment of students who return to university after a long break.

**Balanced Student Awards** reward students who balance multiple life commitments with university study.

**Student Service Awards** recognize those who provide outstanding support to students or their community.

For more information on these and our other awards (the Emergency, Computer, and Travel Bursary), visit the [AUSU awards page](#).

### AUSU Featured Groups & Clubs

Group Name: **AU - Bachelor of Commerce**

Where: **Facebook**

Members: 171

About: Members are typically B.Comm students or students taking business courses. The members of the group typically discuss their views and tips on courses.

Activity: Active several times a week but not daily.

### Great AU Finds Online

**Counselling Assessments** – Am I Ready for studies in ...? Counselling Assessments – A series of review modules to test your skill in a variety of subjects (currently there are assessments for English, math, chemistry, Microsoft Access, and computing science). Use these to determine if you need to brush up on a subject before diving in to a

## IMPORTANT DATES

- Oct 31: extension deadline for Nov 30 contract dates.
- Nov 1: AUSU fall awards deadline
- Nov 10: registration deadline for an Dec 1 start date
- Nov 11: Remembrance Day - AU closed
- Nov 12: AUSU council meeting
- Nov 28: Last business to extend courses ending Dec 31

course, or just for fun. Also, Mapping Your Future helps you choose an occupation.

For links, see:

[http://counselling.athabascau.ca/assess\\_yourself.php](http://counselling.athabascau.ca/assess_yourself.php)



### This Week at lynda.com

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

### Master Office 2013

Microsoft Office products are needed for almost every AU course. Mastery of these products is not only beneficial to your schooling, but also for many jobs. Although using the most basic functions of Word and Excel is almost intuitive, there are so many other functions that that can help you put out superior work. Take the time to get to know your tools. Use Lynda.com.

- Office 2013 New Features
- Excel 2013 Essential Training
- Word 2013 Essential Training
- Outlook 2013 Essential Training
- PowerPoint 2013 Essential Training
- Up and Running with Office 365
- Up and Running with Lync Online

Courses: 7

Duration: 24h 8m

Skill Level: Beginner

***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)***

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# 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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## THE VOICE

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