

THE VOICE

MAGAZINE

Vol 23 Issue 44 2015-11-13

Meeting the Minds

Interviewing Dr. Tilly Jensen

Public Speaking

Master the Fear

Patience

Get Better Marks

Plus:

*Become a Mathemagician
Backyard Animal Husbandry
and much more!*



CONTENTS

The Voice's interactive Table of Contents allows you to click a story title to jump to an article. Clicking the bottom right corner of any page returns you here. Some ads and graphics are also links.

Features

Meeting the Minds: *Dr. Tilly Jensen* 5

Articles

Editorial: *Prove Me Wrong* 4

Public Speaking: *Mastering the Fear* 10

Patience 18

Columns

In Conversation: *with Sunny Gang, Part II* 7

Music Review: *Ships Have Sailed (Re:Mix)* 11

The Study Dude: *Become a Mathemagician* 12

Extracurricular: *Backyard Animal Husbandry* 14

The Writer's Toolbox: *Fragmented* 16

From Where I Sit: *Vicious Cycle* 19

Dear Barb: *The End Times* 20

News and Events

Student Sizzle 9

AUSU Update 22

Comic

How to Write Poetry 21

***The Voice
Magazine***

www.voicemagazine.org

500 Energy Square
10109 – 106 ST NW
Edmonton AB
T5J 3L7
800.788.9041 ext. 2905

Email
voice@voicemagazine.org

Publisher

AU Students' Union

Editor-In-Chief

Sarah Cornett

Managing Editor

Karl Low

Regular Contributors

Hazel Anaka
Christina M. Frey
Barb Godin
Barbara Lehtiniemi
S.D. Livingston
Samantha Stevens
Wanda Waterman

Views and articles presented here are those of the contributors and do not represent the views of AUSU Student Council

The Voice is published every Friday in HTML and PDF format.

For weekly email reminders as each issue is posted, fill out the subscription form [here](#).

The Voice does not share its subscriber list with anyone.

© 2015 by *The Voice Magazine*

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



In his [editorial](#), Karl says he disagrees with me about the future of universities. Actually, I think we probably agree far more than disagree. I suspect that Karl thinks I am suggesting a scenario akin to going to a restaurant and having to select, cook and serve your own food. That might be quite fun: using a professional kitchen and being able to call on its staff is not a bad idea, but it demands a lot of pre-existing skills and is not what I have in mind. I am thinking of the university as being more like a really amazing food court or, better still, somewhere where you get your own personal team of chefs, waiters and sommeliers to cook what you want and, if you need it, to recommend the best things for you. Right now, a university tends to be more like a canteen where everyone has to eat the same thing, no matter how hungry they are, no matter what they want to eat, no matter what dietary needs they have, no matter how fast they want to eat, no matter whether they have already just eaten the same thing, no matter whether they can get something better for free at the food court next door. To make it worse, in most universities (Athabasca is a rare exception), they have to all eat the same thing at the same time and the same pace, whether they are slow or fast eaters. And, worst of all, we punish anyone that refuses to sit at the table, that eats differently, or that brings their own food.

My vision is about putting students in control. That is not at all the same thing as giving them a million choices and leaving them to choose between them. Choices without the knowledge and power to make them are not choices at all, they are random throws of the dice. Often, we need to delegate control to someone else if we wish to make any progress at all, whether it be to a teacher, the writer of a book, a YouTube video or Google's search algorithms. If we need to learn about something new then we almost always need help, and it's good to have some assurance we are getting help from people that know a lot about both the subject and how to teach it. Better still if they care about us and our success. Universities are and (I think) should remain great places for that, especially for the deeper and more esoteric kinds of knowledge at which they excel. But that doesn't mean we all need the same help. Nor does it mean that we have to learn the same things, at the same time, at the same pace, over the same period, in the same place, according to someone else's agenda that may not fit our own.

We do not, as some people erroneously think (despite a complete lack of evidence to support it) have fixed learning styles that determine how we should be taught. However, it is certainly true that different ways work better for different people at different times and in different contexts, and we all start in different places, with different prior knowledge, and have different goals. The problem with traditional courses is that - unless they are very carefully and strenuously designed to diminish the problem - the only point where significant choices can be made is whether to take the course or not and, in many cases, students don't even get that much choice, because courses are prerequisites of programs or professional accreditation. Accreditation does matter, of course, but it does not always have to come with a fixed chunk of teaching attached to it at the hip.

The situation is almost as bad for teachers, who are expected to divide every subject into evenly sized pieces with equivalent outcomes, whether what they are teaching demands it or not. Worse, we have to force our students to do the most natural and enjoyable thing in the world—to learn—and to enforce our control through various carrots and sticks, notably in the form of grades and credits. At best that is bad psychology, at worst it's soul-destroying and humiliating for all concerned. Courses were a fair compromise that made efficient use of scarce resources, given the technologies available in mediaeval times. But now I think we need to put a lot more thought into what we actually want from a university, because we are no longer constrained by how far a human voice can travel, what can be portrayed on the pages of a paper book, or how to manage limited resources like rooms.

Putting learners in control is not a radical or new idea: we have long had pockets of such learner-centric teaching here and there, such as in PhD supervision, student projects and essays, and some isolated 'independent' study courses (they are not independent at all, of course - students get lots of support), not to mention in less formal ways through apprenticeships and the help of friends. The problem till now has been that more student-centric approaches have been very expensive and labour-intensive ways to learn. But we already have the technologies to support this much better, and they are improving all the time. Tools and systems like Wikipedia, Google Search, Stack Exchange, Twitter, Facebook, the Khan Academy, Duolingo, Lynda, and a host of others that many of us use to help our learning process are just the beginning. The changes we have seen in the past 20 years barely scratch the surface of the changes we will see in the next. While smart technologies will play a huge role in this, most of these new tools and methods will not be automated teachers. Robot teachers do have a place: they can provide useful support for some activities, including to help teachers manage the learning process and to find help from real people more easily. But the greater promise of the technologies that we are researching and building now is to support and enhance human interaction and creativity. It's about creating a richer, more informed, kinder, more creative and more critical society, not just filling heads with facts or inculcating skills. Such things may be part of the process, for sure, but they are not the main product. This is what a lot of my own work, such as Athabasca Landing, springs from. It's about finding better ways to learn from one another, to find the people and resources that will help us when we need help, to make inspiration more likely, to make caring more visible and easier to do. Far from getting rid of the support provided by traditional institutions, my vision is about strengthening it. Far from leaving learners to their own devices, my vision is about giving support as, where and how it is needed. If that happens to look like a traditional course then that's just fine but, most of the time, that is not the kind of support that will suit people best.

Dr. Jon Dron.

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**Prove Me Wrong****Karl Low**

One of the best markers of success, in my books, is when something in *The Voice Magazine* sparks a comment or a reaction from someone out there. Whether it's someone agreeing with what we've printed, or someone who thinks we're flat out wrong and needs to tell us so, I take it as a sign that we've made someone think, and that's a win.

In this case it was my own editorial that has prompted a letter from Dr. Jon Dron himself, politely explaining why I was mistaken in my editorial from a few weeks ago. It's a good letter, worth a read, so I've reprinted it in its entirety. I'm not sure he's allayed all my doubts about the idea of student control, simply because I've made enough bad choices on my own that I absolutely thought were right at the time—where I thought I knew what I needed and was proven very wrong. I tend to wonder where my life would be now if someone saw me making those choices and gave me some ideas for a different way to go.

However, perhaps that, too, is simply an inevitable part of the learning process. After all, admitting you've been proven wrong on something is admitting you've learned something—possibly in spite of yourself.

This week, however, our Meeting the Minds column interviews Dr. Tilly Jenson, the Associate Dean of Pedagogy and Student Experience. Dr. Jenson primarily teaches accounting courses when she's not researching web-based technology to help automate parts of the learning experience for students, and has taught accounting in schools ranging from NAIT in Edmonton to a college in Dubai in the Middle East.

We also have Barb L. tell us about her first experiences with the Toastmasters, an organization devoted to help people become better, more confident public speakers and leaders. Personally, I hate the notion of speaking in public, and I know I'm not alone, but the meetings she described have made me seriously consider whether I want to check out a Toastmasters group in my area—maybe they'll do the same for you.

One thing we do not have this week, is a report on the most recent Council meeting. Because of Remembrance Day, the meeting was delayed, which subsequently delayed the report, and because it's Friday the thirteenth, things couldn't go perfectly and the article hasn't been fully vetted yet (and I'm already running behind, here.) Considering that this meeting dealt with e-texts, virtual exams, and council once again increasing the executive's wages, I want to be absolutely sure I have all the details correct before I commit anything to print. Look for that report in next week's Voice Magazine.

Until then, you'll have to make do with a smorgasbord of advice, reviews, interviews, and even some tips to help you be more environmentally responsible by becoming a farmer in your very own backyard.

Enjoy the read!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karl". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

MEETING THE MINDS

INTERVIEWS with AU's EDUCATORS



Dr. Tilly Jensen is AU's Associate Dean of Pedagogy and Student Experience. She is also an Assistant Professor of Accounting at AU and was an Academic Co-ordinator for AU's undergraduate Accounting Program, and has taught accounting in the Middle East as well as at NAIT and to students enrolled in the British accounting certification program. She was kind enough to give The Voice Magazine an interview ranging from her advice to online learners to her research interests and philosophies of teaching, to her favourite course to teach.

What are some of your most memorable awards, positions, or acclamations?

I think the most rewarding role I ever held was as the content expert for Lyryx Interactive Learning Inc., a Calgary-based company that creates web-based algorithmic assessments. While working for McGraw-Hill Ryerson as the Canadian author of its Fundamental Accounting Principles book, I was introduced to Lyryx Learning Inc. I helped them develop LIFA – Lyryx Interactive Financial Accounting. At the time, there was nothing else like it in the market and it was incredibly exciting to be involved in the creation of an algorithmic, auto-grading, auto-feedback assessment tool that I knew would help students learn and love accounting. I still have a role with Lyryx, now managing the development of Open Education Resources (OERs), and it sometimes surprises me that my initial passion has never wavered. I think it's because I continually hear and see students overcome their negative perceptions of accounting as they use LIFA; they actually have fun learning because of an amazing web-based tool—how awesome is that!

Please fill us in on the range of course you have taught or designed at Athabasca.

My area of expertise is in accounting so I am responsible for ACCT253 – Introductory Financial Accounting, ACCT351 – Intermediate Financial Accounting I, and ACCT352 – Intermediate Financial Accounting II.

As an instructor in online education, what are some of the challenges as well as some of the highlights of teaching online?

There are two primary challenges from my perspective. In teaching online in AU's continuous enrollment environment, the greatest challenge, and therefore greatest opportunity, exists in designing ways to improve student/student, student/teacher, and teacher/student interaction. I'm currently working on a project (with Lyryx Learning Inc. of course!) where students can actually see when another student is logged into the course and where they are in that course for the purpose of 'chatting/texting' with them if they so choose. And therein lay the highlights of teaching online—the opportunities to be creative in developing and designing a course. The

possibilities are truly endless because of constantly changing technologies and the potential positive impact on student engagement. Related to this is the challenge of generalizability. When trying to create innovative tools to enhance learning, you get the "biggest bang for your buck" if the tool can be used/adds value across more than one course and in more than one faculty. For example, I anticipate that chat functionality is something that can be leveraged by almost any course, which makes the resources necessary to develop innovative 'chat' applications more justifiable.

How do you aim to stimulate student motivation in online learning environments?

Can I stimulate student motivation in an online learning environment or is it only possible to nurture and leverage existing motivation? I think motivation comes from within. I also think that when a student registers for a course, they are motivated. Something caused them to register, whether it was the desire to advance their career or because it was required by an employer or some other internal or external source. I operate on the assumption that there is a small window of opportunity for us, as educators, to nurture that initial motivation. Initial research that I've done confirms that initiating contact with students immediately upon registration, and repeating that periodically, helps to create a connection. That connection may be responsible, at least in part, for student persistence. Therefore, it is incumbent on educators at AU to work together to develop, implement, and monitor innovative tools and/or processes that show promise in enhancing student persistence and success.

When a student registers for a course, they are motivated ... I operate on the assumption that there is a small window of opportunity for us, as educators, to nurture that initial motivation.

What is your approach to providing feedback for students to help them with their learning objectives?

AU's goal is to provide accessible and flexible education. This means that the courses I am responsible for need to provide feedback using multiple forms of communication. In the courses I am responsible for, we use three forms of communication with students: phone, email, and discussion forums. I personally like what I see happening on the discussion forums the best. We have the discussion forums set up by topic and students ask

questions. The forums are monitored and Academic Experts for the course answer the questions. The big benefit of the discussion forums is that students can see what kinds of questions their classmates are asking that they perhaps didn't think of asking. So greater learning takes place by everyone. As a fourth means of communication, we are trialling chat functionality whereby students who are logged into the course can see what part of the course other students are at and chat with them. Stay tuned for the results of that trial!

What do you purport to be the role of technology and multimedia in online environments? How do they aid or complicate online learning?

Without a doubt, there are two roles for technology and multimedia in online environments. First, accessibility and flexibility; students who are unable to get to a bricks-and-mortar institution can access education via AU's online environment. Students who require flexibility, because of personal and/or work commitments, can get an education that fits their schedule. Second, the opportunities to enhance engagement with content is, by far, superior in online environments: videos on demand, chatting, algorithmic web-based assessments that auto-grade and provide auto-feedback, and so much more. The complicating factor, or perhaps more a restriction, is that what is available may be limited because of available funding/resources and/or capacity of the course professor (aka staying up-to-date on what's possible and what works from a pedagogical perspective).

In Conversation with Sunny Gang, Part II

Wanda Waterman



Sunny Gang is a lively thrash-punk-rap outfit based in New York, known for inspired (and inspiring) rap with a zealous rock ambience. Fronted by rapper Nasty Nate, other members include Chris Bacchus on guitar, Joe Sap on bass, and Marshal on drums. Sunny Gang just released "Godzilla", a single from their album, Party/Animal. Recently the band took the time to answer Wanda Waterman's questions about their instruments, musical educations, and Nasty Nate's real degree of nastiness.

What's your favourite instrument to play and why?

CHRIS BACCHUS: My favorite instrument is my 2005 Paul Reed Smith Custom 22. It's got a super-fast fretboard, which allows me to shred with ease. It's great for live shows because it's light and doesn't feel like you have a cinder block on your shoulders. It's an extremely versatile guitar that has me set from deathcore to reggae.

JOE SAP: My main weapon of choice is a black Ibanez Gio SoundGear GSR200. It's a pretty cheap bass with active pickups, solid tone control and a bass boost built in that comes in handy when I need to give my sound a little more *oomf* on stage. I've played Gibsons and Fenders but I really like the way this thing sounds; I get a real nice mid-range punch out of it and the highs feel warm and fuzzy without sacrificing any power on the low end. Ibanez makes some really solid instruments, especially for live use, and I run into a lot of other bassists using this exact same model. I've thrown this bass at the end of a few particularly wild shows and it's held up surprisingly well.

MARSHAL: I could care less about drums. As long as they're strong and loud, I'm happy. However, I'm definitely a cymbal snob. I exclusively play Zildjian cymbals (my first cymbal was a 16" Zildjian Scimitar Crash). Twelve years later my whole cymbal setup consists of 14" Zildjian Rock Hats, a 20" Zildjian K-Ride, both 19" and 20" Zildjian A-Custom crashes, and even an 18" Zildjian ZXT China that I use to record. Above all else, my 20" A-Custom is my favorite. It's so dynamic and has so much character. I've had it for 10 years and even though it's all cracked and chipped, it's still the best sounding cymbal in my arsenal. I truly treasure that cymbal and loathe the day of its final performance.

NASTY NATE: I don't play too many instruments nowadays but my favorite guitar that I ever played was a '64 Gibson SG. The action was as low as it could go without buzzing and the double cutouts make it fun to play in the upper octaves.

What was your most beneficial educational experience? What or who in your training had the most—and best—influence on you, as a musician, a composer, and a human being?

CHRIS BACCHUS: My dad has definitely given me the most beneficial educational experience. In the early days of my guitar playing I always used to tell him how I wanted to play on stage and make a name for myself. He put it into perspective for me and said, "Stop with all the hypotheticals; actually go out and conquer it. Stop saying you want to be this and you want to be that, go get it or you'll never achieve it." Those stern words helped me in the world of being a musician and composer. If you want something you have to put forth full effort to get it. Hoping and wishing won't get you anywhere; this goes for any scenario in life.

JOE SAP: GG Allin was a man with a dream, and dammit, he did whatever it took to achieve it! But in all seriousness, I've learned a lot from my dad, and our boss and mentor at the Rutgers-Newark recording studio, Eric Johnson.

MARSHAL: For me, there have been a couple of significant educators along the way. Firstly, there's David Grace. Dave is a long-time friend and former roommate of mine who is a couple years older than me. So when I first joined the marching band in middle school, he was the drumline captain. He was a great drummer, leader, and instructor, but more importantly he taught me the invaluable lesson of how to have fun with my instrument. He's since slowed down with the drumming, but every time I get behind the kit, I just try to have half as much fun as Davo has.

Second off, there's Mark Griffen. Mark was my drum teacher at Sweetest Sounds all throughout high school. Unlike any other teacher I had, Mark liked to concentrate more on dynamic techniques rather than showmanship. I'm a definite reflection of that kind of learning.

I'm not a "great" drummer and my parts are relatively simple, but I've learned to intuitively create "awesome" drum arrangements by simply concentrating on dynamic control over something that I may find intrusive... yeah, he made me a music snob. Most significantly though, are my parents Walter and Cheryl (aka C-Nigs). They've not only taught me how to conquer the fears and doubts I've experienced, but also provided me with the confidence necessary to embrace those same uncertainties and seize them for their infinite opportunities. I truly can't thank them enough. Oh, and Satan! He taught me how to be Gnar; big ups to Satan.

NASTY NATE: Probably my HS band teacher. He drilled me a lot with reading music and understanding rhythmic patterns as I was mostly a snare drummer, but that's helped a lot in rapping in terms of coming up with different rhythms for my deliver and being able to ride the drum beat.

How Nasty is Nasty Nate, really?

CHRIS BACCHUS: He's pretty nasty. He used to share a room with Marshal and all hell broke loose. One night, Nate was sleepwalking and whipped his wiener out on a mortified Marshal. Nate was about two seconds away from pissing on Marshal's face. Marshal hopped out of bed and pushed Nate in another direction. I'm like 90 percent sure that Nate ended up pissing all over his room that night. This dude really gave his room a golden shower. But if we're talking hygiene I think Sap is way "nastier" than Nate. Sorry Sap.

JOE SAP: There *is* a reason I call myself Puke Ellington on Twitter...

MARSHAL: Dude's a savage.

NASTY NATE: I think I'm pretty nasty on the mic. I got it from Nasty Nas so it doesn't have to be literal. So IDK how nasty I am literally, but I do know that I can rip a mic. I'm also a pretty nasty chef but that's like an oxymoron cuz by that I mean I make bangin' ass food. It's like when you see a pitcher throw a nasty curve ball or a RB make a nasty juke move. It just means like, "that was so good. You don't see that a lot."

(To be continued.)

Wanda also writes the blog *The Mindful Bard: The Care and Feeding of the Creative Self*.

Student Sizzle

AU's Hot Social Media Topics

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

AthaU Facebook Group

Barry comments on the exorbitant amount of reading material for some courses. Melinda shares her enthusiasm about receiving a shipment of AU Library books. Kevin inquires whether a passing course grade is possible without a passing exam grade.

Other posts include Learning Logs, options for printed textbooks, exam anxiety, and courses ACCT 460, BIOL 341, ENGL 305, INST 430, and NUTR 331.

Twitter

@AthabascaU tweets: "AU Bus Mgmt student Shawna Wasylysyn in Globe&Mail: AB trend twd increasing post-sec Ed thru economic downturn <http://bit.ly/1LasLOR>."

@AU Press tweets: "Stay tuned this #UPWeek for links to the best of everything coming out of University Presses. Proud 2 be a part of it. [@aaupresses](http://aaupresses)."

@AthabascaUSU (AUSU) tweets: "Check out this article about AU written by AU student Bethany Tynes! <http://www.macleans.ca/schools/athabasca-earning-a-degree-by-distance/> ... via [@macleansmag](http://macleansmag)."

Youtube

On the AU channel: "Marketer of the Year Award 2015".



Public Speaking: Mastering the Fear

Barbara Lehtiniemi



Would you rather die than get up in front of an audience and give a speech? If so, I have both good news and bad news. The good news is that giving a speech won't actually kill you. The bad news? The only way to gain enough confidence to give a speech is, unfortunately, to give speeches.

I recently attended my first—and second—meeting with two local Toastmasters groups. I don't feel nervous about public speaking—well, maybe a teensy bit—but I want to improve my ability to organize my thoughts before I verbalize them. Toastmasters seemed like the best choice.

Toastmasters is a worldwide organization devoted to helping people improve their speaking skills. Toastmasters provides a supportive environment that encourages its members to develop skills in communication, leadership, and meeting management. There are over 15,000 clubs in 135 countries. Canada boasts over 500 Toastmasters clubs in ten provinces or territories.

Each club develops its own culture while still following the basic Toastmasters structure. Most clubs are open to the public, but some are restricted (to employees of a company, for example.) Prospective members are encouraged to visit several clubs before deciding upon membership. I decided to attend the meetings of two local clubs as a guest.

If I had felt the slightest nervousness about attending a Toastmasters meeting, my anxiety would have melted at the door. I found the members of both Toastmasters groups instantly welcoming and comfortable. One of the skills Toastmasters acquire is how to put others at ease, and that includes guests. Before the meeting began, most members introduced themselves and warmly welcomed me to their meeting.

Guests at a Toastmasters meeting are not required to speak unless they want to. Guests can choose to observe only, but participation is welcome, too. At one club's meeting, guests were invited to introduce themselves briefly (but could choose not to if they felt nervous about speaking.) At the other club's meeting, members and guests alike were invited to give impromptu 2-minute speeches during the Table Topics segment—and I did.

Toastmaster meetings are highly structured. At first I thought the structure seemed overly formal, but by the end of the meeting I realized that each element of the meeting was designed to improve different skills. Each member has the opportunity to participate by organizing the meeting's agenda, chairing the meeting, introducing speakers, giving a rehearsed or impromptu speech, evaluating speakers and organizers, or timing speeches. There is even a designated "Ah" counter, whose role is to count the number of crutch words—ah and um for example—that other members used during the meeting. The roles rotate so that each member builds skills in all areas of meeting management as well as communication.

The atmosphere at both Toastmasters club meetings I attended was one of positive encouragement and friendly support. At Toastmasters, all feedback to speakers must be given using positive language—another valuable, if difficult, skill to master.

I'm looking forward to my next Toastmasters meeting. Once I decide which club is for me, I plan to become a Toastmasters member. Members progress through the Toastmasters program at their own pace, achieving milestones and valuable skills along the way.

Public speaking isn't fatal. If you don't believe me, I encourage you to attend a Toastmasters meeting and discover for yourself how easy it is to master your fear. You can find more information on Toastmasters, including information on club meetings, at <http://www.toastmasters.org/>.

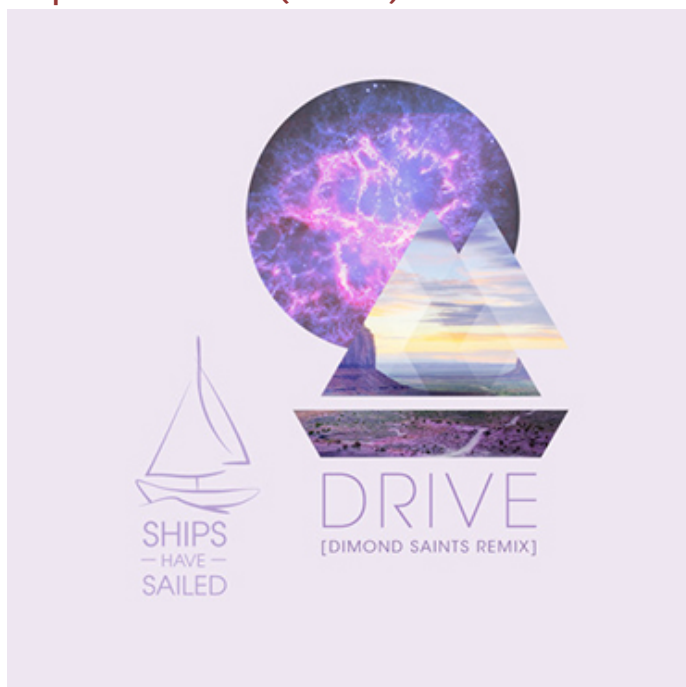
Barbara Lehtiniemi is a writer, photographer, and AU student. She lives on a windswept rural road in Eastern Ontario. Follow Barbara on twitter @ThereGoesBarb.



Music Review

Ships Have Sailed (Re:Mix)

Samantha Stevens



Band: Ships Have Sailed

Album: *Re:Mix*

In mid-October I reviewed Moodswings from pop-rock duo Ships Have Sailed. Shortly after the band released their album, they teamed up with four extremely talented DJs and created the EP *Re:Mix*. Featuring four of the most popular songs from *Moodswings*, *Re:Mix* is a fantastic example of creative musical ingenuity.

Before I get into the EP, a quick refresher on who Ships Have Sailed. *Moodswings* was the band's first full-length album, a follow-up to their EP *Someday*, which had been released last year. *Re:Mix* was released July 14th, 2015.

Considered an alternative pop-rock duo, this LA based band reminds me of Coldplay, Hedley, and The Black

Keys all rolled into one. The music on *Re:Mix* is dynamic, fun, and exciting, and the lyrics are emotional and, with the added beat, the remixed tracks will move a listener to either dancing or tears.

"Summertime (Matt Chiarelli Remix)" is the first song on the EP. Like the original, the music brings to mind surf, sun, and lazy days followed by fun nights spent dancing the hours away. However, the remix enhances the already upbeat feel of the song, making the song perfect to listen to when you need some sort of pick up or encouragement to move. I can't listen to the remix without dancing. The beat reminds me of some of the recent music from OK GO.

"Out of Time (Goatmilk Remix)" has such an incredibly unique sound that I can't help but love it. Similar to the original, it is soft, with an almost 80s pop-music feel and Coldplay-like singing (which is often very distinct).

However, although the original has a very strong influence of pop, the remix is dominated by electronic effects, and the overall feeling and tone of the music is conveyed brilliantly through them. The fading and echoing of the lyrics creates a whole new level to this song. This remix is superb, and I love the feeling that is created by the DJ.

"If Only (Mike Vincent Remix)" gives the dimension and tension to the song that I found lacking in the original. The tempo is a touch faster but does not distract from the overall song. Like the original, the tempo drops off just at the chorus, exactly where I'd expect a crescendo and a pick up in the beat, which still frustrates me and leaves the song feeling anticlimactic. However, the DJ stayed true to the tone of the original song, but he also enhanced the overall feeling of the music and gave it a more robust feel.

"Drive (Dimond Saints Remix)" is perhaps the most artistic and unusual of the remixes on this EP. The original was soft and repetitive, much like driving down a highway for hours (at least that's what I thought of). But the remix sounds more like an interpretive dance soundtrack than a pop song. Although some may enjoy the unique blending and effects, I personally felt lost by the time the song had ended and my ears were overwhelmed.

In the end, if you had the chance to check out *Moodswings* and want to hear how versatile some of the tracks on that album are, then be sure to check out *Re:Mix*, which can also be found on iTunes.

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



Study Tips from a Semi-Anonymous Friend

Become a Mathemagician

There is nothing more that The Study Dude wants for you than to transform yourself into a high-speed human calculator.

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.

Arthur J. Benjamin, PhD and mathemagician, and Michael Shermer write the book *The Secrets of Mental Math*, this week's Study Dude hot topic. All you need to slog through this book

includes knowledge of a basic one by one multiplication table and the ability to add and subtract (and, yes, divide) simple numbers. If you can do that, you've got what it takes to transform into a spectacular mathemagician.

What's a mathemagician? A mathemagician computes instant calculations for an eager audience. Present any math question, and the mathemagician will solve it in a matter of seconds. Surely, that gift would aid and abet in getting you top grades.

Multiply by 11

One of the first things I learned when honing the skill of instant multiplication involved calculating math problems from left to right as opposed to the standard backward right to left process.

At one low point in my life, I decided that my identity would include transforming myself into a mental calculator. I started arduously with the two times table. Knowing that multiplying a number by 5 or more carries a 1, I started calculating multiplication by two from left to right. For instance, in multiplying 186 by 2, I would start by multiplying 2×1 , noting that the next number is greater than 4, so would involve a one carried over. I would then work my way to the right, following the same process.

Using this system, I became so fast at multiplying by 2's that I could instantly calculate numbers in the billions multiplied by 2. However, my life's lull turned around, and I abandoned, temporarily, the quest to groom myself as a human calculator.

Yet, in a computer science course at the university, I could convert digits into binary code in a matter of seconds. This skill of doubling proved handy when it came to computers. The skill paid off.

Arthur Benjamin and Michael Shermer present an easy to learn system for calculating multiplication by 11. So, sit back, learn, and later impress the group with your mathemagic.

- When multiplying a two digit number by 11, say 23×11 , take the first two digits of the 23 (the 2 and 3) and insert in between them their sum ($2 + 3$). In other words $23 \times 11 = 253$.
- When multiplying two digit numbers by 11, say 84×11 , where the sum of the two digits ($8 + 4$) is greater than 9, add one of the left most digit of the solution ($8+1$). So the answer would be 924, where the 9 is the leftmost digit plus one ($8+1$), the 4 is the last digit of 84, and the middle digit is the last digit of the sum ($8 + 4 = 12$, so 2).

Subtraction using complements

I failed to learn a good system for subtraction. Instead, I found myself bogged down when it came to subtracting three digit numbers from three digit numbers.

Fortunately, universities let you rely on calculators, and I discovered that using a calculator that enabled brackets within brackets helped me to make subtraction calculations amidst more complex integral calculations. The calculator was a boon, as the proclivity toward error with subtraction would have magnified without the use of the machine.

The subtraction method used by Arthur Benjamin and Michael Shermer is so simple, I will divulge it by showing you a neat little trick they demonstrate called "subtraction using complements."

- If you need to subtract a two digit number from a three digit number, say $340 - 78$, and the 78 requires you borrow, then take the complement. In other words, do the reverse, $78-40$ for the last two digits, to get 38, and then, to acquire the complement, subtract 38 from 100 ($100-38=62$) and voila! You have the last two digits of the subtraction (62). $340-78= 262$

Squaring Two Digits

I never learned the trick to squaring two digits, but one exists, and it will blow your mind away.

The farthest I got with multiplication involved multiplication with any size number times a one digit number. I found ways to record on my fingers the digits that would involve carrying a number, and, again, I calculated the digits from left to right, and not the standard right to left. This method enabled me to call out the digits in the order they would appear on paper, rather than backwards. That way, I just needed to retain in memory the digits long enough to make the calculation and move on to the next digit.

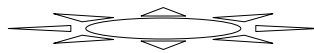
However, Arthur Benjamin and Michael Shermer divulge the secret to squaring two digits. Once you learn this little nifty trick, your life will improve considerably.

- When squaring a two digit number, consider the following formula: $a^2 = (a-b)(a+b) + b^2 = a^2 - b^2 + b^2$
- To make the squaring of a two digit number easier, round up or down the number to the nearest tens place. For instance, to square 86, you would round 86 up to 90. There is a difference of 4 between 86 and 90, so substitute 4 for b in the above formula. For instance, $86^2 = (86+4)(86-4) + 4^2 = 90 \times 82 + 16 = 7380 + 16 = 7396$.
- It's easier to multiply a number ending in zero with another number than it is to square a two digit number not ending in a zero.
- To make the multiplication of 90×82 easier, mentally, think $(90 \times 80) + (90 \times 2)$ which equals $90(80+2)$.

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

Benjamin, Arthur, & Shermer, Michael. (2006). *Secrets of Mental Math: The Mathemagician's Guide to Lightning Calculation and Amazing Math Tricks*. New York, NY: Three Rivers Press.



Extracurricular Backyard Animal Husbandry

Carla Knipe



Awareness of the environment and concerns with the mass-production of our food has led to a large increase in the number of people who raise their own food, not just by vegetable gardening or fruit cultivation, but also taking it a step further and keeping animals on their property. Keeping backyard chickens for egg production and as pets has been a large aspect of this trend, but there are other ways to become a small-scale farmer.

If you would like to try this hobby, do not do it by purchasing animals and then

finding out how to take care of them! This hobby requires an extensive amount of research beforehand. You must check out the regulations, perhaps at more than one level of government, that exist in your jurisdiction. Taking the time to investigate local laws and bylaws may save you a lot of aggravation in the long run. Doing your homework may also determine what type of livestock, and how many, are allowed on your property. For example, in some areas a single, small pig may be kept as a pet, but in others, especially urban areas, pigs are not allowed at all. In many towns and cities, the same legality applies to backyard chickens.

The next step is researching the requirements for the type of animal you would like to raise; for example, rare breeds might have different care requirements than more common breeds. You are dealing with live animals and their welfare should be paramount in any decision. Also, if you decide to raise your animals for meat, especially for commercial sale, you will need to check with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency which regulates animal products into Canada's food supply. If you are lucky enough to have an organization in your area for small-scale animal husbandry, then that would be a fantastic resource to connect with. There are also many Internet forums devoted to all aspects of small farms. Community colleges may be another source of information and expertise.

Another possible path is urban beekeeping. Increased awareness of the role of bees in ecology is leading to a surge in popularity of small-scale apiarists. The crisis caused by the "Colony Collapse Disorder" phenomenon among existing hives is also creating a need to protect and restore bee populations. Bees can be kept in backyards and on rooftops. Suburban gardens can easily provide enough flowers to support a hive.

Being an apiarist is somewhat of an art form, but it does not require a lot of expensive equipment or invasive practices. The biggest concern for urban beekeepers is taking care so that bees do not become a neighbourhood nuisance. Properly managed hives allow neighbours to feel safe and coexist with the bees. A bee stings only when it is frightened, provoked or is threatened, and swarms are actually a rare occurrence.

As with keeping other types of farm animals, it is important to check local regulations concerning bees. Books from local libraries provide a good basic overview of what is involved with beekeeping, but if your area has a local apiarist group (and the number of these groups is growing across North America), joining one is a fantastic opportunity to learn new skills through hands-on courses and workshops, and also to get mentorship from those who are already involved with beekeeping.

There have been news stories highlighting instances of opposition to urban farming. These seem to be far fewer than those that favourably recognize urban food production and the role that small, local farms play in trying to rebalance the quality of our food supply.

RESOURCES:

<http://www.hobbyfarms.com>

<http://www.backyardchickens.com>

<http://smallfarmcanada.ca>

<http://www.honeycouncil.ca>

<http://www.worldofbeekeeping.com>

<http://www.beginningbeekeeping.com>

Carla is an AU student and a caffeinated beverage definitely keeps her going through her studies. However, her pet peeve is seeing people occupy the tables at Starbucks for long periods of time when she can't find a seat.

The Writer's Toolbox

Fragmented, Part I

Christina M. Frey



"Answer in complete sentences," said your fourth-grade English teacher. Well, of course you will—doesn't everyone?

Not necessarily. Can you pick out the complete sentences here?

For sure.

The best movie ever.

Although I'm too tired to come over.

Thinking about the best way to edit my assignment.

That moment when you find five errors just before you submit your paper.

Whatever you want to do.

Complete vs. Incomplete

All the above examples are sentence fragments—clauses, phrases, or otherwise incomplete "pieces" of sentences that may look like sentences, but aren't. They're common and have their uses (more on that later), but they can creep into more formal writing and prompt your instructor's red pen to start moving.

Stumped? Let's take a look at some grammar basics to sort it all out.

Subject and Predicate

In its basic form, a complete sentence has a subject and a predicate.

Subject: the *actor*, in the form of a noun + any modifiers (adjectives or clauses or phrases acting like adjectives)

Predicate: the *action*, in the form of a verb + any modifiers (adverbs, prepositional phrases, clauses or phrases acting like adverbs, etc.)

Example A: She went to the store.

Example A (broken down): She || went to the store. The subject/actor is "she"; the predicate/action is "went to the store" (the verb in there is "went," but the verb alone doesn't constitute the whole predicate).

It doesn't matter if the sentence is flipped:

Example B: Where did she go?

Example B (broken down): She || did go where? Figure out the basic structure, and it's easy to see that "she" is the subject and "did go where" is the predicate.

The same principles apply when the sentence is complicated:

Example C: The girl behind the wheel of the beat-up Toyota pointed frantically at the dark creature rising out of the fog.

Example C (broken down): The girl behind the wheel of the beat-up Toyota || pointed frantically at the dark creature rising out of the fog. Here, the subject "the girl behind the wheel of the beat-up Toyota" is clearly distinct from the predicate ("pointed frantically at the dark creature rising out of the fog").

Some sentences may have compound subjects and predicates, but we'll cover those another day. For now, remember that for a complete, standard sentence, you need a subject and a predicate.

Going back to our examples above, it's easy to see that "For sure" isn't a complete sentence, since it doesn't have a defined subject or predicate (arguably "for sure" is part of a predicate, but with no context it's impossible to break it down—and that discussion is way outside our scope here). Same deal with "Best movie ever." But what about the other sentences?

Independent vs. Dependent

Complete sentences, with limited exceptions, require a subject and a predicate. But finding what looks like a subject and verb doesn't give a sentence the Completeness Stamp of Approval, so to speak. Sometimes a phrase may appear to be a sentence, but it's actually a dependent clause—a phrase or clause that needs to be propped up (is dependent) on an independent clause because it doesn't really make sense standing alone, without the context of that independent clause.

For example:

Example D: I drove to the store today. This is a complete sentence; it's got a subject and a predicate, and it doesn't depend on any other clauses.

Example E: I drove to the store today because it was raining. This complete sentence includes an independent clause ("I drove to the store today") and its dependent clause, "because it was raining" (which depends on the independent clause to provide context).

Example F: Because it was raining. Without the context of the independent clause, "because it was raining" doesn't really make sense. It's a dependent clause, so you can't place it on its own and expect it to function as a complete sentence. Though it looks like it's got a subject and predicate, it doesn't really; it can't stand on its own. Example F is a sentence fragment.

The other opening examples are all dependent clauses masquerading as independent clauses (sentences), and are therefore fragments. They're dependent clauses because they require the context of an independent clause to make sense.

Let's illustrate this further with "Thinking about the best way to edit my assignment."

Example G: Thinking about the best way to edit my assignment is making me procrastinate.

Example H: I was too busy thinking about the best way to edit my assignment to actually edit it.

Example I: She taught me to spend time thinking about the best way to edit my assignment.

As you can see, the context of the independent clause provides meaning to the fragments; therefore, they're incomplete fragments on their own.

What next?

Now that you can identify fragments in your own writing, you're halfway there. But what's the best way to fix them? With the heavier grammar out of the way, next week we'll tackle applying defragmentation to your own work—and when and whether you might want to leave those fragments right where they are.

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](#).

Patience

Deanna Roney



I think it is safe to say that we can all get caught up in time-lines. Getting assignments in as soon as they are done, even if the previous one hasn't yet been returned. Or registering in classes under the cut-off date of the 10th. If there is one thing I have learned, and keep learning, it is that patience is a wonderful thing, and sometimes having it can save a lot of headaches and stress.

Submitting assignments in order, and waiting for feedback, is important in this type of education. Sometimes it can be difficult, or impossible, to wait for assignments to be returned first: contract

dates could be looming, or tutors may not be responsive. For the sake of this article though, I am going off my experience in which tutors have (typically) been responsive and within the marking timeline. There have been occasions that I have had no reason to lose my patience, but I have the next assignment polished and ready to go, so I obsessively refresh my course page to see if an assignment has been returned. The assignment that is done weighs on me. It wants to be submitted. I wait. I wait for what seems to be as long as I can. Finally I throw up my hands and submit, only to have the assignment I was waiting for returned within the hour—with vital feedback that I could have, should have, used in the assignment I submitted too early.

Recently my patience was tested again. I was waiting for a final mark to come through, for a course to be closed off, so I could register for the two I needed for December. Time was ticking by and there was no sign of the final mark. I emailed my tutor and called Athabasca University to check to see where my mark was. It was not looking as if it would be finalized in time; thankfully, though, Athabasca University has a loophole for this issue. This loophole, however, comes with the stipulation that it takes some time to process registration. This time meant that I might not have been able to register for December. So I filled out the paperwork, emailed it in plastered with notes as to how I met prerequisites and how I was—technically—under the six course limit, only for my elusive course to be closed off the following day.

This lesson in patience is one I have learned many times, one that never sticks, and yet, one that should. Having a little patience can go a long way to saving yourself headache, work, and lost marks. Having a little patience can mean the difference between having marks taken off for a repeated mistake, and getting the mark you deserve. It can mean the difference between wasting a couple days trying to jump through extra hoops, or being able to dedicate those days to courses that are on the go. Having a little patience is vital, especially in distance education, the feedback we get is so important, and wasting days stressing over self-made deadlines is, ultimately, not productive.

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



Vicious Cycle

For someone who considers herself a visual person I sure have a lot of hiding places. Nowhere has this been more obvious than when I tackled the cleaning, clearing, organizing, and general purging of my office.

The impulse to start the project came during yet another delay in the 2015 harvest. Even though the room is small, at only one hundred square feet, the job is not. I began in one corner of the room tackling both the interior and the surfaces of the white upper and lower kitchen cabinets we built in during a renovation some time ago to provide closed storage. The counter holds a fax machine, printer, some books, and a three-drawer wooden storage box.

I used the large, flat surface of our bed to collect the different storage options I found. It was quite the collection, both in sheer numbers and variety. There were several covered square tins from my Fossil watches. There were beautiful carved wooden boxes, purple faux suede storage boxes, and a three-piece set of brown leather covered nesting boxes, among other things. Remember when trays were de rigueur for corralling and displaying functional items or objet d'art? Naturally I've got trays, too, including a handmade ceramic one from Japan. Round boxes, gift boxes, pencil cups, metal tins, and tiny ceramic bowls can display and protect virtually anything you can imagine. And they were.

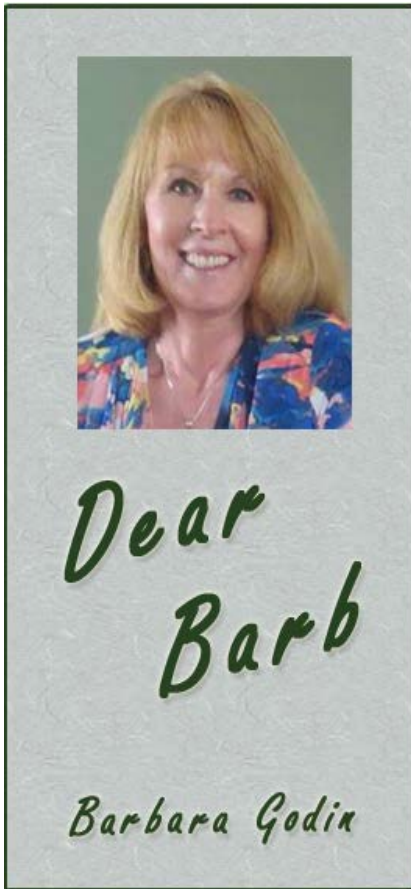
The New York Times best-seller, *The Life-changing Magic of Tidying up*, by Marie Kondo, describes the Japanese art of de-cluttering and organizing. Westerners with all manner of space can learn something.

Kondo's method requires that you sort by category, not location. You need to collect ALL like objects in one place (usually the living-room floor) to, once and for all, see the full volume of the items you're considering. So if you were to sort hair products you'd collect the bottles from the vanity, the tub edge, the storage closet, the basement, and anywhere else they may be lurking. That is truly the only way to know you've got six bottles of shampoo, three hair sprays, four round brushes, two flat irons, and a partridge in a pear tree. Likewise with your sock drawer, t-shirt collection, books (gasp), handbags, papers, photos—everything. She prescribes the order of your work to go from easiest (clothing—tops to shoes) to hardest (photos).

Kondo's de-cluttering method insists that each item be physically touched. And while holding the object you ask yourself 'Does this spark joy?' Keep only those items that speak to your heart and part with the rest. And, while I haven't had the time to try her method, it intrigues me.

But I need to ponder my opening sentence. How can I reconcile the need to 'see' my stuff with the desire to hide what isn't attractive? If I don't see something I forget I have it. If I forget I have it, I don't use and enjoy it or I might buy another one. It's a damn vicious cycle, 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 End Times

Dear Barb:

I have recently gotten married; our wedding was beautiful, as was our honeymoon. However, since we got home from the honeymoon things have changed drastically! We argue all the time, and if we're not screaming at each other, we're nit picking. It's not all his fault, I'm doing it too. It just seems like everything he does drives me crazy. Some of these things bothered me before we got married, but, since we weren't living together, it wasn't a big issue. I guess I thought things would change once we got married, but they didn't. The arguing is so bad that I'm not really sure I love Gary anymore. I think I made a big mistake and I don't know what to do. I haven't told anyone how unhappy I am, but I think people are suspecting something's wrong. I feel like such a loser! Should I just end this marriage and move on? Thanks, Tara.

Hi Tara:

What an unfortunate situation. It sounds like maybe you got caught up with the wedding plans and failed to look beyond. Weddings are a stressful time and it is normal to feel some tension during the preparation, but that usually subsides once you settle into your normal lives. It seems with you and your husband that didn't happen. It is difficult to adjust to living with another person and it does take time, but there seems to be something more going on here, especially since you are doubting your love for your husband. I think

you both need to find a competent marriage counsellor and try to work this out before you give up. You may just need to learn some skills to help the adjustment into married life. So don't give up yet! Best of Luck Tara

Dear Barb:

I recently ended a relationship with my best friend's brother. I was a little hesitant about becoming involved with Jeff because he was my best friend's brother, but the attraction was so strong that we decided to date. We dated for about a year but things didn't work out. Many people didn't want us to date, because of how it might affect my best friend and me. We didn't listen; we both thought we knew what was best for us. Now my best friend won't talk to me and a lot of our mutual friends have chosen sides. In retrospect, I regret that I became involved in this relationship and I'm having a hard time moving forward. I feel like I have lost so much. Why didn't I see the warning signs that everyone else saw? Help, Lisa.

Hey Lisa:

Don't beat yourself up about it! Sometimes we only see what we want to see. You were both probably caught up in the attraction and newness of the situation; we've all been there at one time or another. The important thing is what you have been able to take away from this experience. Give yourself time to heal and go on with your life. I think you will find some of these friends will come back and even your best friend may come back. Good question Lisa.

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.

How to Write a Poem

by Sis Honey Biscuit

You start with a word
that tickles you pink
and you stick it in the
ground.

You water it with tears
and sweat and feelings
by the pound.

You heap it up with
other words until you've
got a mound.

You use the vividest
action verbs and the
colourfullest nouns.

And when she's done,
reread, revise, and turn
it all around.

*(Sis Honey Biscuit is a
founding member of the
Dry Corn Husk Poets
Society.)*

Written by Wanda Waterman



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

Have you downloaded our 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!](#)

The app has **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

- **Nov 13:** December degree requirement deadline
- **Nov 22:** [Meet & Greet in Halifax](#)
- **Nov 30:** December course extension deadline
- **Dec 10:** AUSU Council Meeting
- **Dec 10:** Deadline to register for courses starting January 1
- **Dec 15:** January degree requirements deadline
- **Dec 25-Jan 4:** AU Holiday Closure

AUSU Press Releases



A special notice from your students' union

AUSU recently posted a press release regarding the unsustainability of the Health and Dental Plan.

You can view this on our website [here](#).

Please contact ausu@ausu.org with any questions.

Online Course Evaluations

AUSU recently launched new **online course evaluations** for all undergraduate AU courses!

We hope this will be a great resource for our members to review course feedback, as well as to write reviews of courses they have taken

We encourage all students to write reviews for any courses they have taken in the last 6 months!

Click here to fill out a COURSE EVALUATION

Follow us for more updates!



Follow us on FaceBook for the most up to date news & views! www.facebook.com/AthaUSU

CLASSIFIEDS

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

Views and articles presented here are those of the contributors and do not represent the views of AUSU Student Council

THE VOICE

500 Energy Square - 10109 – 106 St NW - Edmonton AB - T5J 3L7
Ph: 855.497.7003 - Fax: 780.497.7003 attn: Voice Editor

Publisher Athabasca University Students' Union
Editor-In-Chief Sarah Cornett
Managing Editor Karl Low

Regular Columnists Hazel Anaka, Barbara Lehtiniemi, S.D. Livingston,
Wanda Waterman, Barb Godin, Christina Frey,
Samantha Stevens, Philip Kirkbride

www.voicemagazine.org

The Voice is published every Friday in HTML and PDF format.

Contact *The Voice* at voice@voicemagazine.org.

To receive a weekly email announcing each issue, subscribe [here](#). *The Voice* does not share its subscriber list.

© 2015 by *The Voice Magazine*