

# THE VOICE

MAGAZINE

Vol 23 Issue 37 2015-09-11

## Minds We Meet

Interviewing Students Like You!

## Throwing Students a Lifeline

AUSU's New Mental Health Program

## Dear Dad

A Heart-Felt Letter

*Plus:*

*Council Connection*

*25 Percent*

*and much more!*



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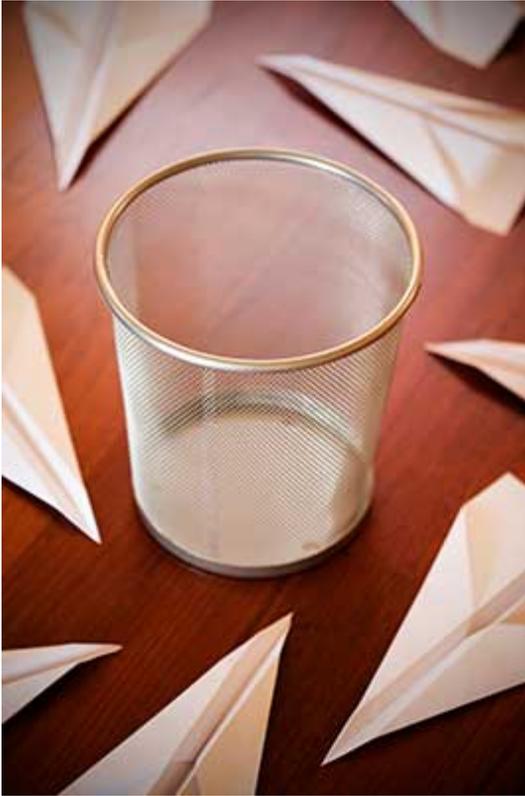
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# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



**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****Back to it!****Karl Low**

It's September and even though Athabasca University doesn't have a traditional school year, it kind of does. AU's student numbers usually have a significant increase in September, as students at brick and mortar institutions realize they won't be able to get all of their desired courses into the schedule and so turn to AU to fill in the gaps. It's also the time that many of those who are relying on scholarships and student loans get their funding put through.

Add a downturn in the economy, something that usually increases enrolment as people have to look for more training to get new jobs, and you've got a recipe for a lot of new students taking their first courses at AU this month. I'm sure all of us remember that first course, the confusion, excitement, and trying to figure out, "So what exactly do I do here? Where do I start?" You can see the uptick in the unofficial AU students Facebook page.

Meanwhile, here at *The Voice Magazine*, the start of the new month means it's back to reporting on AUSU Council activities, and this month brings us a largely new crop of Councillors, almost entirely new staff, and a couple of new programs to start reporting on. So this week, Barb Lehtiniemi takes a look at the new mental health program that AUSU has bought into, to give us a run-down of what it offers and how it can help you.

Our feature this week is an interview with student, and now VP External, Colleen Doucette. This interview was done before the by-election results were announced, so Colleen didn't have any idea at the time if she'd be on Council or what position she'd end up holding. Which means you get to see an inside look at what a Councillor is before they get elected. As it turns out, a lot like any of us.

Also this week, just in time to start helping us out as we get back to serious study, sees articles by The Study Dude on finding research topics, Deanna Roney on a tool in Microsoft Word she's found helps her with her commitment issues in essays, and the return of The Writer's Toolbox, as professional editor, Christina Frey, returns from various conferences over the summer with a simple suggestion that many of us often forget in our rush to get a paper submitted.

Plus, we also have reviews of two very different musical artists, a look at why getting more women into political leadership positions is important, and Marie Well provides us with some advice on how to achieve a peace of mind that can be especially important when we first look at the course requirements and wonder how we're going to get all of it done. If that isn't enough, we've got interviews, entertainment, and another heart-felt article by our own Barb Godin as she remembers her father.

At any rate, enjoy the read!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karl".

# MINDS WE MEET



*Colleen Doucette is an AU student from Truro, Nova Scotia. She's been a student at AU for 13 years, and is currently working towards a Certificate in Counselling Women.*

*Colleen was a candidate in the recent AUSU By-election, and was elected, garnering 722 votes—the most of any candidate. The Voice Magazine caught up with her just before the election results were announced. We interviewed Colleen about school, mind reading, and cozy mysteries.*

**You're in Truro NS. Have you always lived there?**

We just moved here a year ago so that my husband could follow a job opportunity. Previously we were in South Rawdon NS. Since I work in Dartmouth, I kept my same job.

**Are you in a program at AU?**

Right now I'm pursuing a Certificate in Counselling Women. I started my studies at AU 13 years ago. I obtained a Certificate in French Language Proficiency in 2011, and then a Diploma in Arts last year. Each 30 credits represents an achievement and will ultimately lead to a degree. Since I work full time I only take one AU course at a time, which is why I've been at it so long.

**You're an Intelligence Analyst for the RCMP. Is that as sexy as it sounds?**

It isn't. Really, you lose your innocence in this type of job. You may go into it with the idea that the world is an innocent, blissful place, but this work really opens up your eyes to the fact that the world can be a disgusting place, too. There are a lot of bad people out there. In my work, I'm analyzing behaviour patterns and giving support for investigators. It helps bring cases to an end.

Despite hearing and seeing things that break the "blissful bubble", I find this work really worthwhile. Not only am I helping out in that capacity, but I'm learning about the range of behaviour that is out there. It makes me more cautious, and more protective; I think that's a good way to be.

**Describe the path that led you to AU.**

I was living in Calgary at the time, 13 years ago. I love learning and reading and I wanted to continue my education. I was working full time, so the possibility of being able to work at my own pace really drew me in. It's so convenient.

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

Study! Seriously, I'm also a registered holistic nutritional consultant, so I have to educate myself about natural nutrition. I'm also constantly reading, and I like doing crafts, such as sewing, knitting, and crocheting.

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

I would say my Dad. I grew up in a big family, with seven older brothers and one older sister. With that many brothers, there wasn't really anyone who was going to help me! My dad was away a lot, but he'd come home with Dr. Seuss books, or sticker books, or other educational books. I have good memories of putting together puzzles and listening to stories.

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

Princess Diana. She was just a very graceful and compassionate person. Also Julia Child. (Okay, I know that's two people.) Julia worked for the government and had a passion for cooking, so we have some similarities.

**Describe your experience with online learning so far.**

I love the fact that I can choose the times that I want to study. And I like making connections with other students, being able to post questions and get responses, and not feeling alone. What I dislike, if anything, is that some courses are just so difficult for the average full-time working student to complete. Courses need to be constructed with this in mind. Full-time workers, I would suspect, are the highest student demographic out there.

**Have you had a time when you wavered about your education?**

Yeah, just last year! I was working on WGST 266, *Introduction to Women's Studies*. I was getting bogged down in the reading and couldn't find much relevance in the women's movement. Then I met some ladies in Truro who were lobbying against human sex trade trafficking. It was a turning point because it made me realize that what I was learning in the course was still relevant. I wouldn't have continued that course except for that chance encounter.

*It was a turning point because it made me realize that what I was learning in the course was still relevant*

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

It was a French course I took. I can't remember which course it was now, but Dr Audrey O'Brien was the tutor. I love O'Brien; she was just amazing. She was super-knowledgeable and spoke in a beautiful voice. It made the course so great.

**If you won \$20 million in a lottery, what would you do with it?**

I would definitely travel to places steeped in history, especially my family history. I'd like to explore my roots in Scotland, England, Ireland, and France, and stay in castles and enjoy the culture.

**Have you given up anything to go to AU? Was it worth it?**

I have not given up anything. AU allowed me to do something that I couldn't otherwise do: study while working full time.

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

My first project would be to try and get more students involved. I'd like to create opportunities for students to know what's going on. There currently isn't enough engagement. It's difficult for students because so many



## Dear Dad

**Barb Godin**



*Barb Godin and her father*

Today is Labor Day and I can't help but remember you taking me to the Labor Day parade in Windsor. You always pushed me through the crowd to the front so I could see. I loved the marching band, as the pounding of the drums filled my chest with excitement. That was many years ago and one of my few memories of you. Unfortunately I never had the opportunity to really get to know you. Due to circumstances that I don't understand, you chose, for the most part, to be an absent parent. I don't know what happened between you and mom, and I don't want to judge, as I am aware that there are always two sides.

At eight years old I lived with you for one year. What I recall most was your great sense of humor - always joking with me and teasing. Friday was our special day. After you returned home from work we would jump on the bus and go downtown

where you would buy me at least one storybook. One week it would be Cinderella—the next, Pinocchio—leaving me with quite an enviable collection of books. This is how you fueled my lifelong love of books. During the year with you I missed Mom terribly, but I loved having my own dad in my life. I learned quickly that you were not comfortable with displays of affection. Perhaps due to your English background? Whatever the reason, you rarely hugged me and only occasionally gave me a peck on the cheek.

That year passed quickly and I ended up back with mom. I don't remember the circumstances of my leaving you. Not even sure how my clothes and toys were transported to mom's. Maybe it was a traumatic event, maybe you cried, maybe I cried. I really don't know.

Through the years I infrequently visited you at your apartment. It was not a warm welcoming place, but I believe you tried to make me feel comfortable. You often had a bottle of beer nearby, but I don't recall you being intoxicated, or possibly I couldn't tell because I didn't know you that well. During our visits you sat on the chair and I on the sofa. The television played in the background to fill the silent pauses as you asked me all the superficial questions that you would ask someone you hardly knew. What's new? How is school? How is your sister? For which I often gave one-word answers. In spite of the awkwardness I looked forward to our visits because you were my dad. We were part of each other, as evident by our short big toe, wavy hair, and blue eyes. We never discussed Mom; I sensed you would have been uncomfortable if I were to mention her. I wasn't even sure if my siblings visited you, we never discussed it. Feelings and thoughts hung in the air like a heavy fog. We were not like a real family, just acquaintances.

When I got married you didn't attend my wedding, and I never asked why. But I didn't feel comfortable with anyone else giving me away, so I never walked down the aisle. We visited each other a few times after I was married, although the awkwardness prevailed. Unfortunately, there wasn't to be enough time for us to change this situation. Shortly after the birth of my daughter, you passed away, without ever having met her.

Your funeral was a surprisingly emotional experience for me, as the opportunity was gone to be any more than what we were to each other. I still miss you.

Love, your daughter.

*Barbara Godin is a graduate of AU and writes the "Dear Barb" column. She lives in London, Ontario with her husband, two dogs, and one cat.*



**25 Percent**

**Carla Knipe**

**"Empower women and you will see a decrease in poverty, illiteracy, disease and violence."  
 –Michaëlle Jean, Governor General of Canada, 2006-2010**

A good starting point to address the question "Why aren't there more women involved in politics?" is the Canadian documentary, 25 percent. It is just 36 minutes long and is both inspiring yet challenging. The points raised in the film quickly bombard the viewer.

The film's premise is that the United Nations, as part of its Women In Democracy initiative, has set the target for female elected representatives to be a minimum of 30%. When women make up half or more of the population, this is a fair starting point. Canada has some high profile examples of female politicians such as Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne and federal Green Party leader Elizabeth May. However, in Canada, the statistics present a different picture of Canadian political life.

--In 2013, just 24.8 percent of the 308 seats in Canadian Parliament were held by women.

--Of the 20, 513 municipal seats in Canada, 25% are held by women.

--Of the 3726 Canadian mayors, 16% are female.

To put this in perspective, Rwanda, Cuba and Afghanistan rank higher than Canada when it comes to female representatives. From the most recent data, Canada sits at position 55 on the UN rankings.

But, why is having a greater percentage of women in public office better for society? The documentary makes the point that it isn't just about allowing more women into politics for its own sake. There is, in fact, a lot of potential that is being untapped. Decision-making in Canada should be between both sexes because the decisions that are made affect both sexes. As Kathleen Wynne notes in the documentary, having more female elected representatives leads to broader and different issues being discussed in politics. It is about looking at bigger picture of policy. For example, job creation might depend on other policies such as childcare or increased opportunities for education. In short, politics as a whole must be seen in a different way.

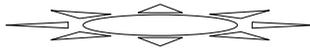
But the answer is not simply saying more women should run for political office. It is not simply blaming the "old boys network" and concluding that women cannot penetrate it, so why bother. Creating more opportunities for women in politics is much more subtle than just them barging into the chambers of power. It is about encouraging and creating leadership opportunities for girls and women from an early stage. It is about recognizing that girls and women are allowed to express their views and for women to recognize that speaking

up can create positive change. It is creating a mentor network where role models can recognize and train up the next generation of leaders no matter their sex, age, or background.

Another huge barrier to women in politics, however, is the fact that women must often juggle roles in caregiving and managing households in addition to an outside career. Political life tends to revolve around long and unsociable hours, and support is limited in terms of childcare outside normal business hours. This also needs to be addressed.

But, if Canadian society cultivated a political culture where everyone who wanted to enter politics—women, racial minorities, and younger politicians—could, then the traditional image of politics will shift. All levels of government will need to make the decision to change and adapt. Whether society is ready to embrace this change remains to be seen.

*Carla Knipe is an AU English Major who lives and writes in Calgary, Alberta*



## Throwing Students a Lifeline

**Barbara Lehtiniemi**



Question: How much help do students need to be successful?

Answer: All they can get.

Being a student is seldom easy. Even on a good day, students can struggle with motivation, juggle commitments, and walk that fine line between sweet success and demoralizing failure. And on a bad day, well, let's just say it can get overwhelming.

Here's some welcome news: AU undergraduate students now have full access to Student Lifeline, a "confidential resource program" which students can use to "manage personal issues" at home, work, or school. The service,

provided by Ceridian, is now available to students free of charge through AUSU.

Student Lifeline, similar to an Employee Assistance Program provided by some employers, offers assistance in all aspects of life such as relationships, work, health, and finances. Students can access resources to help with such issues as stress, parenting, education, aging, and buying a home. Every aspect of life is covered, including the inevitable death (grief and loss, estate and will planning) and taxes (basic tax planning, dealing with debt.)

The Student Lifeline website, [LifeWorks.com](http://LifeWorks.com), is your portal to these resources. Access to the site is easy: just use the generic log-in information provided by AUSU. (You can find this log-in info on the AUSU [website](#), or in the e-mail AUSU sent to all member subscribers September 1.)

The LifeWorks.com website is a complete wellness library, stocked with information students can access immediately. Browse through the various topics and you'll find articles, booklets and brochures to read, audio recordings and podcasts to listen to, self-assessment tools, and in-depth "toolkits."

Resources can be accessed online, downloaded for later, or saved to "My Library." Using the My Library feature requires you to register for an account, with your own unique username and password. The registration process takes only a few minutes and prompts you to provide your name, e-mail address, and to create a password to use on subsequent visits to the LifeWorks site.

Additional online services include the *Student Lifeline Depression Centre*, which includes information, assessment, support, and a 16-session online program; and the *Student Lifeline Stop Smoking Centre*, an online program offering "education, exercises, support, and resources to work through the smoking cessation process." Participation in both these programs is confidential and anonymous (but not meant to replace professional medical advice.)

Students can also access a full array of counselling and support services by phone. Student Lifeline consultants are available at 1-877-418-1537 any hour of any day, or by web chat during specified hours. Consultants can assist students with advice, direct them to resources, or set up counselling sessions. Professional counselling sessions can be arranged by phone, video, or in person.

Being a successful student isn't always easy. If you're also trying to be a successful spouse, parent, employee, retiree, or any of the other life roles you play, it's even more challenging. On top of that, life could throw you a curveball, such as job loss, divorce, mental illness, substance abuse, or a natural disaster.

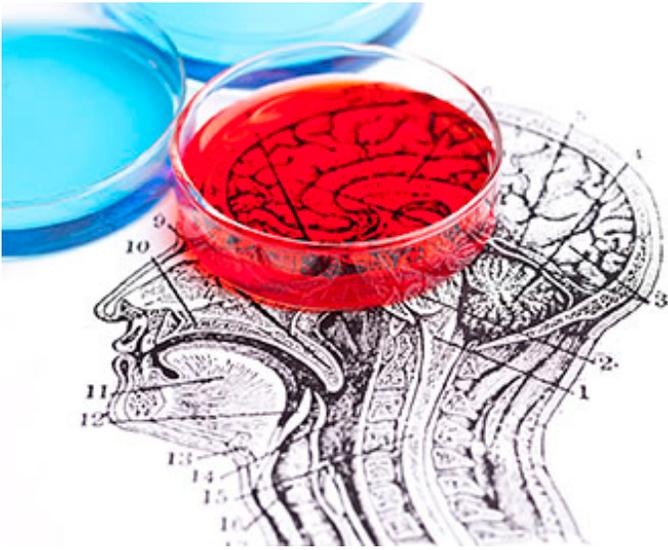
Whatever challenges you're experiencing in your life, you now have more resources to help you. Student Lifeline is a free service provided to AUSU members and their dependents. Access Student Lifeline at [Lifeworks.com](http://Lifeworks.com), or phone a Student Lifeline consultant at 1-877-418-1537. For more information on Student Lifeline, visit the [Services](#) page on the AUSU website.

AUSU refers to Student Lifeline as a "Mental Health & Wellness program." I welcome it as a lifeline that every student needs.

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

## Primal Numbers Fast Talking Toys

S.D. Livingston



Whether your doll of choice was a Barbie or a G.I. Joe, chances are that you talked to it. And you probably wished it could talk to you—for real, not just when you pulled a string. Now, Internet-connected toys really can talk to kids, thanks to speech recognition software. It's easy to see how that could benefit hackers and marketers, but are there any real benefits for kids?

Believe it or not, talking dolls have been around since 1894. The talking-toy phenomenon really took off in the 1960s, and by the '70s there were even talking trucks and cameras to go along with Barbie and Chatty

Cathy. Today's talking toys add a whole new element though. Connected to the Internet via wi-fi, they can build a database of your child's likes and dislikes, create new jokes and stories based on a kid's vocabulary, and even adapt as a child's interests change.

It doesn't take much to realize the potential problems with this kind of tech. It's bad enough that hackers have been able to listen in or talk through baby monitors. Now there's the potential that they could program your child's doll to send frightening or inappropriate messages. A programmer in this [BBC article](#) demonstrates that very scenario as a precautionary tale.

And it goes without saying that parents should avoid any kind of children's toy with a camera in it. At least one that's pointed at the kids.

Then there are the marketing ploys. Will your child's toy send subtle (or not-so-subtle) messages about the company's other merchandise? It was exciting enough when kids used to flip through the annual Christmas catalogue and make a list. The marketing pressure will really be on if their favourite toys are urging them to buy things.

But just because a new technology carries negatives doesn't mean it should be avoided. The Internet itself is a case in point. There are plenty of negatives, but powerful benefits too. The question is, do Internet-connected toys bring benefits that outweigh the risks?

Yes, but only for a small percentage of kids. For example those with autism, who often find interaction difficult. In other cases, talking toys could hinder development. That's because a computer simply doesn't come close to the natural speech patterns of a human being. For kids with speech difficulties or delays, so-called conversations with a toy could easily create frustration or make existing problems worse.

Still, there's the very cool idea that your kid's talking toys could get to know their personality. That a toy could understand and empathise after a bad day at school. Or that it could encourage kindness if it detects a sulky attitude.

In another twenty years, maybe. But today's Internet-enabled toys just aren't that sophisticated. In fact, recognizing human emotions is still just a matter of guesswork for even the most advanced computer. As this [Vice article](#) notes, "intelligent machines—so far—can only recognize and remember patterns in data from the physiological symptoms of emotions."

In other words, a computer can't pick up on the subtle clues that reveal whether you're frowning in concentration, anger, or confusion. And that's with the aid of visual cues. The task gets even harder when a computer has to respond based only on someone's voice.

So as the annual holiday season approaches, remember this. Kids will no doubt want the latest Internet-connected toys. Go ahead and buy them for the novelty or because they're someone's favourite doll. But don't buy them because the marketers have convinced you they can get to "know" a child and interact like a human friend.

That day is coming, of course. And it could be more fun than you think. Just ask [Robot](#) and Frank.

*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.*

## Student Sizzle AU's Hot Social Media Topics

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



Social media posts are ramping up as students return to their studies in earnest. The [AUSU Forums](#) are still sluggish but a few discussion threads continue. Meanwhile, the sparkle of Facebook and Twitter beckons:

### **AthaU Facebook Group**

Tamara is looking for tips from other single parent students on preserving sanity. Sarah wonders how challenging it is to qualify for AU bursaries. Nnelg seeks opinions on SCIE 326 Scientific Reasoning.

Other posts include real text books, and courses BIOL 235, EDUC 316, IDRL 308, LGST 369, and PSYC 426.

### **Twitter**

[@AthabascaU](#) tweets: "Critical Analysis?-"Huh?!" Meet your AU Super Site for [#AcademicWriting](#) <http://ow.ly/ROemx> [#WriteSite](#) [#Thesis](#)." [@AthabascaUSU](#) (AUSU) tweets: "Looking for a [#job](#)? AUSU has some helpful [#career](#) links at <http://bit.ly/1JU00Fe> [#AthaU](#)."

## Writer's Toolbox

### I Have a Spellchecker

Christina M. Frey



*"Eye halve a spelling chequer  
It came with my pea sea..."*

You've seen the humorous [poem](#) before, and you get it; spellcheckers are the misfits of the editing world. They miss homophones. They mix up words. Their understanding of grammar is downright laughable.

But they're not entirely useless—and if you write them off, you could regret it.

Spellcheckers get a bad rap, and deservedly so; they're limited in scope and can't make fine usage distinctions or determine which homophone is the right choice if you type the wrong one in. They're also unreliable in their ability to pick up on typos that can double as real words. Worse, in the hands of someone who's confused about word pairs, spellcheckers may liberally sprinkle the manuscript with misspellings.

With whole blogs and tumblrs dedicated to spellchecker fails, it's no surprise that most now see this tool as a laughingstock, a sad remnant from the earlier, more hopeful days of word processing. More often than not, we don't bother running our spellcheckers at all. Eh, what's the use—they'll just screw things up anyways!

And yet.

A few nights ago I was happily reading when a word jumped out at me: "theif." Just as I typed it here, a little squiggly line came up; it's spelled wrong. I can see that. You can see that. But I can also understand a human copy editor and proofreader missing it, because it's easy to mentally flip the *i* before the *e* without realizing we're doing it.

Human error is inevitable in editing—it's unavoidable. But this error wasn't unavoidable, and that's what's bothering me more.

When you don't run your manuscript through a spellchecker, you risk missing hard-to-see typos or spelling errors—words like "theif," that almost look right (and apparently managed to make it past several editors at the publishing house).

Surprisingly, more than half of the manuscripts I receive have clearly not been spellchecked, which means they contain quite a few unnecessary errors—everything ranging from typical typos to misspellings of an invented word, like a character's name (you can add these to the custom dictionary, and your spellchecker will flag deviations), to two words crunched together without a space in between. First impressions matter, and it can be hard to shake a negative one when easy-to-catch typos jump off at me every time I turn the page.

Technology is no substitute for human editing—but it can help ease the burden and provides another set of "eyes." Even spellcheckers, riddled as they are with imperfections, make a valuable first defense against errors.

Your spellchecker should also be part of your manuscript finalizing routine, as it can help sniff out typos introduced at the proofreading stage—like "teh" for "the" or spacing issues (think "alittle" for "a little").

Recognize your spellchecker's limitations, of course, and use it with care—but use it. You might not find anything. You might still miss word pair mixups, like "then" instead of "than," or improper usage or dangling modifiers. But you'll catch typos like "theif" and their ilk, and odds are you'll end up with a cleaner manuscript than if you never were to run it all.

*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](#).*



## In Conversation

With Director, Erik Poppe, Part II

Wanda Waterman



Norwegian Erik Poppe started his career as a photojournalist, covering war zones all over the world before turning to cinematography. Many elements in his latest feature, *A Thousand Times Good Night*, the story of a photojournalist torn between career and family, are autobiographical (he admits that some lines in the movie came from his own children). Poppe recently took the time to answer Wanda Waterman's questions about his background, influences, and current project.

**What was your most beneficial educational experience?**

My years as a student at the Dramatic Institute (Dramatiska Instiutet) in Stockholm gave me a great deal of practice and theory. I had teachers who pushed me in the right direction, and I was lucky. Film schools are not always the right thing for everyone, but, at that

moment of my life, ending a career as a photographer and moving into movies was the best thing that could have happened to me.

I watched a lot of Francois Truffaut's early movies, like *The 400 Blows* and the Italian *Rome, Open City* from 1946, or *Bicycle Thieves*, and loved them all. I fell in love with Robert Bresson's later movies and was blown away by his *Pickpocket*. Movies from the seventies like *Alice Doesn't Live here Anymore* and Klimov's *Come and See* were also a big influence.

**What was the most mesmerizing experience for you while making *A Thousand Times Good Night*?**

It was definitely working with Juliette Binoche. It was a challenge to nail the script and the dialogue with her, and I loved the process all the way.

---

It was wonderful to be able to introduce new actors and mix them with such incredible actors as Nicolai Coster-Waldau and Juliette.

Laureen Canny, who played the 15-year-old daughter, was the one, among several hundred of young girls, to be cast. At the moment I saw her performance I knew that this was a moment, similar to the one you know that only appears a couple of times during a career as a director. You're confronted with such a rare talent that no one has really seen before, and you're the one to bring her out to the screen for the first time.

**How did you get such moving performances from Juliette Binoche?**

In general I need a lot of preparation and rehearsal time with my actors. This time I had a limited time but needed to build a relationship on trust, a common vision, and an understanding of her part. The time we had was spent on preparing, preparing, and preparing the script, photographic skills, discussing her part as a mother, and finally pushing each other into making brave decisions on how to tell the story.

**Do you have any thoughts on why film can be healing?**

If it's honest, and the audience members identify with the theme and the protagonist, then it's like going on a journey you weren't expecting. My role as an artist is to raise questions and not hand out all the answers. The questions do start processes among people like discussions, thoughts, or fresh perspectives, so film may be able to make a small impact, a change, or even heal.

**How did your experience as a photojournalist prepare you for *A Thousand Times Good Night*?**

I didn't need to do all the research I usually do in advance. The story is also quite personal, and almost private, in the sense of knowing how to work out the story with my fellow screenwriter or how to work on the direction in an honest way.

**Are there any books, films, or albums that have deeply influenced your development as a filmmaker?**

I am influenced by all other art forms, and not particularly influenced by contemporary movies any more. Music is essential, and it's very often classical music by masters like Bach, Händel, or John Cage, or some of the other minimalists.

Scandinavian and Norwegian authors like Knut Hamsun, Pär Lagerkvist, or the contemporaries like Jon Fosse or Per Petterson are all inspiring to me.

**If you had an artist's mission statement, what would it be?**

Don't be general. Be specific.

**Tell us about your current projects.**

I am working on the final edit of my next movie, *The King's Choice*. It's about the first three days of the German attack on Norway in 1940 and tells the true story of the Norwegian King Haakon and the thriller surrounding him. Every institution and person fails or collapses around him, and he is sort of left alone, not knowing how to handle the situation before he sees that he needs to represent a resistance toward Hitler. It's a story of his escape, with the German trying to hunt him down.

Wanda also writes the blog [The Mindful Bard](#): *The Care and Feeding of the Creative Self*.



## Study Tips from a Semi-Anonymous Friend

### How to Turn your Topic into a Research Problem

*There is nothing more that The Study Dude wants for you than to write a paper you feel proud of—and you remember—years later.*

*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 Dude article contains part two of the examination of the the book *The Craft of Research* by Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. Their book is the pinnacle of research overview books for

both the undergraduate and graduate level.

### Unveiling a Research Problem in Sources

In last week's Study Dude article, I ranted about the ever-elusive definition of a gap. What exactly is a gap in the literature? I suggested that gaps could be extending others' ideas or contradicting others ideas. Yet, as will be revealed in this article, gaps can include so much more. Furthermore, when we study our sources, they offer a whole slew of gaps that we can work from. We just need to develop a discerning eye for the proverbial gap.

When I wrote research papers, I used to collect facts and string them together into an organized fact dump. As painful as that may sound, that method got results. Now, after writing the Study Dude articles, I've learned that much better strategies exist for writing a paper. Namely, writing an A++ paper involves finding a compelling research problem from the gaps in the literature and developing your paper around that research problem.

Now, don't run away. Wayne C. Booth, Gregory C. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams outline the various gaps you might find in the literature:

- An article might make a claim that you can further support with additional evidence. The article's evidence might be outdated, whereas you have current information, for instance, or the article's evidence might be on the weak side, whereas you have stronger support to add.
- An article might make an assumption or a speculation on a matter that you have solid evidence to support. So, your view is essential for furthering the soundness of the argument.
- An article might say a certain situation holds for a specific event or instance, but you can prove that the situation holds for other areas as well.
- An article might say something is a certain "type" or "kind" of something else, or has a certain quality, or has a certain value, but you don't agree and have some sort of proof.
- An article might say something is a part of something else, or connects with something else in a certain way, or is always present in a larger thing, but you can show that's wrong.
- An article might say that something is changing or originated from something else, or is growing in a certain manner, but you can show that it isn't.

- An article might say that something causes something else, or is caused by something else, or causes just one thing, but you think you can show that there is more to the story.
- An article might analyze an issue from a certain lens, but you know another lens/theory/view reveals a different outcome.

Is your head aching yet? Well, let's dissect more of the research process...

### Drafting Claims

Don't you want to write a paper that makes people say "Wow"? We all do. In my undergraduate studies my professor insisted that the book *Heart of Darkness* wasn't racist. To me, the book was laden with racist language that I found offensive. I imagined myself as a person of African descent reading the book. The book's contents would horrify me and could possibly spur me to run out of the classroom to shed some tears.

I told the professor I aimed to write a paper that gave evidence of the book's racist nature. He, insistent that the book contained no racist underpinnings challenged me to the task, and I set out to prove him wrong.

When he read my paper, he changed his view to accept that the main character in the book possessed racist tendencies, but he maintained his view that the book itself was not racist. To him, the book posed as a relic of past times.

Although the paper didn't shine as my best piece of writing, it did prove one of his core beliefs wrong. I felt like my paper's claim contained some significance. I felt pride.

Wayne C. Booth, Gregory C. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams show us how to make our claims significant and specific, while also addressing limitations:

- Brief one sentence short claims often don't disclose enough. They are not specific enough. Define variables, such as "the poetry is too long." Define long in your claim, such as through numbers: "the poetry is too lengthy, at over 100 pages."
- Fill your claim with keywords that you could refer to as themes in your research paper or thesis. This endeavour makes your claim for specific, once again.
- Start your claim with the word "although" to capture a naysayer's point of view, and then end your claim with "because" to provide a reason. Give your claim the structure: "(1) Although I acknowledge X, (2) I claim Y, (3) because of reason Z."
- A significant claim challenges a reader's most dearly held views. Reveal new insights. Make people curious. Show divergences in views. Take factual data to throw a curveball in long held beliefs.
- You know that your claim is the most significant it could be if people rise up in arms against it.
- Your claim sucks if you reword it in the negative, and the claim just doesn't seem very interesting or, worse, is false: "Hotdogs contain nitrates" reworded becomes "Hotdogs do not contain nitrates." The reverse claim is clearly false, and therefore, the original claim reveals little new information.

### Producing Reasons and Evidence

How do you validate your research? How do you ensure that your reasons and evidence pass the scrutiny of that white haired, bearded professor, peering at your writing through a magnifying glass? Surely, he knows what makes a paper monumental, and you are capable of writing monumental work, aren't you? I believe we all are capable of writing papers that can change the world.

In fact, in one of my undergraduate classes, I put up my hand and called out that everyone has something they know that could change the world for the better. When I called out my view, one naysayer hammered my contention. Joining in with his voice was a female who rarely spoke. She peeped, "What do I know that can

change the world?" She was a naysayer, but not really. She was really looking for confirmation, and I gave it to her. I assured her that she knew something extraordinary that could change the world, or else she wouldn't be speaking up now, especially after a semester of silence. The naysayer bickered even more loudly, and I held firm to my view.

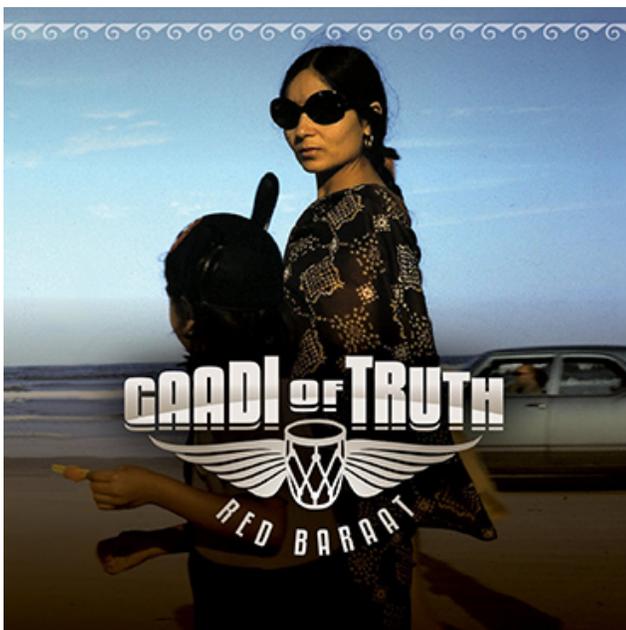
When drafting your reasons and evidence for a paper, Wayne C. Booth, Gregory C. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams say you need your stuff to be sufficient, representative, accurate, precise, and authoritative. While you can feel your shoulders slouch forward in defeat at that past comment, once you understand a little more about what these terms mean, you can get yourself in the game for making relevant, meaningful research. Booth, Colomb, and Williams help you find your voice to make your mark in this world, to better the world:

- In order for your evidence to be accurate, you want to double check your data and ensure you recorded it properly and fairly.
- In order for your evidence to contain precision, you want to define words that lead to subjective interpretations. For example, define what exactly constitutes "a lot of money." \$50? A million? Define what constitutes "some," "most," "large," or "many."
- In order for your evidence to demonstrate representativeness, you want it to be true in every case. If you claim that all religions warn against consulting psychics, you want to ensure that all in fact clearly do, and no instance of religions condoning psychics prevails. Otherwise, your claim fails to be representative. If you say Prime Minister Stephen Harper hates minorities, your claim would not be representative if one instance of him supporting minorities prevails (for instance, Mr. Harper supports foreign workers migrating into Canada).

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

Booth, Wayne C., Colomb, Gregory G., & Williams, Joseph M. *The Craft of Research*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.



### The Mindful Bard Red Baraat

Wanda Waterman

The Truth Train is Coming—Get Ready to Party!

**Album:** *Gaadi of Truth*

**Artist:** Red Baraat

"*Gaadi* literally means 'train' in Hindi, though it can also mean 'car', 'vehicle' or 'journey,'" - Sunny Jain, leader and founder of Red Baraat

"Intercultural dialogue is the best guarantee of a more peaceful, just and sustainable world."

- Robert Alan Silverstein

The music of New York *dhol* and brass ensemble, Red Baraat, sounds like the Dave Matthews Band was hired to go to the Punjab to play bhangra at the wedding of Elizabeth Hurley and Arun Nayar. It's bhangra with a big brassy jazz delivery, but you'll also hear elements of Tijuana Brass, Klesmer, New Orleans funk, and classical Indian music. The

tracks on *Gaadi of Truth*, Red Baraat's second album, also call to mind the heart-pumping musical themes from *Hawaii Five-O* and *The Rockford Files*—the kind of music the guys in the high school band loved to play even when they didn't have to, the kinds of tunes that promised action, excitement, and danger.

The tracks are instrumental, but the musicians will sometimes sing together in unison like the big bands of the past (there are no vocal soloists). The sparse lyrics are sung in Hindi, Punjabi, and occasionally English, but even the English lyrics are so cryptic they may as well be in Hindi.

The players ride buoyantly on the crest of their own enthusiasm, and that of the audience, but their seeming recklessness somehow manages to always sound tight and together. They're great showmen, tireless in their zeal and wit; in one stage act they demand the Anglophone audience repeat a Punjabi phrase that most of us would find unpronounceable, with hilarious results.

The band's leader, singer, and composer, Sunny Jain, a first generation Indian-American, founded the group in 2008. His childhood had been filled with the sounds of Indian classical music, sacred music, and old Bollywood films, but his musical aesthetic was also informed by India's brass band tradition. In Red Baraat he wanted to place the big double-headed *dhol*—North India's dance drum of choice—front and centre.

In order to pull off such radical syncretism he had to recruit a motley crew of players. It wasn't hard finding the right mix, but touring with a multicultural group has had its frustrations, unwanted police attention being one of the most aggravating.

But Sunny Jain practices Jainism, an ancient religion that emphasizes pluralism and diversity. These themes are salient on *Gaadi of Truth*, whose very name suggests both a journey and a unifying dialogue.

The serious convictions don't detract from the pure fun that Red Baraat dishes up. "Red Baraat is still a party band," says Sunny on the band's [website](#). "It's not supposed to be a severely intellectual band, but there is an intellectual aspect to it because we're all thoughtful citizens and individuals, and we're all traveling around and having discussions."

High points include "Bhangra Pirates," featuring that great, driving bhangra rhythm with the thrusting *dhol* beat at the start of every bar, and "Rang Barse," a rich stew of classical Indian, jazz, New Orleans funk, Latin, Klesmer, and bhangra. And the more you listen the more delicious it grows.

You can listen to some of the tracks in their entirety at <http://www.rootsworld.com/reviews/baraat-15.shtml>

*Gaadi of Truth* manifests four of The Mindful Bard's [criteria](#) for music well worth a listen.

- It's authentic, original, and delightful.
- It provides respite from a cruel world, a respite enabling me to renew myself for a return to mindful artistic endeavor.
- It renews my enthusiasm for positive social action.
- It makes me appreciate that life is a complex and rare phenomena, making living a unique opportunity.

*Many thanks for the research assistance of Bill Waterman.*

*Wanda also writes the blog [The Mindful Bard](#): The Care and Feeding of the Creative Self.*

## The Fit Student

Marie Well

### Practices for Coming to Peace with Yourself, Part II



Want to find peace with yourself? Want to nurture a positive sense of self? It's easier than it seems. For instance, you can cultivate a positive trait over the coming weekend. You can see yourself as your ideal, take one characteristic of that ideal persona and work toward making it a reality for you. Discipline yourself. Through that steadfast discipline you groom yourself to experience repetitions of the positive behaviours you cultivate. Ultimately, through cultivating positive behaviours, peace of mind and positive self-esteem becomes your mainstay.

Rick Hanson exposes the route toward a peaceful mindset in his book *Just One Thing: Developing a Buddha Brain One Simple Practice at a Time*. He reveals a number of strategies that, when implemented, serve to not only improve your level of inner peace, but also increase your sense of self-worth.

#### **Make Your Body Your Dear Friend: Treat It Well**

I often disparage doing little things that otherwise benefit my body. For instance, I dread the morning shower as sometimes anxiety, not water washes over me. Yet, I feel elated after a shower, soothed by the hot steam and the refreshing feeling of

cleanliness.

I resented shopping for clothing, too. As I tended to shop at stores I disliked, I avoided buying new clothes like the plague. Industrial clothing stores just didn't speak to me, even after all of the years purchasing at such outlets. Recently, I discovered a new store where all of the clothing seems to have been altered just for my body type, awaiting my purchase exclusively--and the clothes look very stylish. Now I shop to make my body look fashionable.

I also like to eat a little junk sometimes, although not often. Recently, I powered down on coconut ice cream in a huge waffle cone and some donuts. While it all tasted good, my body packed on the pounds momentarily and my face broke out. My body cried for me to stop the junk invasion.

After reading Rick Hanson's views on treating the body as a dear friend, my attitudes toward eating, showering, and grooming completely changed: Ask yourself how you'd treat your dearest friend and treat your own body in a similar fashion. Treat your body to a hot bubble bath, healthy foods, exercise, a nice teeth scrubbing, and lots of love. List out a number of different ways you can be kinder to your body. Your body needs your love just like your truest friend does. When I shower now, I think of myself doing something kind for my body. By doing something nice for someone or something else, our selflessness makes us enjoy the activity even more.

#### **Unleash Your Strength**

Every time I commuted to my workplace on the bus, I cringed at the sound of a cough or sneeze. You see, every time someone would sneeze or cough, without fail I would come down with the cold. At work, I constantly had sniffles and often came down with bronchitis.

I tried to treat someone as a cold as a Tibetan Buddhist would: I would pray that I could take away their suffering and take the suffering onto myself instead. Sure enough, the cold would overwhelm me, and I'd be stuffed and

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coughing for two weeks at a time. While my intentions seemed positive, sneezing and sniffing constantly did not sit well with me.

I read in a Wayne Dyer book how some people say they always get colds and sure enough they do. The problem was framed as something that people's frame of mind can lead to. I thought there must be a psychological way to beat this defeatist attitude in which I always, without fail, would come down with a cold whenever someone sniffled.

And, true enough, a solution presented itself. I never get colds anymore. The solution wasn't entrenched in my psychology. The solution surfaced in my physiology. When I constantly came down with colds, I wasn't getting enough rest. Now that I get an extra hour and a half sleep at night, I never get colds.

I went from always getting colds to never getting colds by one simple adjustment.

Rick Hanson talks about how to unleash our strengths and health by taking adequate dosages of vitamins, by getting sufficient sleep, by exercising regularly, and by eating good helpings of protein in our daily diets. Recall how strong you felt when you stood up for someone you love, when you withstood the winds of travesties, and let those feelings of strength cement your recognition of your inner giant.

### **Rev Up Your Excitement Gauge**

I get pumped with energy every time I think about writing, creating a venture, or engaging in some project. I always loved crafting projects that absorb me for hours on end, from setting up charity events to helping my loved one with his business ambitions. Excitement and enthusiasm can curtail any doubts, fears, or inhibitions we face with endeavours, strengthening us to take the plunge, to take that risk, and to try something new and refreshing.

Some people fear success. Just recently a book by T. Boone Pickens stated how a group contributed approximately ten million in cash just to try to run him out of business. After reading that, my own fear of success skyrocketed, but I also love to take that plunge into a project, to take that risk. After all, it's through the risks that we come to grow, that we gain our share of life's goodies.

Rick Hanson encourages us to rev up our passion as excitement fosters creativity, positive relationships, and even entrepreneurial success. Consider everything that thrills you, whether that thing be a mundane task or something quite climactic. Try to spice up doing the dishes, for instance, by singing at the top of your lungs the Canadian anthem while you dry your plates. Try to make the mundane enjoyable. Let your sparks fly for the tasks that truly rev your engine.

### **Groom Your Patience**

The topic of patience in Rick Hanson's book has probably had the biggest impact on me of all of his write-ups. Ever since reading the chapter on patience, I've aimed to develop greater patience with other people. Instead of judging others, I feel a sense of patience and accept others for whatever state they may have entered at the moment. If someone stares my way uncomfortably, I smile and feel patience and warmth towards that individual. If someone takes too long in line, I patiently look around for things in the environment that can captivate me momentarily. If someone gets my food order wrong, I speak to the waiter in a kind voice and await the correct order.

Truth be told, I feel so good demonstrating patience that I feel like the benefits outweigh the alternative by a long shot. I can hardly imagine how everyone hasn't yet adopted the virtue of patience because it just feels so good and the people around you relax and become more inviting. Everyone benefits.

Rick Hanson says that impatience drives other people away from you. Instead, we should avoid letting minor problems impact us. Just let those issues fall off your shoulders. Try to find ways to tolerate the negative bodily sensations that arise, and toughen up your patience level in any opportunity that presents itself.

In demonstrating patience, you do both yourself and others good. People around you will respond, your relationships will improve, and you will feel much better on a daily basis.

### Say Yes More

Why fight things? Why should we go through life, tension-prone, fighting the realities that we have little control over?

We now have an NDP government in Alberta, and although people wanted a change, the reality is that some people came to this province for the employment and stimulus provided by the PC government, having left their prior provinces because of the havoc reaped by NDP governments. Now, the entire Canadian population may be planning on voting NDP. Why fight it?

Rick Hanson outlines the value in saying "yes" to things that occur to us, whether we like them or not: Say yes to things you love. Then, say yes to things you feel neutral toward. Lastly, say yes to things you detest, allowing yourself to feel a sense of resignation. Say yes to all of your past, to your future, to your current state. Say yes to your ailments, to your enemies. Say yes to things you previously said no to. Sometimes, it feels better to say yes than to resist. Say yes to the beauty of your grandmother's passing. Say yes to the goodness you bring this world. Say yes to that feeling of resignation. Say yes to peace of mind.



### Music Review

Denny Schneidemesser

Samantha Stevens



**Composer:** Denny Schneidemesser

**Album:** *The First Five Years*

Occasionally I find an amazing treasure hidden within the depths of the internet. One day I was rummaging around on a popular art site looking for some new and wondrous visual art to admire when I came across a music file. Not used to finding musicians on this particular site, I investigated further and discovered an amazing composer. The music file that he had shared was an amazing masterpiece, the like that I rarely come across. Absolutely stunned that I had found such magnificent music buried away, I quickly tracked down the composer's site and found that he had released an album on iTunes last year. I only had to listen to the album once to immediately know that I wanted to share it with all of you, dear readers.

*The First Five Years* was released last year on iTunes by German composer Denny Schneidemesser. Denny composes film and soundtrack music that is used in movies, advertisements, video games, and short films.

Inspired by composers like John Williams, Hans Zimmer, and Alan Silvestri, Denny began in 2008 creating music as more of a hobby and is self-taught. In 2009, much to his surprise, Denny was offered his first professional film music composition job and since then has written many soundtracks and was even nominated for an Annie award two years ago for "Tiny Nomad", which is on the album *The First Five Years*. In July 2014, Denny compiled 21 of his compositions into *The First Five Years* and shared his music on iTunes.

The most notable aspect of Denny's music is the grandeur and elaborate sounds. The tracks on *The First Five Years* inspire touching moments, deep thoughts, and epic adventures. Amazingly, Denny creates all of his music using keyboards, software like Samplitude Pro, and high-end instruments libraries from Eastwest. The resulting sound is similar to that of a vast orchestra. Given that Denny is self-taught and composing started as a hobby, his talent as a composer and musician is instantly obvious.

Although it is hard to pick a favourite track from so many fabulous ones, "Sea of Crystal" is magnificently unique. As epic and as grand as the other tracks on the album, what I love is how Denny was able to capture the imagery of a fantastical sea of crystal and translate that image into sound. Apart from the mystical and elaborate music that transcends from adventurous to intriguing, the occasional ding that brings to mind images of light hitting massive crystals is an unusual and inspiring effect. It is obvious that Denny takes great care to create music that, although intended to accompany a visual media, can stand on its own and create spectacular mental images.

Music like Denny's is perfect for students, writers, and creators. Whether you are studying, reading, writing, or just staring at the wall thinking (like I occasionally do), this album is perfect to listen to if you are like me and love having music playing while reading and writing. The tracks are uplifting, emotional, and, with over an hour of music on *The First Five Years*, you will have lots to choose from. The tracks range from a mere 55 seconds for the intro to a startling 21 minutes.

If you would like to sample some of Denny's music, many of his tracks are available to stream on his [website](#). *Samantha Stevens is an aspiring writer who loves combining her love for literature with photography, painting, music, and all creative pursuits.*



### **AUSU Council Meeting – (Almost) Back on Track**



After the upheavals and controversies surrounding AUSU Council for the past several months, the inaugural meeting of the newly formed council made two things abundantly clear. First, many of the new faces, including the Executive Director, inspire confidence with their level of preparation and professionalism. Second, it was that very same professionalism that highlighted even more the need for a change in council leadership.

Although the meeting was long, at close to three hours, it ran smoothly thanks in large part to the very capable presence of Sarah Cornett, AUSU's new Executive Director. It was a welcome change of pace from the last few council meetings, including the AGM, where uncertainty about procedure led to confusion and delays.

Most of the agenda items at the September 9 meeting were straightforward. New councillors were welcomed and two vacant executive positions were filled. Colleen Doucette was elected as Vice-President External and Student Affairs with six votes. If the clear, logical approach of her candidate remarks is anything to go by, student interests are in good hands.

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The next executive vote was for the role of Vice-President Finance and Administration. It was a close race between two capable candidates, Tamra Ross and Brandon Simmons, and Brandon was elected the new VP Finance and Admin by one vote.

Other items, including the approval of three months of council reports, passed smoothly. As well, several councillors put their names forward to join the standing committees. Tamra Ross, Philip Kirkbride, Pierre Plamondon, and Laura Zhu are now part of the Finance Committee. Philip and Laura are also on the Awards Committee, while Tamra and Philip have joined the Member Engagement Committee.

One interesting point came up when it was time for item 6 on the agenda. This was the ratification of several email votes that took place before the new councillors came on board. Pierre Plamondon is one of those new councillors, and he raised some important issues.

For example, there were eight email votes to be ratified, but one of those votes (on policy 2.15 Executive Accountability and Compensation) hadn't been unanimous. At Pierre's suggestion, council amended the agenda to separate that item from the other seven.

When it came time to ratify that vote, Pierre also noted that there was no email thread presented that showed the item had been open for the required five days for discussion before the email vote took place. Councillor Kim Newsome pointed out that there are typically two separate email threads on items. The first is a motion and discussion thread, while the second is a vote thread.

However, the issue remained that the motion and discussion thread hadn't been presented to the new council members, so they had no way of being sure that proper procedures were followed for an item they now had to vote on.

It was a civil (and surprisingly interesting) debate, but here's the real takeaway. Even as a new councillor, Pierre had clearly taken the time to start finding his way around AUSU's policies and bylaws. He and several other new members were asking relevant, insightful questions. This is exactly the kind of engagement and attention to detail that AUSU, and its members, needs.

Obviously, an inflexible, dogmatic approach to policy doesn't benefit anyone. The spirit of a policy is just as important. It was pointed out in the meeting that it was an unusual situation that email votes were being ratified by a significantly different group of people and after a fairly lengthy delay, which made their ratification more difficult. But those were the circumstances Council had to deal with and they were dealt with fairly and openly.

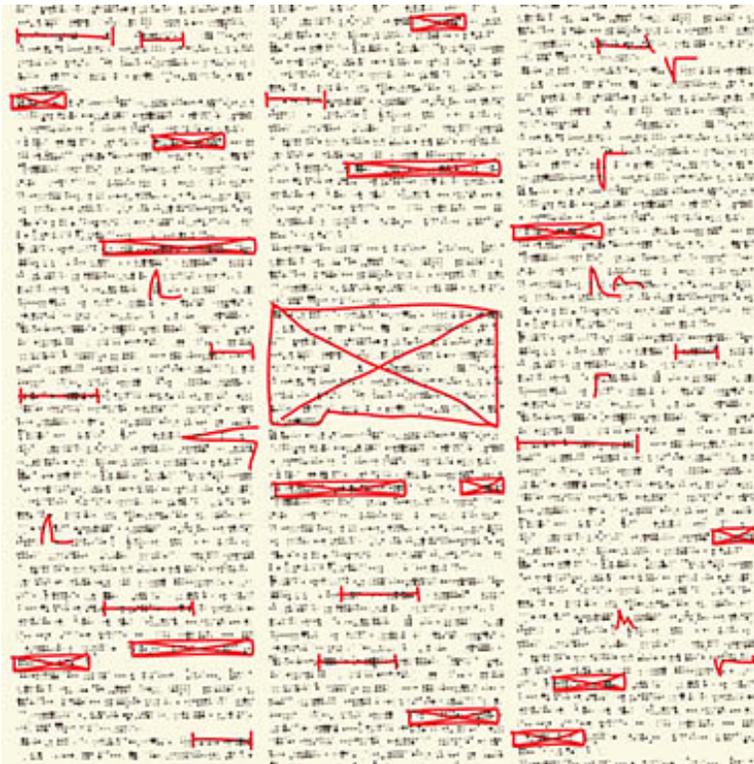
Several new councillors have already demonstrated the qualities needed to keep things on track with respect to policy by bringing a professional, diligent approach to the job. And with a general election coming up soon it's worth keeping their names in mind. Oh, and for the record, the email vote on policy 2.15 was ratified with one councillor opposed.

Which brings us to the final item of note, the question of whether to create an ad hoc Forensic Audit Recommendation Committee. Students have made it clear at the AGM and elsewhere that they have serious questions about the president pay raise as well as the matter of former president Jason Nixon being paid the Executive Director's wage for a time before he left council. The recommendation to form a committee was passed, and councillors who volunteered were Philip, Brandon, Pierre, and Kim. The committee will also have two members from outside Council, and is tasked with researching the topic of forensic audits and making an informed recommendation to Council to address the Members' motion from the AGM. All councillors voted to approve the terms of reference and the Council appointments.

The next meeting will be scheduled shortly, once the new councillors have had a chance to coordinate their calendars. Watch the AUSU home page for updates, then send an email and dial in.

## Tracked Changes

Deanna Roney



There are some great features in Microsoft Word; one in particular that I have found helpful, and only recently started using, is the 'Track Changes' tool. I had seen this used by tutors in marking up my essays as well as *The Voice Magazine's* editor, who uses it to mark up my articles. It is a fantastic teaching tool, but it goes beyond that.

I can become possessive about certain sentences or words in my essays: I like to think of this as a writer's quirk. While a sentence may sound "off" I can hesitate to change it for fear of possibly losing my meaning –perhaps there is a way to make it more simplistic, but would that lose the meaning? Is simple always better (the answer is almost always yes.) Knowing this is one thing, following through with it can be a challenge.

When it came to making stylistic changes in my writing I have found using the 'track changes'

option invaluable. I am able to go through my entire essay and make changes to it. I can reformat sentences and paragraphs with ease, without losing my original work: I can make the changes without commitment. While, yes, I might not be committing had I made the changes without the 'track changes' tool, it can be difficult to delete or move sections of an essay, to reformat without creating a large amount of work for myself if I decided to change it back. With the 'track changes' tool I can make all the changes I want, my original words are still there, the new words are clearly marked in red. After I make all the changes I can simply go through the entire document clicking either 'accept' or 'reject.' If I accept the changes the new additions turn black and blend into the document, or the section I "deleted" will then be removed. If I reject the changes I made it is with this simple click that the change then disappears.

With one simple click I can either accept or reject a change; my original words are not lost, and I have not created a large amount of work if I want to change it all back. Usually when I do this I end up accepting all my changes, but knowing I am not committing to the change, not yet, makes it easier to try something new and to compare it to what I had. I can see why a simple sentence makes a piece flow better and can take that onto the next sentence, next paragraph, and next essay.

Word has a number of wonderful tools, but I can be the type of person who likes to do things the manual way, or the hard way. But this is a tool I have found to be indispensable. For someone who has a hard time committing to change this is the perfect tool. A tool that I wish I had begun using in my writing earlier in my program. We all have our quirks when it comes to academics, certain traditions maybe, or stubbornness; we can sometimes see what we should be doing but have a hard time accepting that what we have written could be written in a simpler manner; that quality academic writing does not mean using large, filler words, but simple words that are clear and concise.

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



## Get Home Safe

It's been quite a while since I shared my collection of clever license plates and signs with you. I only have one sign from beside a church but it's a goodie, especially these days. "Honk if you love Jesus. Text while driving if you want to meet Him."

It seems the more aggressive license plates appear on bigger or sportier vehicles. UCDUST on a white Dodge dually truck. Or CHWTHS on a white Acura sports car. Or RUNAMUC on a Jeep.

I prefer ones that are clever, confessional, or self-deprecating not intimidating. The owner of a Ford Edge states a philosophy: LIV2LAF. Apparently the driver of a white Hyundai Sante Fe is a SPOILD1. Another Hyundai SUV wonders WHAZZUP.

But there is hope. The owner of a blue Ford Focus is clearly MKNPRGS.

Other times the plate is a statement of fact: 60CHEVY on a fire engine red Impala complete with fuzzy dice hanging from the rear view mirror. Or the Toyota Highlander whose owner is a DOC 4U. Or the Mustang plate that says GONNGT.

I feel a little sad for the driver of a grey SUV who says I12ESCP but then who hasn't shared that sentiment?

Sadly, when I got to the end of my own list I was forced to Google to see what else was out there. I think most of these are American. Someone in Montana has ICU2COP while somewhere in Arizona someone else is having 3XTHFUN. Unfortunately in Alaska you can expect BRRRRRR. In Maryland we find that WEHVFUN.

There's also a wee bit of passive-aggressive stuff happening between couples: H1SNHRS, WASHIS (on a silver convertible), and H8MYWIF. Way to keep the animosity alive, guys.

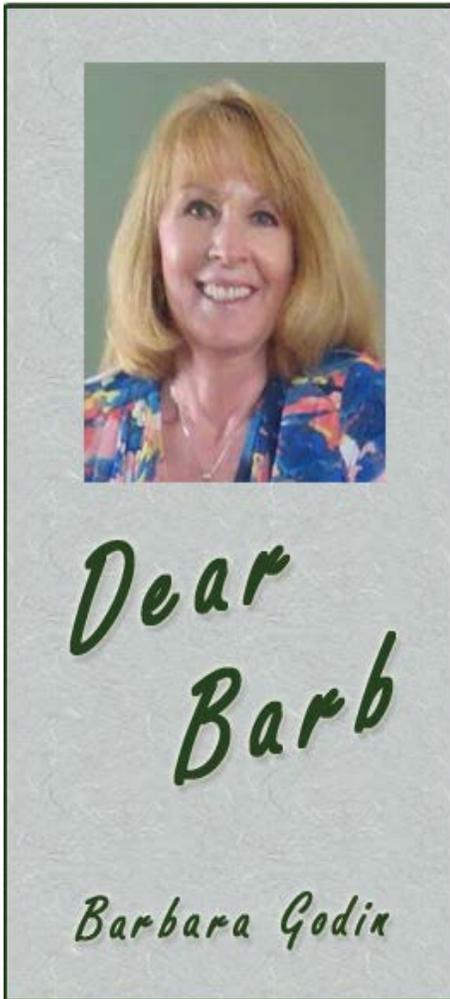
It seems a certain corvette driver suffers from NRSISSM, while a Mercedes owner declares NOT POOR and someone else is CRAMPED. The owner of a black sports car thinks he's driving the BATT MBL. A hearse warns that UARNEXT. At least, he's not COP B8 or SUPRBAD.

Let's hope that IAMLATE and TRIPPIN (a California plate, go figure) go with GOD SPD and arrive with NOREGRET. There is likely no help for the BLOND plate mounted upside down or the red SUV with a smashed rear end despite the plate imploring everyone to PLZ STOP. There were also a couple DROPOUT plates on snazzy sports cars.....so, there! Someone else wants to publicly state IOU DAD.

I wonder what goes on in the car with \$EXXXIII or SATAN plates? We can feel the discontent with AWWCRAP, WNTR SUX and OMGWTF. There's a better attitude expressed with SKI BUMM, HOWIROL, and ITHAD2BU. Could Buzz Lightyear be driving the Infiniti N BYOND?

I hope this exercise in fun has inspired you to check out who is sharing the road with us because whether they're bullies or cheeky or just good fun, we're all in this together. We need to be smart and give the job of driving the attention it deserves so that we all get home safe, from where I sit.

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



## No Sex, Too Much Facebook

**Dear Barb:**

*Hi, I have not been able to talk about this with anyone. My girlfriend and I have been dating for almost a year and we haven't been sexually intimate. We are affectionate, but she always stops it before we go too far. She is a great girl and we get along and have lots of common interests. I keep wondering if there is something wrong with her, like maybe she was abused or something. What happens if we get married and then end up with sexual problems. I haven't discussed this with her, as I am trying to respect her wishes. She does come from a strict Catholic family so maybe that has something to do with it. I'm really not sure what to do about this situation, any suggestions? Thanks Luke*

Hi Luke:

I'm happy you chose to write in Luke. The fact that your girlfriend comes from a strict Catholic family could definitely have something to do with this situation, as premarital sex has not been acceptable in a Roman Catholic upbringing. It is important that you discuss this with your girlfriend. Communication is a pivotal part of any relationship. No matter how much you have in common, if you are not able to discuss issues, problems will inevitably arise. She may have been abused, or it may be her upbringing, but you need to discuss these issues before you even contemplate marriage. If you do not feel comfortable, perhaps you will both have to go to a counselor in order to address these issues. Best of luck Luke.

**Dear Barb:**

*I'm on Facebook, as are most of my friends. I basically use it to keep in touch with family and friends and stay up to date with what's new in their lives. I have a problem with people who post every time they have an argument or break up with their partner. They air all their dirty laundry and then a week later they are back together. Don't people realize that affects how others view their partners? I really think people should use their chat or email for stuff like that, not broadcast it to the whole world! What do you think? Leah*

Hey Leah:

I tend to agree with you. Individuals who air their dirty laundry on Facebook are probably the same individuals who choose to tell everybody all the details of their lives anyway. Facebook provides them with a bigger forum and unfortunately if you are their friend you will see it, unless you turn your notifications off, which is easy enough to do. Facebook is a public forum where users can post whatever they like, which is the beauty and also the detriment of Facebook. Thanks Leah.

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.

# 10 THINGS TO SAY TO ANNOY ART HATERS

**1.**

So what do you do instead of expanding your mind?

**2.**

Of course I look at art. I'm a human being.

**3.**

You know without art all that mindless entertainment you consume wouldn't even exist.

**4.**

Real Madrid? No, thanks— I can't stand watching baseball.

**5.**

I sent my kids to art school because I was terrified they'd never amount to anything.

**6.**

It's okay— some people just don't have the capacity to appreciate real music.

We'll talk when you can get up off your low horse.

**7.****8.**

Define art? What for?

**9.**

I was so disappointed when my son decided to go into law.

**10.**

Don't feel bad— if I were unconscious I'd hate art too.

*written by wanda waterman*



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## New Mobile App

AUSU partnered with AUGSA to provide students with a **FREE MOBILE APP**. This is a great opportunity for AU students to stay organized, have easy access to services, get notices of events and, most importantly, **a chance to interact with other AU students!**

[Download the mobile app here!](#)

Now there are **3 great ways to connect with other AU Students:**

1. Connect with everyone who downloaded the app through the **campus chat**.
2. **Add friends** on your profile page and chat with them directly.
3. **Chat with your classmates** by adding your course(s) to your schedule

For more information visit our website [here](#).



## IMPORTANT DATES

- **Sept 15:** Deadline to complete degree requirements for graduation in October
- **Sept 31:** Deadline to apply for course extension for courses ending Oct 31
- **Oct 10:** Last day to register in courses starting Nov 1
- **Oct 15:** Deadline to complete degree requirements for graduation in November

## AUSU Executive Council

During the September 9, 2015 council meeting, AUSU council voted in two council members to the two vacant executive positions.

VP Finance & Administration: **Brandon Simmons**  
VP External & Student Affairs: **Colleen Doucette**

If you want to know more about what these Executive positions do, visit AUSU [Policy 2.03](#).

## FREE Smart Draw

Did you know AUSU provided Smart Draw **free** to all AUSU members?

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

To access the software, email [admin@ausu.org](mailto:admin@ausu.org) with your name and student ID number.



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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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