



THE VOICE

Vol 28 Issue 46 2020-11-27

Minds We Meet

Interviewing Students Like You!

Negotiating

Is it All Just Wheeling & Dealing?

Befriending Nature

The Point of Bird Watching

Plus:

*Women of Interest: Mary Jacobi
Beats from the Basement
and much more!*



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



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

Hey! Did you know the Voice Magazine has a [Facebook page](#)?

No kidding! We also do the [twitter](#) thing once in a while if you're into that.

Editorial

Cheating the System

Karl Low



Cheating is nothing new. It's probably been happening since the first time someone had to demonstrate their knowledge and simply weren't ready to do so. And there's always been a bit of an arms race between those who want to cheat and those tasked with stopping it (typically the teachers). But with the pandemic, it's being noticed that cheating is on the rise.

It's easy for some to blame online learning for this. Being able to be in an unsupervised environment, goes the thinking, means that potential cheaters will feel emboldened and so more likely to cheat. But the reality is something different, as multiple academic studies have found that there is little difference in the amount of cheating between online and face to face courses.

However, what these studies have also found is that students themselves often believe it's easier to cheat in an online environment, and that they also are quick to believe that their fellow students are likely cheating. To address this, universities have signed up with various exam monitoring services, such as

ProctorU, at AU, or others such as Examus, Verificent, MeritTrac, Honorlock, and a variety of other companies all with names that try to portmanteau from a very limited set of terms.

But these companies have their own problems, as many AU students are finding out. Try to run an exam without your internet connection dropping when you live in a rural area with spotty phone lines at the best of times and a winter storm rolls in. Go ahead, find a place somewhere in your 400 square foot bachelor's apartment that isn't covered by various study papers from one course or another. Moving exams into the students' homes often places a burden on students that they didn't know they'd have to accommodate for when they signed their lease, and some students' unions have started making their concerns known to their universities. At AU, we've had some extra time to sort some of these issues out, but a lot of students are finding out that they're not all solved, not by a long shot.

And it's bad enough when the problems are at your end, what happens when the problem is at their end, and you end up having to wait well beyond your appointed time to start the exam, or the connection is lost from their end as the companies, too, are trying to increase their capacity rapidly to deal with the influx of students from the pandemic.

AU is currently running a committee looking at assessment overall, but anybody familiar with AU knows how long it takes anything to get from initial committee to concrete action for the students, assuming it ever does (hey, it only took ten years or more to get athabascau email addresses for students).

In the meantime, the best way for us as students to deal with the software is to demonstrate that it isn't really needed. When you see or hear of someone cheating, looking to cheat, or offering to help others cheat, report it. No mercy, no hesitation, no shrugging of the shoulders and leaving it for someone else to do. Show AU that the AU community itself is the biggest threat to cheaters. After all, all they do is devalue our degrees, and I don't think any of us want that.

Enjoy the read!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karl', is located in the bottom right corner of the page.

MINDS WE MEET



Who are your fellow students? It can feel like you are all alone in your studies, but across the nation, around the globe, students like you are also pursuing their AU education, and *The Voice Magazine* wants to bring their stories to you and vice versa. If you would like to be featured next, do not hesitate to get in touch!

The Voice Magazine recently had a chance to chat with Natesha Francis, from Edmonton, Alberta, located on Treaty 6 territory and a traditional meeting ground and home for many Indigenous Peoples, including the Cree, Saulteaux, Niitsitapi (Blackfoot), Métis, and Nakota Sioux Peoples.

Natesha previously attended the legal assistant program at MacEwan University, which “was transferrable to Athabasca.” Although she had previously transferred to AU eight years ago, work as a busy licensed realtor, as well as family obligations, temporarily derailed her journey. She returned in 2019 and is completing her second year of AU’s Bachelor of Professional Arts in Governance, Law, and Management program. Although she initially began her educational journey at the age of 22, after several pauses she is now very committed to reaching her goal. She stated,

“Either life was in the way, or funding, or I felt that I just couldn’t fit it in.”

Outside of school, Natesha enjoys the outdoors, including walking on trails and “being active,” mentioning a recent trip to nearby Elk Island National Park. She also enjoys reading, especially historical fiction. She mentioned that she is currently reading *The Tattooist of Auschwitz* by Heather Morris, enjoys television series, such as *The Good Fight*, and has recently re-watched *Hannibal*.

She credits both of her parents, who emigrated from the Caribbean, with her desire to learn. She stated, “It was really just drilled into us how important education is,” speaking briefly about her father’s educational experiences in Jamaica. She mentioned that when she planned to get married, her parents made her promise to finish her program beforehand. She stated, “I was so happy that I listened to them, and I finished that program!” She also credits her children for inspiring her to study. “I have two girls, and I always drill into them that education is so important, especially for women. It gives us options. They should always have an education to fall back on.”

When asked about her experience learning in an online environment, Natesha stated, “Personally, I love online learning.” Although she has attended traditional in-person classes, she revealed, “I love online [classes] for the simple fact that you can go at your own pace, you can cover as much as you can.” She appreciates the “individualized” learning process, revealing that she has only recently “begun reach out to the tutors. ... It’s really helped ... getting the full benefit.” She continued, “I would highly recommend that people do that. Sometimes we just get lost in the reading, and it’s just nice to talk to the tutors and see who they are.”

Her most memorable AU course has been SOSC366: Research Methods in the Social Sciences, where she learned “so much,” mentioning that the tutor was great as well. She continued, “It has really made me think outside of my own box. It really expanded how I thought about things. At the time that I took it, the Black Lives Matter [movement] ... was starting to happen and it’s all about these issues. I got to really dissect that based on the course. It was very real life. I really liked it!”

It’s this particular course with its focus on equity that she credits for setting her on a different path. In the future, she would like “to be involved with policy creation and governance to make a difference.” This is her end goal, and it merges nicely with her legal background and previous desire to go to law school.

As for communication with her tutors, Natesha stated that she had not felt the need to reach out during her first eight courses, but recently had begun to engage and ask them questions. She continued, “I find that they’re all wonderful.”

When asked what her first task would be as the new president of AU, Natesha revealed that she “would figure out how to get their phone lines back up!” a common refrain heard from AU students during these past seven months. As an example, she mentioned a small mishap that was eventually resolved, but could have been taken care of by phone much quickly than by email correspondence.

Natesha would like to have lunch with Michelle Obama, as well as Hilary Clinton, or Nancy Pelosi, “one of those three or do a group meeting.” The ideal lunch would take place in Washington, D.C. with Indian cuisine.

Her proudest moment is that her daughters know how hardworking she “has tried to be for them” and feels that her tenacity distinguishes her from others. Her most valuable lesson has been “to take responsibility for your own life and what happens in it,” qualifying this by mentioning that there are exceptions. She also considers laziness her pet peeve.

As a final note, Natesha has noticed that oftentimes students appear overwhelmed on social media, especially near the end of their group of courses. “We’re kind of getting burnt out because of life and school, and it’s nice to know that it’s normal, that everybody experiences [it].” She continued, “For the most part ... most of it is so encouraging to know that you’re not the only one.” Best of luck Natesha!

Natalia Iwanek is currently completing her Bachelor of Arts in English at Athabasca University and is also a freelance editor and writer. She can be contacted at <https://www.nataliaiwanekediting.com>.



Why We Should Befriend Nature

Marie Well



For most of my life, my idea of nature was a peanut in a Snicker's bar. Blindly, I missed out on nature's worlds of mysterious beauty, of sacredness, and of friendships with unlikely souls.

I saw a clip about a 97-year-old man who wrote philosophy books, one of which was on dying. He seemed a lonely man, facing a death he believed would lead to nothingness. He seemed forlorn by the thought of nonexistence. But what saddened me most was his words about nature. He said, in all his life, he never really noticed the trees. Not until now. Much of the beauty of the world passed him by, unnoticed. Nature to him, like to me not long ago, held little beauty.

But I had no excuse. Mom would spend hours in her garden, digging in the rich, moist soil, planting carrots, beets, potatoes, peas, and lush lettuce. Mom's garden-grown carrots, when steamed, tasted like crisp, buttery delights, a secret none of my friends knew, a pleasure that kept me healthy, unlike some of my friends who

feasted on warmed up cans of Campbell's stew.

Mom and Grandma were two nature-oriented souls. Mom grew endless rows of flowers in her seven acres of land. Grandma, meanwhile, grew a modest flower garden and an apple tree. They both once said something that stumped me: "Every flower has its own personality." Perhaps if I grew a flower, I'd have known why.

Mom loved birds—so much so, she fed and housed them. When I was in grade three, or was it four, she placed a picture of a bird on my wall, bearing the words, "A bird in the bush is a friend indeed." That year, I learned how to spell the word "friend," proudly getting it right on a spelling bee.

Mom once bought ten or so bird houses crafted by disabled people. She hung those bird houses throughout her seven acres of land, luring a community of birds, and later chicks, to fill her havens. Mom grew special trees with berries for the birds to feast upon, and adorned her acreage with a beautiful pond. The birds delighted Mom with choirs of melodious chirps. So, she spent her days enthralled, bird-watching.

But one day a giant jealous bird came along and ravaged those homes, killing the community of birds in a wild bloodshed. When Mom saw the death of her beloved birds, she was heartbroken. Mom's anguish, to this day, saddens me. "I'll never buy birdhouses," I secretly thought. And so, I failed to grasp why anyone would watch birds.

My neighbors had a beautiful yard with a cobblestone spiraling walkway. In that yard, they placed a bird bath with a bird feeder. Every day, tiny birds—what seemed like hundreds of them—would splash in the water, chirping, as my neighbor and his wife watched on a nearby bench. I didn't understand, but I longed to know why. "Why do you like watching the birds?" I asked. "You should try it sometime," the neighbor said, a tinge of annoyance in his tone. And I walked away, wondering, again, why people love watching birds.

My disregard for nature extended to trees. I lived with an elderly landlady, and she had a giant tree in her backyard, so giant that the branches hung over the neighbors' lot. When the neighbors complained, my landlady asked me, "Should I cut down that tree?" I replied, "It's a pain to mow." When the tree was cut down and hauled away, I felt a tinge of sadness. Now, a decade later, I feel remorse over the death of that tree, for I have come to know more about the soul within all living things.

I then met my turning point. During an illness that plagued me, magpies circled me, stalked me from neighboring trees, swooped me, thereby terrifying me. I dreaded my trips home. Many winters later, I read up on magpies. I learned they remember, for their entire lives, faces of friends or foes, even the human ones. I also learned that magpies enjoy cat food. Boldly, I set out to make amends.

When I first placed cat food on the snow-covered lawn, twenty or more magpies swarmed around the kibbles, taking turns filling their beaks and flying off to their dwellings. The birds looked uniform, like a military battalion. As they flew over my head, I shuddered, worried they would swoop down and peck my scalp. But they seemed nothing short of grateful. So, my habit of feeding the birds began.

One stormy night, I went outdoors, surrounded by trees. Typically, I'd feed the birds. But I had nothing to feed them that day. So, I meditated on the bench in the dark of night. And then I had this feeling of being watched, not by another human, but by the trees. I had this eerie feeling that every tree was staring me down. The trees seemed alive like never before. As I drove away, I had this funny feeling that I had disappointed those trees. And then I realized it was not the piercing stare of the trees I felt; it was the watchful eyes, within those trees, of the hungry birds.

Normally, I feed the magpies black sunflower seeds, cat food, and suet. Suet is beef fat mixed with peanuts, corn, grains, and sometimes berries. The birds go wild over it, hoisting chunks of suet in their beaks and flying off at hyper speeds, fearing foes who might stake out their treasure. As the birds fly off, I wonder if they return to their companions, maybe even their chicks, to share in on the feast.

Magpies mate for life, and I once saw one, its mouth filled with kibbles, return to its mate whose eyes widened, bewildered, as she shook her head, once, in disbelief. The kibble bearer seemed to shrug in equal surprise. They looked like a married couple on a prime-time sitcom. As I peered up at those birds, they peered down at me. I delighted in that moment and prayed the kibbles would fill their bellies, helping them survive a brutal winter.

One time while meditating, I was greeted by a young magpie, who flapped its wings wildly on the bench beside me, fluttering upward onto the branch above me, as if to say hello. Even the hares that ate leftover birdseed would lock eyes with me, bearing a love-filled gaze, as they gently chewed grass. Twice, hares ran up to the feet of my companion, circling his sneakers and running away, a ritual rabbits use to attract a mate or express devotion.

I've listened to countless tales of near-death experiences. In heaven (as these tales claim), everything vibrates—the grass, the trees, the rocks, the sky, the birds, the humans. All these vibrations harmonize with one another, forming a choir more blissful than birdsong, more magnificent than any conceivable symphony. Like the euphoria of angelic music, when you nurture nature, you feel it in your soul.

All life forms thrive when loved. All life forms delight when giving love. All life forms bond when love secures survival. My mother's wisdom, at last, had reached me: a bird in the bush is a friend indeed.



Negotiation Not Just Wheeling and Dealing

Alek Golijanin



Everyone wants to get ahead in life, but the question is how. Wheeling and dealing is often thought of as the act of making a profit or getting an advantage by deceiving people or breaking the rules. Pop culture music and films reaffirm that the road to riches is paved on the far side of the law. On the other hand, social media is flooded with “influencers” selling side hustle wolf tickets. Neither are the answer. I believe the one life skill everyone should focus on is negotiation, because negotiation is the process of getting to a desired outcome, which should be to get ahead in life.

Preparation

Preparation has always been the foundation for future success, and desired outcomes require time and effort. It is the single most important step because preparation is when the strategic planning takes place. During this step it is important to plan around challenges, needs, objectives, and to try to understand the parties involved and the dynamics in play. It is also important to dispel negotiation myths surrounding ultimatums and bluffing during

negotiations. Children may have success with ultimatums when they throw temper tantrums, and bluffing may work in poker, but if that is your negotiating strategy then you will be exposed as weak and incompetent.

Verbal and Non-Verbal Communication

There are two ways that people communicate in a negotiation, verbally and non-verbally. What someone says during a negotiation is just as important as what they are not saying. The clarity, tone, or speed at which a person speaks can indicate nervousness or frustration and combining these indicators with non-verbal ones will give you a better idea of the situation. That is because our body is also sending signals through our actions, which can reveal how we are feeling. These actions can range from frowns and folded arms to posture and movements. Keeping an eye out for verbal and non-verbal signs should give you an advantage during a tense negotiation, but it will be difficult if you are unprepared and have to focus elsewhere.

Listening for and Seek Out Shared Outcomes

Misunderstandings tend to be the root cause of disagreements and that is why it is important to be a good listener during negotiations. During negotiations, parties can not afford to misunderstand each other because it can lead to unexpected reactions and a complete breakdown of negotiations. One way to avoid this is to start off by repeating what you heard the other party say and end it by asking them if you understood correctly. This action comes across as sincere, honest and with humility. It allows you to avoid misunderstandings. A mutual understanding between parties is important because it leads to shared outcomes, which are crucial for long-term success.

Applying the Basics

With anything we do in life, it takes time to become good at things. Becoming a good negotiator will take time, it is an art form. I believe that the best starting point for beginners revolves around

three points: preparation, communication, and listening. Do your homework, try improving the way you communicate, and seek first to understand then to be understood. These are the basics, but you can build on them by reading and applying what you learn.

If you want to learn how not to get ahead, I recommend watching 2016's War Dogs, which is based on a true story of two young men that tried hustling their way to the American Dream by dealing arms internationally. While it is perfectly legal way to earn a living, there are strict international laws that need to be adhered to when it comes to selling arms. However, the two young men try to wheel and deal their way to riches, with a re-emerging theme of poor negotiating skills, and it costs them, leading to many laughs for the audience.

A combat sports fanatic, Alek is a fourth year business student who like to read research papers for fun.



Women of Interest

Mary Jacobi

Barb Godin



Mary Corinna Putnam Jacobi was a teacher, writer, medical doctor and was actively involved in the suffragist movement, publishing several articles. She was the first woman to study medicine at the University of Paris and the first woman to become a member of the Academy of Medicine. Jacobi was considered to be the leading female doctor of her time.

Mary was born August 31, 1842, in London England and died June 10, 1906, in New York, USA. She was the oldest of eleven children. For most of her early years Mary was educated at home by her mother, eventually attending public school. After graduating in 1859, she began to study medicine. In 1863 Mary became the first woman to graduate from a United States College of Pharmacy. One year later she graduated from the Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania.

Mary continued her education at the University of Paris. Being a woman, she was required to attend lectures by entering through a separate door from the men and had to sit at the front of the lecture hall near the professor. Jacobi studied in Paris for five years and graduated with a prize-winning thesis. She then returned to the United States where she began her own private practice. In 1872 she was instrumental in establishing the Women's Medical Association of New York City, serving as president from 1874 to 1903, where she was able to address the limitations women were facing in their pursuit of a medical career.

In 1873 Mary married Dr. Abraham Jacobi, considered the "father of pediatrics" in America. Mary became interested in children's diseases and, in 1886, opened a children's ward at the New York Infirmary. In addition to her medical work, Jacobi wrote more than a hundred articles on various medical issues, mainly in the areas of pathology, pediatrics, and neurology. One of her articles was outlining her symptoms following being diagnosed with a brain tumor. Mary was first published at 15 and went on to write nine books.

Jacobi remained actively involved in the suffrage movement. Her essay "The Questions of Rest for Women during Menstruation" won the Boylston Prize at Harvard University. This paper was in response to Dr. Edward H. Clark's book "Sex in Education: or, A Fair Chance for the Girls" where he claimed that any physical or mental exertion during menstruation could lead to women becoming infertile. Jacobi wrote "Common Sense Applied to Women's Suffrage," a book that was often used as a reference tool to support the women's suffrage movement. Mary was one of a group of six who founded The League for Political Education, which was a group that began as a pro-women's suffrage group, but eventually opened up to both genders. The purpose of The League for Political Education was to provide a forum where all people, could be educated on the important issues of the day. This league ended in 1938 and was replaced by the building of "The Town Hall" where people of all ranks and positions could meet and be educated on the matters of the day.

Mary died in New York City and is interred in Green-Wood Cemetery in Brooklyn, New York.

Mary Putnam Jacobi was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame in 1993.

Additional information available at the following websites:

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Mary-Putnam-Jacobi>

https://cfmedicine.nlm.nih.gov/physicians/biography_163.html



Beats from the Basement

The Police

THE POLICE

SYNCHRONICITY



out, and it features considerably less reggae elements compared to the trio's earlier efforts with their rock music.

Milica Markovic

Album: *Synchronicity*

Artist: The Police

After essentially turning my entire basement upside down in the name of music, I have had a difficult time deciding what would be my penultimate entry for this series. I suppose leaving my favourite new wave band, the Police, for last would've been more suitable, but I've got something else in mind instead.

That's a topic for another time, of course, because we've got experiments to unfold and journeys to embark on in the final album by frontman Gordon "Sting" Sumner, guitarist Andy Summers, and percussionist Stewart Copeland. 1983's *Synchronicity* managed to leave a lasting impression on critics and fans alike just before new wave was beginning to phase

Rather, the songs are primarily structured around thick textures and polyrhythms that mix synth pop with blues and ethnic influences. Such enigmatic choices support the purpose behind *Synchronicity*: to show how seemingly unrelated though coincidental events, theoretically, may share a common meaning and are dictated by some arbiter of fate. Each track should be regarded as an anthological contribution to this underlying theme, which seems to suggest that the unpredictable—and often, chaotic—nature of life is not born from a lack of control.

Our musicians expertly weaved these fascinatingly disconcerting ideas into the dark relationships we humans have with ourselves, others, and our planet. From the title to the lyrics, *Synchronicity* abounds with literary references and heavy subtext that encourage listeners to explore the literature so they can reflect on the messages between the lines.

Ambition has its drawbacks, however. One or two songs can break immersion with their stylistic choices alone because they make the album's first half seem overproduced and abstract. By contrast, the second half plays out like a coherent narrative, starting with "Synchronicity II." It uses the analogies of a working-class family man's miserable life and the Loch Ness monster's rage to illustrate an inevitable breakdown. While I don't think it's necessarily the most sonically pleasing of the tracks, the rhythmic patterns and chord progressions do sensibly follow the lyrics.

Simpler arrangements can be effective in creating a particular mood, like in the highly misunderstood "Every Breath You Take." Summers and Copeland maintained an up-tempo beat throughout, but downplayed their performance to emphasize Sting's balladic interpretation of how an individual's jealousy leads to surveillance. That many people over the years have considered this a declaration of love, as cynical as it sounds, might prove how we view relationships—and therefore, the point of the album. That said, I respectfully disagree with Sting's insistence that it's malicious. I find it sad and desperate, the epitome of a wandering soul in the night unable to cope with its losses or comprehend its faults.

My favourite piece of the Police era has always been "King of Pain" because it perfectly captures the daily energy that we, deep down, don't enjoy keeping up. The mixture of marimba with rock accompanies Sting as he observes unfortunate circumstances and simple annoyances as painful realities he must continue to endure under the guise of enthusiastic hustle. How many of us completely ceased to participate in society and enjoy the little pleasures we can find because of the harrowing sights we might have experienced? Exactly.

For all these one-sided emotions, we have songs that are spitefully responsive such as "Wrapped Around Your Finger," which describes changing—and unhealthy—power dynamics between two people. There's something very detective-like in its soft, yet suspenseful tone—a probing of the proverbial oyster, if you will. It's a reasonable direction for the music considering that it tries to navigate complex states of mind.

Synchronicity reflects its band members' feelings at the time. They were suffering through failed marriages and apparently did not get along with each other in the studio. I would never wish misfortune on anyone, but it appears that their personal troubles may have authenticated the themes in their album. Perhaps it was meant to show that, no matter how dearly they probably held one another, the time had come for a chapter to close as far as studio recordings were concerned. It's a beautiful kind of cruelty that makes you appreciate the journey more.

Milica Markovic is a Toronto AU student enrolled in the MA-IS program with a BA in criminology and political science.



Fly on the Wall

I Scream, You Scream, We All Scream For Our Truth!

Jason Sullivan



One of my sweet nieces said the darndest thing to her Dad the other day. Having finished her special kiddie-sized bowl of ice cream she blithely asked for some ice cream. Not more ice cream—just ice cream. As if the first bowl had never happened. Her Dad replied with a no and explained that she'd just *had* her ice cream and that that was the truth. The wee tot's rejoinder? "That's not *my* truth!"

You could have heard a pin drop in the jaw-dropping silence that followed. Every pause begs explicative opportunity, however.

The Soft-Serve Truth About Truth

Truth. To have and to hold, an idea from which never to part, the notion of truth is part

of our mental wiring. Being human includes a lived desire for truth. It's held dear almost as an incantation: the truth, we presume, is out there. This hope reveals that we want what we don't quite have; that is, absolution from ambiguity. Essentially, truth divides people because we each inhabit a unique cranial space from which we ourselves see and experience the Other. Truth inexorably relates us through power relations, it twists its bent trunk around our being. To ask of reality that it be straight and narrow and true is indeed to apply a saw-women's crafty touch or the machine appendage of a lathe or the industrial monolith of a mill. Indeed, we make reality out of what we find and, pausing to survey our tools and wares, find our handiwork fine or coarse, true or false, depending upon our preset objectives. We seek that we may find and when truth is concerned it's the shearing away of what we define as superficial dross that allows us to discover what we are looking for.

My little niece had not had enough ice cream to meet her truth standards of having had ice cream; to have ice cream to her meant to have enough, to be satiated as such. We begin with the goal of truth and we go forth to find it. Disagreements thus begin in quantifying truth. Child-rearing depends upon truths centred around core beliefs and intended outcomes, the avoidance of Type 2 diabetes from too much sugary ice cream for instance. In this same manner we tend to our academic spirit at AU; we have to manage our time and our goals in a way that meets our expectations. The truth is, we are mostly alone in our journey and that's an opportunity to tailor our truths to meet our needs.

Post-Truth Can Mean My Truth

Post-truth society is a buzzword unlikely to fly away home in the 20's. Literally, post-truth means "relating to a situation in which people are more likely to accept an argument on their emotions and beliefs, rather than one based on facts." Believable enough, where desert is concerned, but truth becomes murkier in the depths of our consciousness. Examples abound where truths slip away from the grasp of consistency. Is it racist to favour Indigenous people when hiring workers? Is it militarist to favour Veterans when granting contracts at federal institutions such as my local Agriculture Research Centre? Instinctively and emotionally, thanks to our socialization, most of us feel that nothing is wrong with either of these practices. We have to level the playing field, right, by correcting past injustices and rewarding untold sacrifices for the common good. Yet, the truth of our belief in a society of equals (and the philosophers who espouse assorted forms of

liberal democracy from John Locke and John Stuart Mill all the way down to, say, Paul Kennedy or Michael Ignatieff) rests on having no presumptions of difference prior to assessment of talent, aptitude and, well, willingness to work for our reward and bust for our bacon (or meatless substitute). Even our truest truths founder a bit on emotional involvement in the controversies over the truth of our times which, as Shakespeare's *Hamlet* so eloquently reminds us, tend to be a little out of joint when compared to our preconceptions.

The concept of post-truth suggests an original, more truthful, state of society. Such preconceptions are embedded, like a sliver of wood or a sliver of truth (no pun intended) so deeply in our society that they may be invisible. There's Biblical precedent in there too, like it or not, and that's because our cultural inheritance of words and discourse is inseparable from the creation of knowledge and the promulgation of truths (yes, plural). John 1:1 states that in the Word (Logos, which translates as Word or Discourse) resides God and the two march forth together as one. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was God, and the Word was with God." Revelation 22:13 states that "I am the Alpha and Omega, the First and Last, the Beginning and the End"; thus, the first and final letters of the Greek alphabet come to symbolize the self-enclosure of Truth as a creation that unfolds rather than exists as an immobile unity.

So, words aren't separate from the creation of truth; the two are linked. Consider these words by Louis Hjelmslev in regard to language and in reaction to the notable co-founder of modern linguistics, Ferdinand de Saussure. After comparing monetary units, currency akin to social capital invested by those whose hierarchies decide what's true, what counts, and, above all, what's popular and what sells, Hjelmslev makes this deceptively simple observation to show how discourse is not a currency with a common, objective, baseline in the way that the popular imagination hopes and dreams it to be: "In linguistics, on the other hand, there is nothing that corresponds to a standard. That is why the game of chess and not economic fact remains for Saussure the most faithful image of a grammar. The scheme of language is in the last analysis a game and nothing more." (Hjelmslev in Derrida, 62). Discourse and truth are thus a process rather than a fact; what's true today isn't true for all time, at least where human interactions are concerned. One day my niece will make her own ice cream decisions, for instance.

AU-thentic Events Upcoming AU Related Events

Google Scholar Webinar

Mon, Nov 30, 12:00 to 1:00 pm MST

Online via Adobe Connect

Hosted by AU Library

library.athabascau.ca/orientations.html

No pre-registration necessary; access through above link

Talk to a Librarian Drop-in Session

Tues, Dec 1, 9:00 to 9:30 am MST

Online via Microsoft Teams

Hosted by AU Library

library.athabascau.ca/orientations.html

No pre-registration necessary; access through above link

Bannock and a Movie December Edition: Birth of a Family

Dec 1 to Dec 31, Online

Hosted by AU Nukskahtowin

indigenous.athabascau.ca/bannock/index.php

Access through above link

Project Management Certificate Info Session

Thur, Dec 3, 11:00 am to 12:00 pm MST

Online

Hosted by AU's PowerED™

news.athabascau.ca/events/powered-leadership-information-session/

Register through above link

Talk to a Librarian Drop-in Session

Thur, Dec 3, 3:00 to 3:30 pm MST

Online via Microsoft Teams

Hosted by AU Library

library.athabascau.ca/orientations.html

No pre-registration necessary; access through above link

All events are free unless otherwise noted

The question thus becomes whose words do we believe and whose truths do we value most? At AU it's key that we adopt a study regime to match our wants and needs and truths we can live by. There's no sense forcing a round peg into a square hole; after all, we're adults now and our education has to match our learned experience of what works best for us, in truth. In the end, the proof is in the pudding. Like dough proofing on a counter our academic success rises when we match out inner truth with our outer circumstances. And, truth be told, bread dough rose during its period of proofing prior to folks knowing the truth about yeast as after. Truth is external to context; what matters most, in truth, is what works for us.

References

Hjelmslev, L. (2016). In Derrida, J (1967, Trans. 2016 Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak). 'Of Grammatology'. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins.

Jason Hazel-rah Sullivan is a Masters of Integrated Studies student who loves engaging in discourse while working in the sunny orchards and forests of the Okanagan.



Quick Homemade is Better Afterschool Snack

Chef Corey



I I know many of you out there have little one's running around at home, and some may even have school aged children. A few weeks ago, my youngest and I were playing around and came up with a super simple afterschool snack. Sometimes the simplest snacks are the best. They're quick, you can fancy them up a little, and the dishes are minimal. This one literally takes three minutes to make and it can be a base or the entire snack. It also hits a few nutrient bases. Protein in the peanut butter, some carbohydrate in the cracker, potassium in the banana, and a little tease of superfood in the raisin. It's that simple, and this recipe is easy.

The Chuck

Ingredients:

1 banana
Peanut butter (or no-nut peanut butter substitute)
Craisins
Crackers

Directions:

- 1) Cut your banana into thick slices, maybe about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch.
- 2) On a large plate, spread out as many crackers as needed to use all the banana.
- 3) Spread a good amount of peanut butter on each cracker.
- 4) Place a banana on each peanut buttered cracker.
- 5) Top is a raisin.

That's it. You're done and eating. I hope you and your little ones enjoy.

Chef Corey is a student in business management who first graduated from NAIT's Culinary Arts Program in 2007

Kitchen Gadgets

Air Fryer Review

Xin Xu



Crispy Salmon prepared in under 10 minutes

After abstaining from adding to my kitchen appliance collection, I caved when I saw a favorite air fryer brand on sale for pre-Black Friday shopping. While I'd heard excellent reviews about air fryers, I was a little skeptical about the idea myself. I've always pan-fried most of my recipes, with the occasional deep-frying to satisfy the craving for perfectly crispy proteins. So far, my experience with the air fryer has been deeply satisfying and I wanted to share some cooking tips for it

I purchased the [Ninja Airfryer](#) from Costco Canada. Having eyed it for nearly half a year, I was finally motivated by the special deal that was available. This air fryer has many features including programmable cooking settings that include both a roast and an air fry option.

How does it work?

Air frying works by coating the food with a thin layer of oil. Like a convection oven, it circulates the air inside a small, contained space which helps keep temperatures even and also enables more controlled cooking as opposed to on a stove top--

where the food can be cooked at uneven temperatures.

Convenience:

★★★★☆

One of the big factors I look for when purchasing a new kitchen appliance is the time-saving factor. Particularly as a busy AU student, I have very little time during the day to prepare for meals and I want it to be as efficient as possible without resorting to unhealthy frozen dinners. I learned quickly that the air fryer prepares food very quickly. For example, after throwing some bread-crumbed chicken drumsticks into the air fryer, it was perfectly cooked within 20 minutes.

Cleaning:

★★★★☆

Cleaning is another important factor I consider when purchasing a new appliance. If the cleaning is difficult, I will be discouraged from using the appliance again. For this air fryer, there is a simple attachment that can be removed from the rest of the appliance. The cup holder is the only item that requires washing after each meal.



Detachable cooking cup makes it easy to clean and reuse.



Perfectly golden and crispy fried pastry dough makes for a delicious snack

Taste:

★★★★★

If you're obsessed with the texture of food like me, you'll fall in love with the air fryer because of its ability to turn any boring recipe into an exciting one. Having been used to pan-frying my food in the past, using the air fryer has dramatically changed the taste and texture of many traditional recipes like breadcrumb-crusted salmon. The air fryer functions much like a miniature convection oven that heats and cooks food evenly as opposed to pan frying where the heat is distributed unevenly between the top and bottom sides. The temperature is also more uniform, creating better tasting dinners. I also enjoy experimenting with different baking techniques using an air fryer.

Xin Xu is a post-graduate health-science AU student, aspiring clinician, globe-trotter, parrot breeder and tea-connoisseur.



Student Sizzle — AU's Hot Social Media Topics

Following What's Hot around AU's Social Media Sites.



AthaU Facebook Group

Erin posts about problems experienced during an attempt to write an exam through ProctorU; a torrent of responses with similar experiences flood in, plus some helpful suggestions about alternative assessments.

reddit

One post floats the notion that AU might refund ProctorU fees; not going to happen—invigilation services are always on the student's dime. (If you've been lucky enough to have written for free at AU's local exam centres prior to the pandemic, have pity on the majority of AU students who pay to write exams Every. Single. Time.)

Twitter

@AthabascaU tweets: "2020 has been a momentous year for #AthabascaU: not only are we celebrating our 50th anniversary, but we are also celebrating 10 years of the Writer in Residence program! Learn all about the program and how it can help you: <https://bit.ly/36QHdZ> #CanadaReads #CanLit."

@austudentsunion tweets: "We're coming up on December, which means a new group of

@AthabascaU students will be starting their first courses! Before you dive in, check out AU's New Student Orientation, and be brought up to speed on everything in store for you. Info here: <https://bit.ly/3pTxstd> #AthaU."

The Study Dude

Seven Ways to Temper Student Stress

Marie Well



Can we possibly identify with students plagued by exam anxiety, students so spacey during tests that just signing one's name, reading the first question, and circling a single multiple choice answer takes the brunt of thirty minutes? What about the study nights where students feel so overwhelmed, so anxiety-riddled, that nine hours go by without a single sentence understood, without a single word written? Studying for most anyone is taxing; studying for those with extreme anxiety can feel like losing one's mind.

But the best question to ask is, "What tactics can help us relax and excel—at the same time—in any study program, whether for a certificate, an undergrad, or a PhD?"

Let's explore seven possibilities for relaxing while mastering schoolwork: (1) meditation, (2) muscle flexing, (3) exercise, (4) caffeine-free beverages, (5) hot baths, (6) affirmations, and (7) journaling. As a bonus surprise, some of these tactics

come with a twist.

Tip 1: Meditate.

When we meditate, we calm the mind, prepping us for either relaxation or studies, depending on the type of breaths we choose. A fast repeated exhalation is great for priming our brains for action, such as for studies. On the other hand, a four-second inhale and six-second exhale works great for calming the mind, easing exam jitters, and bolstering the thickness of our hippocampus, the brain area used in memory.

Tip 2: Flex our muscles.

When we flex and ease our muscles, we relax. Our biceps, gluteus (our bum, in common vernacular), calves, forearms, eye muscles—basically, any muscle--feels soothed when flexed and released. On top of that, a wild theory suggests muscles have memory. So, we could think of a fact while flexing a muscle, thereby storing that fact in that muscle. Soon, flexing a muscle releases not just tension, but also a fact memorized.

Tip 3: Exercise.

Exercise helps us relax. Why not connect our headphones to our cell phones, head out to a field, and do two laps around the perimeter, each lap followed by some calisthenics? Calisthenics are body weight exercises like push ups, planks, and sit-ups. But, while running the field, listen through our headphones, to videos that relate to our studies. We only stand to gain. Parks are free. So is YouTube. And aerobics, such as running, release endorphins, which are feel-good chemicals that make studies fun.

If outdoor training takes too much time, try watching educational videos indoors while briskly walking back and forth in our hallways, timing our trek for thirty minutes. It's free and doesn't require extra equipment. Plus, walking releases endorphins, the feel-good hormone, to pump us up for a productive day.

Tip 4: Drink water.

Water has a calming effect, while caffeine--even decaffeinated beverages--can trigger anxiety. If we drink nothing but water throughout the day, we fuel every cell with the optimal--free of cost--liquid. Fueling our brains with water calms us down for studies.

Tip 5: Have a hot bath.

We can also enjoy a hot bath while viewing a laminated sheet of important formulas or facts. We can buy a waterproof laminate coat from our local printer. It'll help us memorize in bathtubs, stress free.

Tip 6: Use affirmations.

An affirmations app with voice recording capability primes us to relax and learn. Instead of writing just affirmations, we mix the affirmations with facts to memorize. For instance, we could have one affirmation say, "If I succeed, I've done well. But if I fail, I've opened a door to growth and opportunity. I'm not here just to have things come easy. I'm here to grow." And then mix that affirmation with a fact to memorize, such as, "World War II began in 1939 blah blah blah." As long as it's a relax and learn moment, it's a small win.

Tip 7: Journal.

And why not extend that win to our journals? Journal about how much we admire our profs, enjoy our T.A.'s, and love the knowledge we're gaining—even if we're kidding ourselves. Most of us already love our instructors, but sometimes friction surfaces, friction that, at times, explodes into a mess of all-out war. When we, instead, view an adversary with love, that adversary turns into a friend, even a motivator, rather than a roadblock. Journal, also, about how the struggle to excel at studies makes us finer people, more able to contribute to society, more prone to achieve our dreams. Writing with love eases the obstacles.

When we relax and learn, we grow into better students. And, for those of us with anxiety, we just might conquer exam anxiety, enough to excel at school, even at a PhD level. Achieving a degree, especially a PhD, is scary when we're overrun with anxiety, but it's possible, and it comes most easily when we master the ability to relax and learn.



Scholarship of the Week

Digging up scholarship treasure for AU students.

Scholarship name: Mike Puhallo Memorial Scholarships

Sponsored by: The BC Cowboy Heritage Society

Deadline: December 31, 2020

Potential payout: \$500

Eligibility restriction: Applicants must be Canadian or U.S. students, and about to enter, or continue, a program of study at a post-secondary institution.

What's required: A completed and emailed entry form, along with an original piece of rhyming cowboy poetry.

Tips: See [last year's winning entries](#) for inspiration.

Where to get info: www.bcchs.com/scholarships.html



Daddy Issues

Dear Barb:

Hi, I am in a terrible situation and I'm not sure what to do. My husband and I have been married for five years and we recently decided to try to have a baby. We had wanted to wait until we finished school and were established in our careers, which is where we are now. The good news is I am pregnant, the bad news? I'm not sure my husband is the father. Recently a co-worker and myself were on a four day business trip when we landed a fantastic deal and decided to go out and celebrate. We both drank too much and got carried away. I know I shouldn't have been drinking since I was trying to get pregnant, but I just wasn't thinking. I know I made a big mistake. When I got home, I bought a pregnancy test and discovered I'm pregnant, but now I don't know who the father is! I am devastated that I did something so stupid. I have never cheated on my husband before and now I'm in this mess. I really need some direction. Should I tell my husband, or should I just not say anything and hope it is his baby. The man I cheated with also has a wife and a two-year-old daughter. If I disclose this situation a lot of people will be hurt, so I have no idea what the right thing to do is. Help, Tiffany.

Hi Tiffany:

Yep, you have got yourself into a bad situation. I really don't see an easy answer. You have a few options. Since I always believe telling the truth is the best option, I would suggest you tell your husband what happened and it's

probably a good idea to tell your co-worker that you are planning to tell your husband. He may not even know that there was a possibility of pregnancy. Also he may choose to admit his infidelity to his wife before she finds out from someone else.

Another option would be to wait until the child is born and do DNA testing and if the child is your husband's it would not be necessary to tell your co-worker that there was even a possibility of him being the father. Although I still feel you should come clean with your husband, as these things have a way of coming out, and not always at the most opportune times. On the other hand, when your co-worker learns you are pregnant he may wonder if he could possibly be the father, so you will have to decide how much you want to disclose to him.

For some people abortion would be an option, but that is a personal choice. Whatever you choose to do, you ultimately have to take responsibility for your indiscretion and accept the consequences. Sorry I couldn't be more help. Best of luck Tiffany.

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.



Chazz Bravado
Why Concede?

Wanda Waterman



Gotta say,
I am
pumped
with respect
for my buddy,
Donald!



Such
balls!
Such
chutzpah!



And why
SHOULD
he concede?
Is there
a **LAW?**



His stance
is deeply
affirming
for those
of us men
who just
won't take "no"
for an answer.



I'll bet
they'll
have to
drag him
out of the White House
kicking and screaming—



—just like
they
took me
outa
Hooters
Friday night.

The information on this page is provided by the AU Students' Union. The Voice does not create this content. Contact AUSU at services@ausu.org with any questions about this article.

IMPORTANT DATES

- **Nov 30:** [Deadline to apply for course extension for Dec](#)
- **Dec 10:** [Deadline to register in a course starting Jan 1](#)
- **Dec 15:** [Jan degree requirements deadline](#)
- **Dec 21:** [Deadline to request exams for Dec. end date](#)
- **Dec 21 – Jan 4 –** AUSU Holiday Closure
- **Dec 24 – Jan 4 –** [AU Holiday Closure](#)

New AUSU Executive Team

On behalf of the entire team at the AU Students' Union (AUSU), we are excited to announce the new changes to our AUSU executive team.

Stacey Hutchings - New AUSU President

Natalia Iwanek - New VP External & Student Affairs

Monique Durette - VP Finance & Administration

We look forward to seeing what this new team will accomplish together, and congratulations to Stacey and Natalia on their new roles!



AUSU Open Mic Podcast [Turning your AU Degree into a Career](#)

In our latest AUSU Open Mic Podcast, AUSU asks outgoing AUSU President Natasha Donahue and AU student Jennifer Bouley how students can leverage their education at Athabasca University into a new job or advancing in their career. Tips on networking, writing cover letters, and getting noticed in a crowded job market are shared as the two look at what makes Athabasca University students stand out.

[Click to Listen to this Episode](#)

University Advocacy for Students

Since the beginning of the pandemic in March 2020, AUSU has been actively advocating on behalf of AU students to Athabasca University, as well as to external stakeholders such as the provincial and federal governments. We are aware that many students have been struggling with their studies due to COVID-19 and we want students to know that we hear you!

AUSU has been compiling AU student feedback from social platforms, our COVID-19 impact survey, and hundreds of emails received by our team members about the impact of the pandemic on their studies, and the barriers students have faced.

Our executive team and staff have been meeting regularly with administrators at AU, including the President, Provost, VP Academic, Registrar, Info Centre Coordinator, Deans, and others to bring student concerns forward.

We also recognize that AU has experienced a massive increase in the volume of student inquiries and requests due to COVID-19, as well as a large enrollment increase all while adjusting to their staff working from home due to the pandemic. AUSU applauds the efforts of the front-line staff during a difficult time, and the AU for delivering 134 emergency bursaries in response to the pandemic.

We know this has not been an easy time for everyone.

However, we will continue to advocate to the University about the struggles students are facing and work with the University to develop more supports for students and open the phone lines back up!

Read more about this online [here](#).



CLASSIFIEDS

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

THE VOICE

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