

THE VOICE

MAGAZINE
Vol 23 Issue 11 2015-03-13

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Minds we Meet

Interviewing Rebecca.

Student Funding Unrealistic

A First for AUSU?

Plus:

*Council Connection
What Mitty Teaches
and much more!*



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



We love to hear from you! Send your questions and comments to voice@voicemagazine.org, and please indicate if we may publish your letter.

EDITORIAL**Karl Low****Student Funding Unrealistic**

Unfortunately, I completely missed attending last week's AUSU Council meeting. No excuses, I just completely forgot about it. I think I was looking up stuff about optimizing PDF files for Google searches. (The reason may become clear later this year.) Fortunately for me, and you, Barb Lehtiniemi was not so absent-minded, and her Council Connection article should be read by any student who thinks the government needs to provide more funding to needy students. Because, at least according to this AUSU Council, that's not something which is realistic to lobby the government about.

Yes, you read that correctly. The AUSU Student Council has decided that it's not realistic for them to have a policy which says that they will lobby the government for increased non-repayable grants and bursaries for students. Not just that the government is unlikely to grant the request, but that it's not realistic for them even to pursue such an idea.

While I haven't done the research on this yet, I'm pretty sure this is a first among students' unions.

Let's give the benefit of the doubt here, however. Maybe it's not realistic to assume that they'll ever succeed at getting such bursaries. After all, such things are certainly not in the policy manual of the Alberta Government or Alberta Opposition Parties. The PCs have some non-specific words toward supporting lifelong learning, but no numbers, and the Wildrose Alliance Party's policy proposes at best a 50% forgiveness of student loans. And given how AUSU President Jason Nixon is the nominated member to be a candidate for Wildrose Alliance, he probably knows the chances of them providing non-repayable bursaries.

But even so, what harm does it do to AU students to have a policy that says they'll lobby the government for needy students? The policy didn't say how often, or how hard they'll lobby for increased bursaries for needy students. It doesn't give an amount that the union has to spend. But when it was a position policy, if anybody ever asked a staff member, or any person who worked at the Students' Union, "What do you guys think of the idea of more bursaries for needy students?" they could simply look at their policies and say, "We think that's a good idea, we want it."

Conversely, what benefit does getting rid of that policy give to students? Are we saving a lot of money by making sure we don't have that policy there? Were we somehow wasting AUSU resources because of that policy? When talking to government members, is their time that precious that they couldn't sometimes say, "Also, could you consider more grants for needy students, we have a number of reasons why that's a good thing for us and for the province."

But, on the bright side, I'm pretty sure that a student council removing a policy saying they'd like more money for needy students is a first for any students' union, so, huzzah for us, I guess. We're unique. Fortunately, that's not the only thing in this week's issue. A lot of good stuff this week, including an interview with a student working from France! We all know we're a global student body, but sometimes it's neat to see it in action.

As always, enjoy the read!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karl'.

MINDS WE MEET



Rebecca is an AU student living in Nancy, France. Her hometown is Calgary, Alberta, and she's been dividing her time between Canada and France for the past four years. Right now, Rebecca is taking AU courses as a visiting student, but she plans to enrol in a program.

Rebecca was recently interviewed by The Voice Magazine about school, size acceptance, and the amazing functionality of the brain.

Describe the path that led you to AU.

I was originally at Mount Royal University in Calgary. When I moved to France, I wanted to keep going with my studies. AU was a convenient option for me.

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

While I'm in France, I like going for walks. The cities are compact, the buildings are gorgeous here, and there's always something interesting to see. In Canada, the spaces are vast so walking isn't the same. I often spend free time going to movies.

What happens after you finish your education?

I'm not really sure. When I was studying in Canada I was planning on being a psychologist, perhaps working with children. Now that I'm in France I'm not really sure what I'm going to do. I plan to stay in France so I need to re-think my goals.

One thing I need to focus on is improving my French. I'm learning more and more the longer I'm here. When I came to France, I first lived in Lyon. It's a bigger city and it was easy to get by in English. Even if I spoke French, people would often switch over to English. Now that I'm in Nancy, English is not as widely spoken so I'm speaking more French and learning more.

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

I don't know if there was anyone originally, other than myself. Now I would say that my fiancé influences me. He's working toward his PhD and he motivates me.

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

My number one choice would be Linda Bacon, the author of *Health at Every Size*. She's an advocate for size acceptance, and I think she'd be interesting to talk to.

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

Although I prefer in-class learning, I'm getting the same grades with online. It's nice that I don't have to take the bus an hour each way, so I can spend more of my time learning. Ultimately, it's the flexibility.

Was there ever a point when you wavered about your education?

I didn't begin university until I was 24 or 25. I wavered a bit when I moved to France. I'm not sure what I'll do with my education here, so at times I've wondered if it's worth the time and the money.

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

Cognitive Psychology, PSYC 355. I just find it amazing all the things your brain can do. We take so much for granted but when you think about it, it's truly amazing.

Describe the proudest moment in your life.

It was being accepted into university. I was a troubled teen and didn't do well at school. Going to university was a big accomplishment for me.

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

Well, I gave up a job, but I was ready to move on anyway. Really, I've gained by going to AU.

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

Priority would be to cancel e-texts and the call-centre. I haven't had an e-text at AU yet but I did have one at Mount Royal. I gave up on it.

Describe your favourite sound.

It would be kids laughing! I can picture them, smiling with their whole face; not a bit of self-consciousness.

If you were trapped on an island, what 3 things would you bring?

First of all, I'd want my cell phone. Not to make calls or texts, since I assume I wouldn't be able to anyway. But I have everything on it: books, entertainment, and everything I need to occupy my time. Secondly, I'd like a comfortable pillow, and my third thing would be toothbrush and toothpaste.

Describe one thing that distinguishes you from most other people.

I'm interested in becoming a size acceptance advocate.

What is "size acceptance"?

At its most basic, I would define size acceptance as a movement that works toward ending discrimination based on body size/type.

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Why is this important, and why do you want to advocate for it?

We're bombarded with messages that tell us our bodies aren't good enough and that we all need to work to change them. The size acceptance movement often focuses on fat bodies, but it's an important movement for people of all body types. Everywhere you go you're going to find messages telling you that you should be on this diet/doing that exercise program/eating these specific foods, and so on, in order to be attractive, healthy, happy, and most importantly, accepted. And if you don't meet all of these standards, you're probably going to face some sort of discrimination. No body type deserves to be discriminated against for any reason. Regardless of a person's health, fitness level, or physical attractiveness, one shouldn't be required to change anything about one's body in order to be treated equally, and with respect.

I grew up in a family whose members were very sensitive about their weight. They were on diets or talking about going on diets—they were in a constant battle with their bodies. This had a huge impact on my attitude toward my own body. I learned that my body would never be good enough unless I reached some arbitrary weight/shape. I spent over a decade despising my body, and battling against it in increasingly extreme ways. No matter what I tried, it continued to be not good enough. I would spend nights crying about it and hating myself for it. Size acceptance has given me the ability to stop hating myself and to start focusing on things that can actually make me healthier and happier. I want everyone to have the opportunity to feel the same way.

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

I guess it's a bit clichéd, but "hang in there." I've gone through some crappy times when everything seemed hopeless. Now things are going good and I expect they will continue that way. You just never know what's around the corner.

What do you think about e-texts or the call-centre model?

No and no!

How do you find communications with your course tutors?

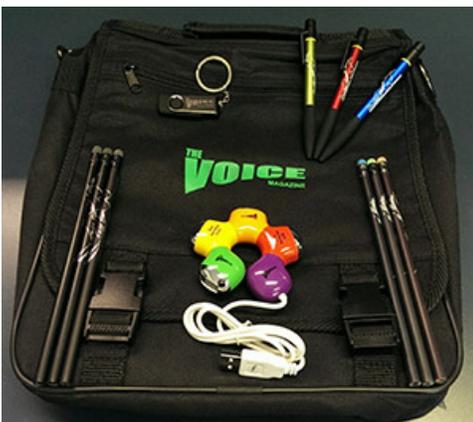
I haven't communicated a lot with my tutors. I probably should utilize them more. I just prefer to work through things on my own.

Where has life taken you so far?

Various places in Canada: Montreal, Winnipeg, Vancouver. I've also been to California, and Las Vegas, Nevada. In the past few years I've been to Venice and to Spain. And I've been to a whole bunch of places in France.

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

I'm reading *The Edible Woman* by Margaret Atwood. I'd read one her other books and liked it, so that prompted me to pick up this one.



See that cool stuff there? That's a sample of what students who get interviewed for The Voice Magazine's Minds We Meet column get in the mail, just for talking with a fellow AU student for a while and letting us report the results!

Sound good to you? Sounds good to us too! So let us know if you'd like to be featured in The Voice Magazine by writing us at voice@voicemgazine.org. We'll hook you up and you can help your fellow students get a feel for what amazing people are on this journey with them!

Free Books! Free Knowledge! From AU Press

Barbara Lehtiniemi



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- [*Teaching Crowds: Learning and Social Media*](#), by Jon Dron and Terry Anderson (2014)
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Barbara Lehtiniemi is a writer, photographer, and AU student. She lives on a windswept rural road in Eastern Ontario



In Conversation ..with the Highway, Conclusion

Wanda Waterman



"I read a lot of Russian literature years back—Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, and stuff like that. Then I read lots of Buddhist and Zen stuff. Then I got into politics, economics . . . also the psychedelic stuff. Movies, other music, weird life events—it all goes into the melting pot. Depending on where you dip the ladle you get a different kind of song."
- Ted MacInnes of The Highway

Daniel Tortoledo (vocals/bass), Ted MacInnes (drums/backing vocals), Adam Douglass (guitar/backing vocals), and Griffin McMahon (keys/backing vocals) make up The Highway, a New York band

that plumbs the best of rock's roots to create its own original psychedelic rock. They've recently released the single "All You Do", a foretaste of their upcoming second album, Enter to Exit, out April 14. "All You Do" is a long, strange ride, containing the dark tale of an evil deed compelled by love.

Recently all four bandmembers took the time to answer Wanda Waterman's questions about inspiration, mission statements, and what's on the horizon. (See Part I of this interview [here](#), Part II [here](#), and Part III [here](#).)

Do you feel that Brooklyn is a creatively stimulating city?

Adam: Yes, because there are so many musicians here—the best of the best—that it inspires you to be the best you can be. And no, because there are so many musicians here, the worst of the worst. They'll take shit gigs that don't pay, lowering the standard of what's expected to compensate performers in nightclubs. Some bands are unprofessional and unrehearsed (or they at least sound that way) because, good band or not, no one is being compensated fairly for the work they put in.

Why did you call this project *Enter to Exit*?

Ted: Because if you don't hit "enter" someone else might see your account balance on the ATM machine (and that'd be embarrassing). Also, it's like the one certainty of life—entering and exiting—and what happens in between is our life's experience.

Who writes the lyrics, and where does most of his inspiration come from?

Daniel: Ted and I have written all the lyrics for all our different songs so far, and we try our best to allow each other to feel we have control of each other's songs. I think it's a healthy approach, and it sure permits the songs to take a fresh turn from their original conception. I think that's the reason we're a band and not solo artists.

"All You Do" is an example of a 100% co-written song.

Are there any books, films, or albums that have deeply influenced your development as an artist?

Daniel: From different angles, yes. *Fawlty Towers*, *Cinema Paradiso*. Two books I've enjoyed and I know have created some impact would be *The Web of Life* and *The Tibetan Book of The Dead*.

Astronomy books I also find really interesting. Essentially anything that goes through your brain will have an effect on what you do. Neil Young's book *Weighing Heavy Peace* was a great one.

Hunky Dory (David Bowie), The Band, *Abbey Road*, *The Soft Parade*, *All Things Must Pass*, *What's The Story Morning Glory*. I'm digging a lot *Fear Fun* by Father John Misty, so that's having some influence in my life right now.

Griffin: The first time I ever saw a clip from The Talking Heads' *Stop Making Sense* I was entranced. It's the greatest concert film I've ever seen— such brilliant concepts put to life, overall production, and just kick-ass performances. It's not just David Byrne with a good backing band; the film is a living archive of a historic collaboration that is very much of its time and place— the extended Talking Heads line-up at its artistic height in the 1980's.

Ted: It's been different things at different times. I read a lot of Russian literature years back—Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, and stuff like that. Then I read lots of Buddhist and Zen stuff. Then I got into politics, economics . . . also the psychedelic stuff. Movies, other music, weird life events— it all goes into the melting pot. Depending on where you dip the ladle you get a different kind of song.

Adam: I like Kurt Vonnegut's writing. *Dumb and Dumber* was funny.

If you had an artistic mission statement, what would it be?

Griffin: It would be to communicate with others in a deeper way through music and to give them something worth feeling and thinking about. It doesn't hurt to have some fun along the way, too.

Daniel: To stick to the project you're proud of, make it shine, don't give up, and have a good time along the ride.

Ted: Our mission is to make people happy and to spread peace and love across the world.

Adam: I want to create good art.

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.



Study Tips from a Semi-Anonymous Friend

There is nothing more that The Study Dude wants for you than to know the strategies the top academics use for making arguments and claims so that everything you write about—even personal experience—is logically sound.

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.

This week's focus is on a book titled *The Literature Review: Six Steps to Success* by Lawrence A. Machi and Brenda T. McEvoy.

The Ins-and-Outs of Claims and Evidence

In a recent Study Dude article, we looked at a book called *They Say, I Say: The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing* by Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein. While this book espoused and advocated the merit of you inserting your own voice in academic writing, the book came short on letting you know that you need to have ample evidence—or at least logic—to support any claims you make.

One key characteristic of academics is that they try to remain objective as much as possible by letting the data dictate the conclusions of their research (Machi & McEvoy, 2012). Your conclusions can be considered your claims. Chris Hart (as cited in Machi & McEvoy, 2012) outlines five claims types that you are well-advised to insert in your essays and write-ups: claims of fact, claims of worth, claims of policy, claims of concept, and claims of interpretation.

Claims of fact are the ones most often used in literature reviews. These are things like statistics and other elements that are generally assumed to be true, such as the earth rotates around the sun.

Claims of worth are where you stand in judgement of the value of something under consideration. You could make the claim that the Buddhist faith is *more liberal-minded* than most other religions, for instance, but whenever you make a claim of worth, you need considerable support (in other words, evidence) to back it up. Another example of a claim of worth is that you could say that Prime Minister Harper has a *superior* handle on economics and business relative to the other candidates. (Please note that these claims are for example only and do not necessarily represent my own views.)

Claims of policy are the "should have" or "should do" items, such as when you say that a policy that encourages small business growth in Canada should be implemented to stave off recessionary impacts. These require a great deal of evidence to back up such claims.

Claims of concept occur when you present a definition as relayed by expert testimony. For example, it is when you define a concept such as "sustainability" through one or more experts' definitions.

Claims of interpretation use "expert testimony, empirical research, statistical studies, or anecdotal case studies [...] Researchers use claims of interpretation to build models, to synthesize data, and to organize factual claims" (p. 72).

Locating Reasoning Patterns

When I took a logic class, I excelled to the top of the class. I think all of the math courses I took conditioned me for logical thinking. Yet, debate for me is another story, especially with its myriad of emotional elements. But logical thinking is essentially what you want to present when stringing together your arguments in academic writing.

When I was in graduate studies, it behooved me to learn the value of using evidence, based on a variety of reasoning patterns, to come to conclusions. I was used to the pattern of logic where multiple expert citations and some statistical data would stand to confirm that point I was making. Each expert point could stand alone and the accumulation of them just made the perspective that much stronger.

Yet there are a number of other ways that you can assert the soundness of your argument. Machi and McEvoy (2012) outline four reasoning patterns that can take your writing to a whole new dimension of complexity: one-on-one reasoning, side-by-side reasoning, chain reasoning, and joint reasoning. Each of these are called "warrant schemes" which are patterns that logically connect your evidence to your conclusions.

- One-on-one reasoning is where you have one piece of reasoning that connects directly to a conclusion/claim. For instance, the clouds are black; therefore, it is likely to rain. It looks like "reason; therefore claim."
- Side-by-side reasoning is where several expert testimonies (in other words, authors, statistics, expert opinions, and researchers) support the same conclusion. For instance, there are Chinook clouds; the forecast says 9 above; the snow is melting; therefore, it is likely going to be a warm day. This looks like "reason1 AND reason2 AND reason3 and so forth; therefore claim".
- Chain reasoning is where "each link of the chain becomes the premise for arguing the next conclusion" (p. 96). For instance, inflation means higher prices, so there is less demand for consumer goods, so economic growth slows down; therefore, inflation means a slow-down in economic growth. This looks like "reason1 leads to conclusion 1. Conclusion 1 leads to conclusion 2, conclusion 2 leads to conclusion 3, and so forth" as in a chain reaction.
- Joint reasoning is where you need more than one reason to lead to the conclusion, but each reason alone is not enough by itself to substantiate the conclusion. For instance, if you are clinically brain dead and you are experiencing an ethereal reality, you are possibly having a Near Death Experience. Just one of the premises alone is not enough to substantiate the Near Death Experience criteria, although, admittedly, they are reported to happen even when people have not been clinically brain dead. This looks like "Reason1 And Reason2 and so forth together lead to the conclusion."

It's sane to think that people do not experience their logic in that matter, but it is good to know that you have options for presenting your case.

So for longer documents, you can string multiple reasoning/conclusion patterns together such that the conclusions of each one become a new subset of reasons for an even bigger conclusion. The complexity of the paper intensifies, but you weave together multiple subsets of conclusions into a larger final summation. Your overall argument takes on a whole new life form of weaves and interconnectedness. Isn't the complexity of logic irresistible?

Complex Reasoning

As an analogy, when you are comparing things like hockey versus football, you can look at what they have different from one another or you can compare and contrast parts of one another. Simply stated, that is complex reasoning: examining two or more bodies of knowledge (each one containing evidence that leads to a conclusion) in a compare/contrast or a strictly contrasting manner.

Perhaps when working with your essays for undergraduate studies, a single line of reasoning that involves substantial evidence leading to a conclusion is more than enough to meet the requirements of the assignment, but when you do a literature review, you are cross-examining a massive amount of information overload. To sort through this overload of data, you could break down the biggest branches of competing knowledge into their own evidence/conclusion formations and then contrast or compare them with one another.

One of my reservations with this system is that it seems to forecast that the data you examine will fit this pattern nicely, or that you will be able to structure the data to fit a pattern precisely. Does it work in every potential study of the literature? Perhaps not always, but here is the secret to writing a phenomenal comparison and/or contrast paper: with a little refining, the more structure—yes, structure—and parallels you can give your mapping of similarities and/or differences, the more structured—and more convincing—your overall argument will be. Try to find nice fits wherever possible.

Machi and McEvoy (2012) describe the structure of complex reasoning patterns:

- Divergent reasoning is where you have two or more bodies of knowledge. For instance, it could be comparing two different theoretical schools that talk about the same subject, such as theorists who espouse the view of multiple intelligences versus those who believe in a singular global intelligence. You can use any of the reasoning patterns above for contrasting the two bodies of knowledge. Sources you can use include "expert opinions, research studies, statistics, expert testimony, and other data" (p. 100). The aim is to single out each and every direct contrast between the two fields of knowledge. This way, you can isolate the strengths and weaknesses of each point-of-view. For example, if you were using the side-by-side reasoning above, where reason one, reason two, and reason three all point to the same conclusion, you would set up both sides of the argument to have side-by-side reasoning, each with their own respective conclusion, and then point out the contrast between each reason on each side. That symmetry is the ideal situation, but you likely won't be able to capture it in all situations, of course.
- Comparative reasoning is where you imagine the data as a Venn diagram with two or more circles representing each body of knowledge (in this case, it could be multiple intelligence theorists versus global intelligence theorists). Here, the circles overlap at common, similar reasons/conclusions and the circles do not overlap where the reasons/conclusions contrast one another. This gives you more flexibility, as here you are able to focus on both the similarities and differences, so a much broader range of discussion is enabled. Remember, the more symmetry you can get in your argument, the better.

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

Machi, Lawrence A., & McEvoy, Brenda T. (2012). *The Literature Review: Six Steps to Success*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Writer's Toolbox

All the Time

Christina M. Frey



Sarah was born in 1975 and had an unusual childhood, as her father's job required the family to move at least once a year. He made good money, and Sarah had all the opportunities that come with the chance to travel and see new places. But she wasn't happy with the lack of stability. She began acting out and causing trouble. When Sarah turned 17, she ran away from home to do drugs with an underground organization that originated in the late 1990s. After six months, she returned home, got clean, and started getting her life back together. She met Jeff in rehab, and the two moved in together in the fall, around Sarah's birthday, and she got pregnant right away. She gave birth to a daughter, Danielle, but when Danielle was eight months old, Sarah started using drugs again after Jeff left her. The law caught up with her and she was eventually arrested for heroin possession when she was 19. Three-year-old Danielle was temporarily placed with Sarah's parents.

Sad story about someone with problems? Or a logic problem on a standardized test? Maybe both—but there's a problem all right.

And a simple editing trick will ferret it out.

They say you can't see the forest for the trees, and nowhere does this apply more clearly than when timelines intersect with an engaging story. The problem is that once the reader steps back from the story a moment and realizes the dates and times don't make sense, the errors become so distracting that they overwhelm the story the author's trying to tell.

Fortunately, a timeline can help you sort it all out *before* you put your work into your readers' hands.

In the story above, we know some facts—when, approximately, Sarah's birthday is (fall 1975)—and we know a few actual dates and can figure out a few more based on ages. Putting them all together side by side with a few notes makes the timeline errors jump out (and in case they don't, I've italicized them).

Fall 1975: Sarah is born.

Fall 1992: Sarah turns 17 and runs away to join an organization *that originated in the late 1990s*. (Wait—it's not the late 1990s yet!)

Early 1993: Sarah gets clean and meets Jeff.

Fall 1993: Sarah and Jeff move in together. At some point she gets pregnant and they have a daughter, Danielle.

Year? Danielle is born (Sarah is at least 17.5, which has to be in at least 1993, so the earliest Danielle could be born would be late 1993 or later).

Year + 8 months: Sarah starts using drugs again (has to be sometime in 1994 or later).

1994/95 or later: Sarah's arrested for heroin possession. She is 19. *Danielle is three* and is placed with Sarah's parents. (Sarah had to be at least 18 when Danielle was born, so Danielle couldn't be three yet even if Sarah is almost 20. Also, Danielle was born 1993 or later, and Sarah is arrested in 1994 or 1995, so Danielle wouldn't be three on that calendar either.)

As you can see, creating a timeline showing actual dates and relative dates (and doing a little math, where required) is a good way to see where the problems are. In fact, timelines are an essential part of the self-editing process, and they can be as informal (as above) or as complex as your particular project demands. A great, simple timeline tracker can be found here: www.marymccauleyproofreading.com/blog/manuscript-management-tools-for-fiction-authors

While it might not cover some very complex projects, with multiple interconnected histories and backstories, it works well for many novels and even nonfiction projects. Just start filling in the blanks and use both exact terms ("He's 23 in this chapter") as well as relative information ("Chapter 3 takes place three years after Chapter 2"); as you begin working through it, you'll start noticing time relationships and will be able to pick out where they don't match up. You'll also be able to see at a glance how resolving those questions might lead to further timeline issues.

If you have a very detailed project, like a fantasy epic—or if you like a more hands-on approach—it can be very valuable to hand-draw a network or flow chart or timeline tree (using as many sheets of paper as your world and characters require) to get everything sorted out in terms of time and time relationships. I've often recommended the paper-on-the-floor method to clients who are incorporating a detailed backstory into present narration or who have a lot of characters and need to ensure there are no inconsistencies anywhere.

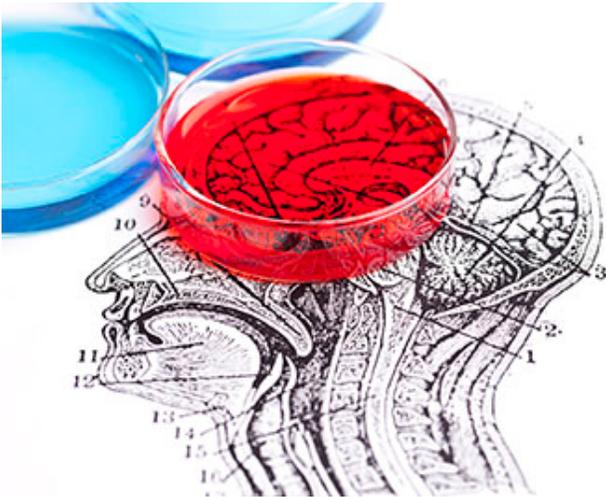
Don't forget about the little dates, too. If chapter 2 describes how your main character meets an alien in Week 1 and a robot in Week 2, then make sure chapter 46 doesn't say the character met the robot before the alien. This is another reason why timelines are a good idea; when a lot of text separates date references, it's very easy to forget what happened over 40 chapters before.

A lot of work? Maybe, but it's worth it when you catch that one small flub that throws your whole timeline into question. And there's no need to create a timeline as you work, either. In fact, many advise against it—in the interests of letting your creativity flow free. However, once you've revised the draft and started cleaning it up, creating a timeline can help you corral that creativity and get all the time-related elements of your book on track.

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](#).

Primal Numbers Vaccinating Pandora

S.D. Livingston



When we imagine scientists tinkering with DNA, we like to think of them creating cool stuff. Things like cloned dinosaurs or alien-human hybrids. But what if they decide to recreate the deadly Spanish flu virus, which killed an estimated 50 million people in the pandemic of 1918? That's what a group of researchers has done, opening a Pandora's Box that should be left closed.

The virus was created by a group of scientists at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. *As [The Guardian reported](#)*, they "used a technique called reverse genetics to build the virus from fragments of wild bird flu strains." The new pathogen isn't an exact

duplicate of the original Spanish flu but it's incredibly close. After manipulating the DNA of several viruses, the scientists managed to create one that spreads easily between animals and is "only about 3% different from the 1918 human virus."

The question, of course, is why anyone would want to do such a thing. To a certain degree the answer makes sense. In the wild, viruses can swap DNA and mutate into entirely new forms that humans and animals haven't a natural immunity against. Understanding how those mutations occur—even creating them—could let us react much faster to create vaccines against powerful new flu strains.

But plenty of other scientists say that creating deadly pathogens is dangerous and irresponsible. They argue that creating a vaccine for a specific mutation isn't much use since there are dozens of other possible mutations that could occur. In other words, it's impossible to plan for the random alterations of viruses.

No doubt both sides could argue statistics all day, but let's look at the practical reasons against it as well.

First of all, who gets to decide? This isn't a scientific or medical creation where potential damage is limited to the people who took a drug or underwent a procedure. Those errors are common enough, and getting people to acknowledge harm and make reparations can take decades. Just look at the history of Thalidomide victims.

If you're accidentally exposed to a genetically engineered virus, though, transmission is random. You don't get to choose whether to try it out. If something goes wrong it could affect millions of people all over the world—people who had no say in whether they wanted to participate in the effects of the research.

This quandary was tackled in a *Guardian* [column](#), which suggested that the public should have a say in whether this kind of research should be allowed. In theory, a good idea. In practice, it's got serious drawbacks. Like the fact that scientific literacy among the general public tends to be low.

Take this 2013 EKOS [survey](#), for example. The poll revealed that Canadians ranked first out of 35 countries in scientific literacy. Sounds good, until you consider that our ranking is based on true/false questions such as "Does the sun go around the earth or does the earth go around the sun?"

Getting that question right might suggest we have a decent level of general science knowledge, but the fact remains that "fewer than half of us would be able to read and understand a newspaper article about a new scientific discovery."

If that's the case, how many people would truly be able to weigh the data and make an informed decision on whether to create deadly viruses in a lab?

Then there's the problem of pathogens escaping the lab. It's not just the stuff of Hollywood movie plots. There are plenty of real-life examples too. Like the 2007 outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in Britain that led to over 1,500 animals being culled. The disease had been contained in a high-security lab but a broken water line carried it outside and onto the tires of construction vehicles. That's just one of several examples in this *National Post* [article](#) on viruses being accidentally spread from the lab.

Do we need to study viruses and try to prevent outbreaks? Of course we do. But deliberately recreating deadly viruses seems counterintuitive, like opening a scientific Pandora's Box that's been lying safely dormant. Let's just hope that, unlike the original fable, nothing dangerous escapes.

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.

Click of the Wrist

Freaky Friday

It's Friday the 13th . . . *again*. While you're busy avoiding path-crossing black cats and the underside of ladders, take a few moments to sort out the myths, the facts, and what you really should be afraid of on Friday the 13th.

Dos and Don'ts

If you want good luck this Friday—or any other day—*Discovery* magazine has a slideshow of activities and situations that you should probably avoid. Read with tongue planted firmly in cheek.

Staying Well

Are accidents and other medical emergencies more likely on Friday the 13th? Not according to this study, published in the *World Journal of Surgery*.

Paraskevidekatriaphobia

Talking about your fears is supposed to help, but "paraskevidekatriaphobia"—the fear of Friday the 13th—is a terrifying word to even attempt. This NPR short will teach you how to say it. Baby steps!



The Travelling Student Halloween In Vegas

Philip Kirkbride



My name is Philip Kirkbride. I'm a college graduate from Ontario studying at AU. I've always wanted to do an exchange program or study abroad but never found the right time to do so. This is the story of how Athabasca University has allowed me to create my own study abroad program. In the last part I flew from Quebec to Las Vegas. While my final destination was Australia, I had decided to stop in Vegas for the Money2020 conference, which would kick off on Halloween night.

I stepped out of the hotel and, with some extra time on my hands, decided I'd walk the strip. As I walked, the sun sank below the horizon and the Halloween crowd started to appear. There was no lack of creativity on the strip. Among my favourites were someone dressed as Zach

Galifianakis in *The Hangover*, which included a baby-strap—complete with fake baby.

The Vegas strip is lined with casinos. Many of which are as thematic as the Halloween costumes people were wearing. For example: Treasure Island—a pirate themed casino; Excalibur—a medieval themed casino; and Luxor—an Ancient Egyptian themed casino (complete with giant pyramid). More impressive than the themes, however, are the extravagant displays in front of many of the casinos. As I walked past the Bellagio their iconic Fountain Show began. Several large fountains spray in impressive unison, in sync with music and lighting. Not far from the Bellagio, a crowd gathers around for its volcano show. While the volcano is fake, flame-throwers around it shoot real fire, hot enough to make the crowd sweat.

All around the strip, party promoters tried to get people with the best costumes into their club or bar. Unfortunately, my costume, which consisted of a single eye patch, didn't get much attention.

Finally, I reached my destination Aria Resort and Casino, where the Money2020 conference was being held. While Aria has no overarching theme, it encompasses all aspects of modernity, the building makes use of modern design and features large, multi-media displays on the outside. An appropriate place for a tech conference, the Aria has been described as possibly "...the most technologically advanced hotel ever built" by Popular Mechanics.

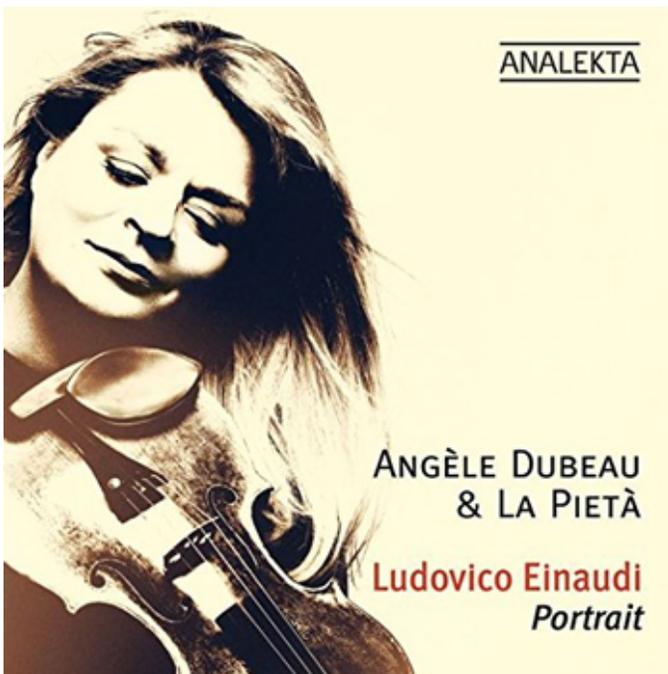
After checking in and getting my pass for the event, I headed to the Haze, a nightclub inside the casino. A small crowd had gathered outside the nightclub, people who, like myself, were a half hour early. Anxious to find others attending the Hackathon I struck up a conversation with a man in a suit waiting outside. He explained that he worked for MasterCard and was there sponsoring the event and promoting tools made by MasterCard to website and app developers. One of the more interesting tools was the MasterCard Places API which gives access to trending locations based on where people are using MasterCard credit cards. For example, an arena would start to trend during a hockey game as people used their credit cards there. On a smaller scale the API can be used to find up and coming restaurants based on purchase trends.

As we waited in line another line started building up beside us. A line only filled with people wearing outstanding costumes and a green wristband to prove they'd been invited. Not long after, their line started pouring into the club. The bumping of the bass could be heard from inside as well as the cheers of party-goers. After they were in, our line started moving. Soon we'd be inside, ourselves.



The Mindful Bard Portrait

Wanda Waterman



A Band of Angels Plays Celestial Tracks,
With "a Fierce Joy in the Doing"

Album: *Portrait*

Artists: Angèle Dubeau and La Pietà

Composer: Ludovico Einaudi

"The greatest compliment is knowing that some people have written a poem or painted a painting while listening to my music. Or that they have simply smiled at another day. I think that music can enter deep inside your soul. You are more defenceless when confronted with notes. And it's fantastic."

- Ludovico Einaudi

"Dubeau is an exciting, dynamic fiddler . . . The performances were consistently robust and inquiring,

taking nothing for granted . . . Dubeau's well-drilled band played with agility, power, a nicely weighted sound and a fierce joy in the doing."

- *The Los Angeles Times*, on Angèle Dubeau and La Pietà

Back in the eighties the late Peter Gzowski hosted a highly enjoyable television documentary of then up-and-coming violin virtuoso, Angèle Dubeau. In one scene Gzowski, Dubeau, and her boyfriend are having dinner with Dubeau's huge Québécois family, which I'm pretty sure numbers more than eight siblings. Her career was just taking off then.

She's now one of the top-selling classical artists on the planet.

I was recently delighted to discover that she and I share a favourite current composer, the Italian Ludovico Einaudi (see *Voice* review of *Essential Einaudi*). A brief listen to *Portrait* convinced me of the serendipity of the match between Dubeau and Einaudi; the inimitably accomplished—and *soulful*—violinist, Angèle Dubeau, plays a 1733 Stradivarius violin and is accompanied by La Pietà, the all-girl string orchestra she assembled herself, a small band of virtuosos culled from Canada's finest classical musicians.

Turin-born composer and pianist, Ludovico Einaudi, is extremely popular with both classical and pop music

audiences, sometimes finding himself the only classical musician on a pop music stage. Once you make his music a part of your life you'll realise how ubiquitous it is these days; if you don't hear it on CD or at the concert hall, you're sure to run into it on the tube, where it often graces the soundtracks of movies (notably *The Untouchables*), commercials, and television shows.

He's been likened to Satie but without that composer's sarcasm, and he's certainly a much more approachable guy and a much less "difficult" composer. But it's not as if Einaudi popped out of a cultural vacuum with no link to the musical experiments of the last hundred years; he trained under Luciano Berio, a leading avant garde composer whom he deeply respected.

However, the path Einaudi forged for himself was in quite a different direction, one heavily influenced by the *tacet* goals of New Age music, such as soothing, calming, and emotional healing. As a result Einaudi has managed to make avant garde classical music "accessible—" a dirty word for musical purists now obliged to accept that such a thing doesn't actually spell the end of art. (We need only remember Beethoven's efforts to bring classical music to the masses to see that Einaudi's artistic benevolence, welcome as it may be, is nothing new.)

Like most postmodern composers Einaudi fuses varied elements and genres in a highly experimental process, but with the exception that his work sounds comparatively classical and harmonious, never chaotic or dissonant as has been largely the mode for serious composers since the early part of the last century.

He's also added the beautifully logical development of avoiding the longer classical forms like the symphony and fitting the trio sonata form into the convenient three or four minute lengths of songs so that they can easily form a list of tracks on an album.

Something that makes this music even more deliciously democratic is that even amateur musicians can play it. But whereas it may be easily played, it's only rarely that such music can be played so well. Kudos to the brilliant Dubeau for not considering such music beneath her, because the result is an aesthetic achievement that can't be matched.

It seems as if the feminine touch is especially adaptable to the interpretation of Einaudi; they play his music slightly slower and more reverently than even he does, with an even greater tenderness, if that were imaginable, and a loving attention to detail.

The best way for me to describe Dubeau and La Pietà's interpretation of these pieces is to say that it's like a kind of contrapuntal sighing, performed by a band of angels who are mourning the suffering on the earth and wishing to send down fragments of beauty to lift our hearts. High points: "Svanire," "Life," "I giorni," and "Indaco."

Portrait manifests five 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 displays an engagement with and compassionate response to suffering.
- It makes me want to be a better artist.

Music Review

Pulp

Samantha Stevens



Artist: The Seasons

Album: Pulp

As winter draws to a close and the warm sunshine begins to seep through the snow and rain laden clouds, we find ourselves venturing outside more often to welcome the coming change of the season. And what makes that experience even more uplifting is fun and quirky music gently rolling through your ears and

weaving into your soul, helping it to shake off those winter doldrums. The album *Pulp* is full of music that will instantly have you dancing in the sunshine.

The Seasons was formed in 2011 in Beauport, Quebec. Comprised of brothers Hubert and Julien Chiasson (vocals, guitar, and keyboards) and their friends Remi Bélanger (drums and percussion) and Samuel Renaud (bass), they've quickly gained popularity in Quebec. Selling out many of their shows, recently they've signed an album deal with Vega Musique. The band spent 2014 touring across Canada, and captured the attention of a couple of international labels, eventually leading to the band signing with BMG Right Management in France, Are in Belgium, and they are presently in negotiation with the legendary Harvest label (Capitole-EMI). *Pulp* is the band's first full-length album, which was released on April 2014.

Given how their music makes me feel, I instantly fell in love with every aspect of the band. Their sound is creative, merry, and offbeat. I can't pin them to any specific genre of music, but they are very much a combination of psychedelic rock and 60s rock, with a soul influence. The sound is similar to the later music from The Beatles, but not the same.

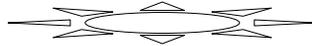
"Copernicus" is the second track on the album. Perhaps it is because I just learned about Nicholas Copernicus in my AU History of Psychology (PSYC375) course, but I really like this song. Brilliantly, the chorus alludes to Copernicus's heliocentric theory (he was the first to argue that the earth revolved around the sun), and the repeating verse "I need the sun I need the sun" is something I find myself saying more during these last few days of winter. The simple music of the song lends a theme of deep contemplation on the part of the singer. The overall feeling is light and optimistic, but I can't help but sense that there is a deeper layer to the song.

I find that the lyrics are difficult at best to make sense of. That is why I compared them to The Beatles later on in their careers, because they were also known to have ambiguous lyrics that were difficult to decipher. As well, unless you really enjoy psychedelic rock, the general tone of the album becomes tiresome by the end.

That being said, I could see myself listening to this album while painting, simply because it is so deeply infused with a creative essence. But, I couldn't listen to this album while studying because I find it too distracting.

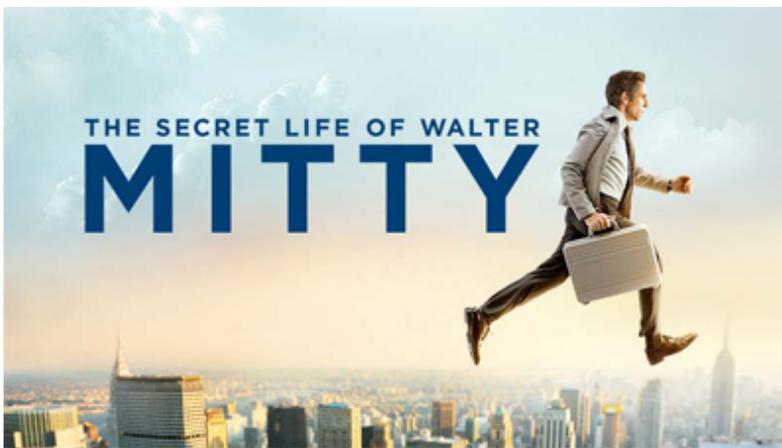
So if you need some music to help you to shake off those last of the winter blues, or want to listen to unique expression be sure to check out *Pulp* from The Seasons.

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



What Mitty Teaches

Deanna Roney



I have never been a big movie-buff. I can watch a terrible, low budget, movie and still enjoy it. I can really watch almost any movie (unless it is based on a book, and is butchered.) That being said, I do not usually enjoy watching movies more than once or twice. One of my new favorite movies is *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty* (2013). When this movie comes on TV I usually end up watching it, even if I had just seen it the day before, and I am currently listening to the sound track as I write this. As I was watching it again, for the possibly 10th time, I wondered at

what in this movie spoke to me in such a way that I, apparently, could not get tired of it?

I think this movie speaks to those who grew up and lost a part of themselves in the process. In today's society we are taught to have realistic expectations—to seek high paying employment regardless of the personal cost. We are taught that the things we day-dreamed about as kids are childish, foolish, and idle pleasures. In *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty* there is the iconic moment when Walter has to grow up and take care of his family. To do so, he shaves off his mohawk, which is symbolic of him losing that part of himself. I think this is something we all go through at some point, making the responsible choices, shaving our literal, or figurative, mohawk.

When I was in high school I subjected myself to chemistry, biology, and the higher-level math class. I hated these classes, and the feeling really was mutual. I was unable to take courses I wanted to, History and English Lit, because it conflicted with the 'smart choices'. I thought I was making responsible choices in going this route: keeping my options open. I made it through the courses but with a certain level of stress and self-doubt. As I have grown I have found my childhood passion again, which, surprise, does not include anything to do with chemistry, biology, or math! Walter Mitty has help in finding himself again, help in touching with that childhood free spirit that he had lost along the way.

Like Walter, I had help in finding my passion again. Sometimes we need a little nudge to get on that helicopter with the drunk pilot. While Cheryl Melhoff may not have actually been there, encouraging Walter to get on that helicopter, her voice was in his mind. Having that support, and that nudge, is sometimes all a person needs to find themselves again, to reconnect with their childhood dreams. For myself, I have the support of everyone

around me to follow my passions. But, without the continued support of my husband, without the push to take a chance and reconnect with my passions, I likely would not have taken the leap. I would be living in a grey world of repetition: get up, go to work, go home, repeat.

Walter Mitty found how easy it was to get back to the life he wanted if he was willing to take the chance. From the beginning of the movie to the end you can see a physical change in appearance in Walter, but also an emotional one. He is no longer afraid to speak about his feelings or be true to himself. The quintessence of life, the reason Walter connected with Cheryl, who encouraged him to leave the safety of his regular life, was himself. The quintessence of life resides in everyone. Sometimes we just need the right person to come along and coax it back out.

What resonates with myself in this movie is the change that comes over Walter. He is able to change from what I would consider a mousy character into someone who is confident and empowered. I can relate, as I have seen the same changes in myself. It is amazing what a little coaxing from someone can do; even if that person does not know what they have done to contribute to the positive change. Perhaps it is because they are not consciously trying to encourage change that we are receptive to it. It is simply through their actions and attitude that they draw out our old self. Cheryl did not try to get Walter to embrace his old self; but through her actions and attitude, coaxed Walter out of his comfort zone, and encouraged him to take a risk.

Deanna Roney is an AU student who loves adventure in life and literature.

Student Sizzle AU's Hot Social Media Topics

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

AUSU Student Forums

In the Science Course Discussions forum, user "MKhan786" seeks advice on the final exam for MATH 265.

Other topics include an article in the *Athabasca Advocate*, the AUSU Executive Director position, and courses COMP 444 and 486.

AthaU Facebook Group

Abra's looking for insight to the POLI 450 final exam. Ashlee wants to know if she can claim invigilation fees on her tax return. Jesse sends a shout out to all those working full time and taking courses. And Melinda looks for ideas on what she can use to prove her student status without a student ID card.

Other postings include popular goddesses, Khan Academy, finding quiet study places, PLAR, and courses HRSV 422 and MKTG 396.

Twitter

@AthabascaU tweets: "Are you eligible to graduate this year? The deadline to apply for graduation and convocate in June is April 1st! <http://ow.ly/Kd5tt> ." In a separate tweet, @AthabascaU posts a link to their AU Careers Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/AthabascaUniversityCareers>.

@AUPress tweets an announcement on their latest book, *Rocks in the Water, Rocks in the Sun*.



Council Connection

Barbara Lehtiniemi



Athabasca University is not closing and your credits are safe.

Aren't you glad *The Voice Magazine's* writers attend AUSU's monthly council meetings to bring you news you need in a timely basis? Sitting in on meetings listening to discussions on policy is sometimes—dare I say it—boring. Judging from the number of other student observers who attended this Wednesday's meeting (ie. none) I'm not the only one who thinks so.

However, among the policies, reports, and "be it resolved that" motions, there are gems of information that make attendance worthwhile. You can wait for a month or two to access the meeting minutes and reports on AUSU's [website](#), or wait two days and read the highlights in *The Voice*.

The meeting of Wednesday, March 11 got underway shortly after 5:30pm MST and lasted one hour and one minute. The first item of note was a ratification of an earlier e-mail vote, which will see AU pony up \$5000 to sponsor convocation lunches, in conjunction with AUGSA. The next three items were updates to policies [9.06 Technology and Infrastructure](#), [9.12 Course and Program Development](#), and [9.16 Co-op Programs and Job Placement](#).

The final two action items concerned motions to repeal two policies: [9.17 Lowering Inter-Provincial Barriers](#), and [9.18 Student Financial Aid System](#). There was minimal discussion on these items, with the consensus being that 9.17 was redundant, and 9.18, which resolved that AUSU would lobby for more non-repayable grants and bursaries for students in need, was no longer realistic.

A review of submitted reports from various individuals and committees took up the remaining 20 minutes of the meeting. As usual, the full reports are initially distributed to council members only, but will be posted with the meeting minutes in a month or so. Here's a summary of discussion around the reports:

- in his President's Report, AUSU Council President Jason Nixon commented on the recent rumours that AU is merging with the University of Alberta. Jason remarked that rumours of this nature were cropping up over a year ago but have no substance. It's true that AU, along with the rest of Alberta, is facing sustainability issues. A task force composed of AU, student representatives, and government officials has been set up to address AU's issues and will report back in June. Jason is one of the task force members. Jason stressed that student credentials are safe and AU is not shutting down.
- regarding the vacant Executive Director position at AUSU, Jason commented that the hiring process is moving along and they expect to have the position filled shortly.
- in her report, VP Finance Corrina Green observed that nobody has seen AU's budget yet which is giving rise to rumours and anger around AU watercoolers.
- in her Office Coordinator's report, AUSU's Karyna Hochachka advised that the AUSU office had a productive month. They're still fielding phone calls about the new healthcare plan, along with inquiries about the student planner and [lynda.com](#).

The next AUSU meeting will be on Wednesday, April 8, 2015. It remains to be verified if this will be AUSU's AGM meeting. If it is, all AUSU members are invited to attend and have their voices heard. For information, contact AUSU at 1-855-497-7003 or admin@ausu.org.



Shop Anyway

During our recent cruise there was no shortage of programming to keep passengers engaged, active, entertained, or learning. One of the things we attended was the much-lauded presentation by the ship's shopping ambassador. Indeed, such a person and position exists.

Here was our thought process. We were going to be spending at most a few hours at ports in places we had never visited before: Half Moon Cay, Bahamas; Grand Cayman (no, we didn't go to visit our offshore moola); Cozumel; and Key West, Florida. We were in possession of US dollars that cost us an arm and leg so any tips and tricks would be welcome. Like most travelers we hoped to buy something meaningful as a reminder of the trip. We were disappointed that the onboard shopping selection was limited and very expensive. The lure of free draws clinched the decision.

At the appointed time and place we sat through a session that frankly, primed the pump. We heard that most visitors to the Caribbean go home with diamonds, gold, or tanzanite. We heard that by taking advantage of Alyssa's knowledge and relationship with on-shore retailers, we could save money. And who doesn't want to do that?

We just needed to go to the 'recommended and guaranteed' stores identified on the shopping guide available for each port. (A closer reading of the back page disclosure reveals that each store 'paid a promotional fee.') If we had one of her VIP passes we would get the best pricing and special service. Uh-uh.

Part of the pitch also included information about tanzanite, a gorgeous blue gemstone. Apparently tanzanite is 1000 times rarer than diamonds. Its value comes from its beauty and scarcity. Apparently, the only source on the planet will be depleted in one generation, so owning a piece as an investment was touted as a

smart decision.

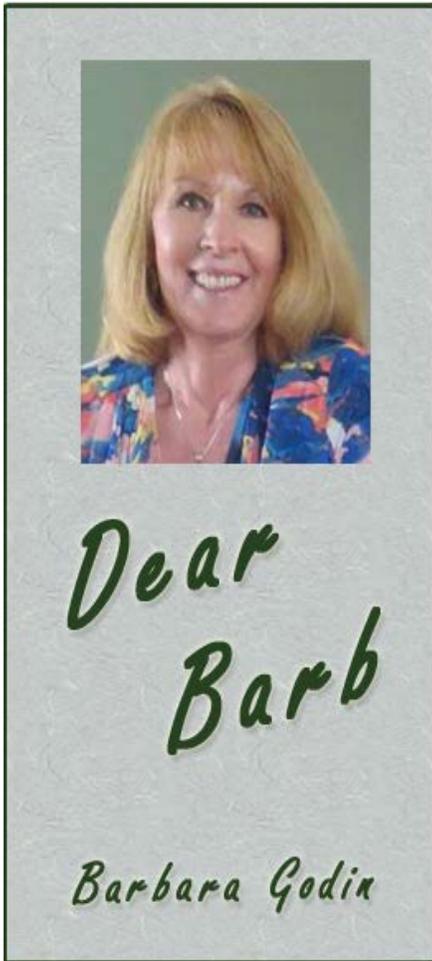
According to legend a Maasai tribesman who was tending his cattle first discovered this stone in 1967 in Tanzania at the foot of Mount Kilimanjaro. African folklore believes that tanzanite restores balance, eases stress, and brings luck to the wearer. Tanzanite is trichroic meaning that it exhibits three different colours (sapphire blue, violet, and burgundy) depending on the stone's angle. The darkest blue is rarest and therefore priciest. As with diamonds, the four C's apply when making a purchase: clarity, colour, cut, and carat weight.

I was lucky to find a three-piece set (stud earrings and pendant) set in 14k white gold in a pretty blue and unusual triangular shape in a price I could afford. It's delicate and something I will cherish and pass on to my daughter.

The only other notable purchase was a Valentino handbag I snagged at the Clearance Sale onboard near the end of the week. Even though it still cost a pretty penny I smile because of its unique yet classic shape and colour.

As always be aware of prices, sales hyperbole, and budget before believing everything you hear or opening your wallet. Or ignore all that and shop anyway, from where I sit.

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



The Question of Ink & Age

Dear Barb:

I am dating a guy who is ten years older than me. I am twenty-one and he is thirty-one. We get along great and have a lot of things in common. At first, I was a little hesitant to see him because of the age difference, but I liked him so much that I continued and now we are definitely in a relationship. The problem is that I still live at home with my parents and I haven't told them about him, let alone his age. I think my dad might panic and I really love my parents and don't want to have any problems with them. I was thinking of just having them meet him, but not tell them his age, what do you think? Tonya

Hi Tonya:

Some say age isn't important, but in a lot of respects it is important. For example, if you are both at different points in your life, age could be a major factor. If you do not want kids until you are older and your boyfriend is ready to start a family that could cause major disagreements between you. Also, in your careers, you probably will just be starting out, if you are even finished school, whereas your boyfriend may have been working for a while and be well established. However, as long as you discuss these things they can all be resolved. I think you need to introduce your boyfriend to your parents and, if they ask his age, then you should tell them the truth. There is no point in lying or hiding the fact that he is older as it will come out. I would think if he's a decent guy who treats you well, your parents would be able to accept him in your life. Thanks Tonya.

Dear Barb:

I'm sick of reading all this negative stuff about people who have a lot of tattoos. I have a friend who is covered in tattoos; in fact she is a tattoo artist. She is also a mother of two and a great person. She doesn't drink, smoke or do anything illegal and takes very good care of her children. In fact I wouldn't hesitate to leave my children with her. What makes people so small-minded and judgemental! Tammy

Hi Tammy:

You know the old saying, "don't judge a book by its cover," well that's exactly what happens a lot of the time. It is nobody's business except your own how you choose to dress, color your hair, or what tattoos you choose. On the other hand, some tattoos are offensive and if they are displayed in a location that is highly visible, this may cause some problems for the individual. For example if you are going to work in a fancy restaurant that is frequented by older people, and have a questionable tattoo that is visible to all patrons, an employer may choose not to hire you. So while it is up to the individual what and where they chose to put their tattoos, we do have to conform somewhat to what is acceptable in our society. Thanks for your question Tammy.

Email your questions to 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

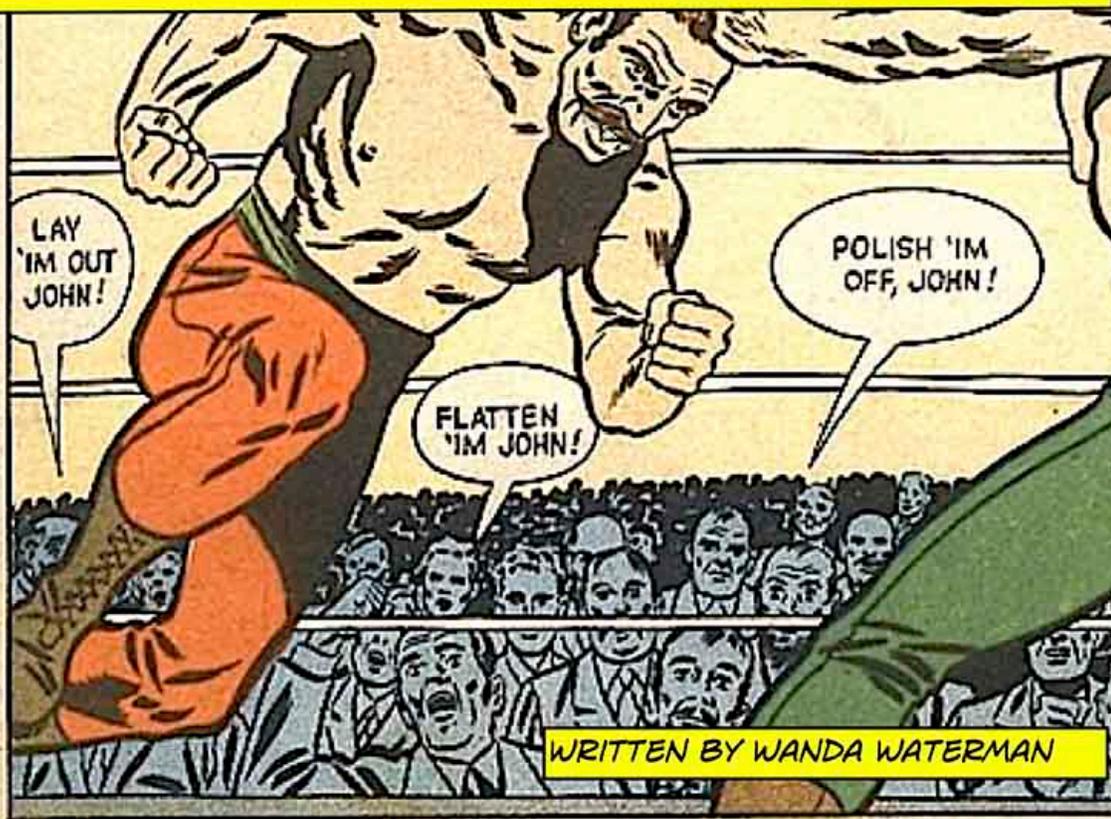
Wanda Waterman

Weird Canada

Weird Parties Department

"I can lick any man in the house"

THE CANADIAN EXTREME WRESTLING PARTY chooses its chief by staging a wrestling battle royale and appointing the winner as party leader. The party was formed in 1999, and had a left wing agenda that included environmentalism and gun control. In 2000 one of its candidates, the Newfoundlander Sailor King Moondog White, ran for Canadian Parliament, with the slogan "Parliament needs a Moondog."





AUSU
ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY
STUDENTS' UNION

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Featured AUSU Member Service: Awards

AUSU offers a variety of scholarships and bursaries for members. Our next awards deadline is May 1.

Academic Achievement Scholarships reward scholastic excellence. Applicants must submit a transcript and the students with the highest GPA over the last thirty credits will receive the award.

Overcoming Adversity Bursaries help student 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 study after a long absence from school.

Balanced Student Awards reward the scholastic effort of students who balance multiple life commitments with university study.

Student Service Awards recognize those who provide outstanding support to students or their community. A letter of support from a volunteer supervisor is an asset, as is service to students at AU.

For more information on these awards and our other awards (Emergency Bursary, Computer Bursary, Travel Bursary), visit AUSU's website at <http://www.ausu.org/services/scholarships.php>

Great AU Finds Online

Am I Ready? Counselling Assessments – A series of review modules to test your skill in a variety of subjects. Use these to determine if you need to brush up on a subject before diving in to a course, or just for fun. Also, Mapping Your Future help you choose an occupation. For links, see: http://counselling.athabascau.ca/assess_yourself.php

AUSU Featured Groups & Clubs

Group Name: **Athabasca University Faculty of Science and Technology**

Where: **Facebook**

Members: 275 Likes

About: Posts related to the FST and its students

IMPORTANT DATES

- March 31: Last day to extend courses ending April 30n
- April 1: Deadline to apply for June convocation
- April 3-6: Easter Weekend – AU & AUSU closed
- April 8: AUSU Council meeting
- April 10: Last day to register for courses starting May 1
- April 30: Last day to extend courses ending May 30

Activity: Regular posts each week or every two weeks.



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:

Increased Productivity

The following three video is essential for new students because distance education can be daunting. Setting small, reachable goals and learning how to boost productivity with time management are keys to a successful start.

Firstly, there is a short (just over 11 minutes) video about managing your time by Todd Dewett called Managing Your Time.

Secondly, if you are interested in a course about productivity and managing time, you could watch Enhancing Your Productivity, by Dave Crenshaw. This course discusses

1. Your most valuable activities
2. Building up coworkers
3. Having focus

Lastly, there is a course called Achieving Your Goals, by Dave Crenshaw, that explains how to set measurable and achievable goals.

Have you signed up for lynda? It's free for AUSU members. To learn more, check out ausu.org/services/lynda.php

CLASSIFIEDS

Classifieds are free for AU students! Contact voice@voicemagazine.org for more information.

THE VOICE

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