

# THE VOICE

Vol 31 Issue 06 2023-02-10

## Minds We Meet

Interviewing Students Like You

## Defunding the Police, Finale

The Lesson to be Learned

## Ableism in Our Textbooks

A Course Review



*Plus:*

*The Official Reaction*

*A Valentine's Day Special*

*and much more!*

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**The Voice Magazine**  
www.voicemagazine.org

**Email**  
voice@voicemagazine.org

**Publisher**  
AU Students' Union

**Editor-In-Chief**  
Jodi Campbell

**Managing Editor**  
Karl Low

**Regular Contributors**  
Barb Godin, Barbara Lehtiniemi, Alek Golijanin, Jason Sullivan, Wanda Waterman, Corey Wren, Jessica Young, and others

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

**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

### The Official Reaction

Karl Low



I got in touch with AUSU's president, Karen Fletcher, to ask her about the recent change in AU's President, including as to what your student representatives on the board knew about the whole affair, and what happens now.

In her response, she noted that "despite being board members, with full voting seats, students were not informed that there would be a vote, and were never sent a formal motion from the board chair to vote on. Instead I was informed that the decision had already been made in an email from the board chair, which said, 'I appreciate it was last minute but I wanted to give you advance notice of Peter's termination and the hiring of Dr. Alex Clark... notwithstanding my late contact to you...you are permitted of course to send me your vote by return email if you wish.'"

She continued, "We were not informed that there would be a vote until after the vote occurred, and were excluded from all discussions about Peter's firing and Alex's hiring which seem to have taken place among a small group of board members. As you can see from Byron's email above the 'opportunity' to vote happened after the vote occurred, that email was sent to me from the board Chair after AU staff members were already informed of the decision."

I also asked if any official or legal follow-up was planned considering that the press release of AUSU seems to indicate that this action may have been done in contravention of the AU governance bylaws. The section in question is 8.63 on page 14, which notes that if, in the opinion of the Board Chair, it is desirable to pass a resolution outside a regularly scheduled meeting, then a written response by at least 75% of the Board Members shall be valid. Did 75% of the board members respond? Who can tell; a count of the votes is only recorded if three members request one before the determination of the vote. As noted by the quotes above from Advanced Education Minister Nicolaides' ~~bagman~~ appointee and failed Alberta PC leadership contender, Byron Nelson, he had already determined the vote by the time he wrote your student representatives, neatly shortcutting a possibility of requiring a count of the votes be recorded.

Yet we can do some figuring, and note that there are currently 19 members of the board. 75% of those is 14.25, or at least 15 of the members of the board must have voted for this. We can be pretty sure that the President himself did not, and we know our two undergraduate student representatives did not. That's three.

Dr. Dron further noted in his blog that the Academic Staff members seemed to have been taken similarly by surprise, which suggests another two had not voted. If this is true, then the most that could have voted would be 14, or 73.68% of 19.

President Fletcher told me that AUSU is currently evaluating their options, but it seems to me that the Board Chair may well have over-stepped his bounds when calling the decision made, as it does not seem to have been done in the manner allowed. Of course, all of that runs into one giant sticking point that is point 2.21, noting that "The Board is the sole authority for the interpretation of these Bylaws, including any question of interpretation ...". So even if 75% is needed, if 50% of the board, that is, less than the number of people Minister Nicolaides has appointed in the last six months, decide to 'interpret' 75% as meaning 14 (or 12, or 2) people out of 19, it's technically within the legal boundaries.

Because hey, if you're going to be this blatant about not caring about the university, why not be blatant about everything? Enjoy the read.

# MINDS WE MEET



*The Voice Magazine* recently had a chance to chat with Melanie Rousseau (she/her), a Post Diploma, Bachelor of Science program student, from Windsor, Ontario. She explained that she “recently transitioned from part-time studies to full-time studies to prioritize finishing the undergraduate degree in less than two years.” She plans to use this upgraded knowledge at the chemistry lab she currently works “to offer more as a worker and mentor to others.” As an out-of-province learner, Melanie also hopes to visit Athabasca University at least once.

Melanie is an experienced learner. She stated, “My school background includes a three-year advanced diploma in chemistry at St. Clair College, as I’ve always had an interest with branches of physical science. I am a current member of the Program Advisory Committee as an alumni representative for the chemistry department, offering direction and expertise for improvement of the curriculum to better match the chemical industry. I moved into the city about four years ago to be closer to my full-time job.”

She had some great personal study tips to share with fellow AU students. “My most successful study times are by myself, in complete silence. I thrive best when I am alone with my thoughts and able to give my brain the full patience and attention it needs to grasp my content. The best study tip is creating both to-do lists and completed lists! This way you are able to track what needs to be done, as well as celebrate your accomplishments. Discouraging thoughts can be easy if we do not celebrate our small wins,” she stated.

She also had some advice for students at the beginning of their journeys. “No matter how much you have on your weeks’ schedule, eat dinner, and close the books by 9:00pm. A proper sleep schedule and diet is what will keep you afloat mentally and physically during the stressful periods. You show up for your classes and assignments day after day, so this gives you all the more reason to prioritize and show up for yourself as well,” she advised.

When she is not studying, Melanie enjoys running and baking, explaining that these are her “two ways of relieving stress and expanding [her] mind to new limits.” She stated, “I ran my first half marathon in 2021 and hope that one day I can run a full marathon (after school perhaps – one goal at a time)! I have a sweet tooth for homemade desserts, so I love experimenting in the kitchen with limited ingredients and no recipe just to see what I will get. I also appreciate greenery hikes and lounging, as I take any opportunity I get to visit national parks inside and outside of the province. I have a love for instrumental music and spend much of my free time with orchestral or piano tunes in the background.”

Melanie also shared a book that has had an impact on her life. “I recently read *The Da Vinci Code* by Dan Brown and I believe it was one of the best books I’ve ever read. It impacted my life by

inspiring me to learn about art more, as this is not my usual place of interest or expertise. It provides an array of intellectual theories and religious topics that I've never encountered or considered before. I always enjoy books that challenge me and help to expand my personal perspectives," she explained.

She also let *The Voice Magazine* know about her most memorable vacation. "My most memorable vacation was a trip to Europe with two of my best friends in 2017. We visited England, Spain and France and left with a full heart and a bad sun burn. I have visited many areas of the Caribbean and Florida when I was younger, but this was by far the most diverse and adventurous two weeks I had in my life. My friend was on exchange for a semester in England, so I had the privilege of seeing her school, the friends she made, and the different cultures they had to share," she recounted.

Melanie's desire to learn comes "from many different teachers and mentors ... over the years." In particular, it was witnessing "their passion for topics they are teaching." She continued, "I had the privilege in my last chemistry program to learn from some of the smartest and most inspiring people: in particular, Michael Siwek, my program coordinator."

She also let us know that her "experience with online learning has put a serious test to [her] self-discipline." She explained, "The amazing thing about Athabasca is that it is all dependent on whatever schedule works best for you, though the only way to be rewarded is through your self-discipline and hard work. It challenges you to set daily goals, and structure to the tasks you want to accomplish. My favourite aspect about online education is that it forces you to learn more about yourself: strengths and weaknesses, as well as what works for you and what may not. Although I miss the in-class dynamic sometimes, I appreciate that every decision I make during my educational journey is purely for me, not my teachers or peers."

Her most memorable AU course has been SCIE 326: Scientific Reasoning, as it provided purpose to a lot the material [she is studying] currently, and plan[s] to study in the future." She continued, "It also gave me my first solid experience for university writing, as I hope to build my skills further to write strong essays."

As for communication with her course tutors? "Communication with my tutors have varied from course to course and depending on how often I reach out. Many have been very quick to providing constructive feedback and phone calls to allow for more personalized guidance, while others offer a bit less communication. Each tutor has contributed to my success in the courses to at least some degree."

*The Voice Magazine* also asked Melanie what her first project would be if she were the new president of AU. She stated that it "would be to find more affordable routes for local and remote students to take the courses needed for their academic goals." She continued, "School, even for one course at a time, can be expensive, especially if you live out of town from the university and have to pay extra fees and shipping for laboratory kits. Perhaps different services such as used book sales, could be introduced to be more financially friendly."

When asked which famous person, past or present, she would like to have lunch with, and why, Melanie chose Michael Jackson, "one of [her] favourite late musicians." She continued, "I discovered his music on vacation when I was 10, and have been a fan ever since. Considering some of his favourite foods consist of fried chicken and fresh fruit, that sounds perfect to me."

Melanie also shared her most valuable lesson learned in life. "The most valuable lesson in life I have learned is to always prioritize the well-being of yourself before giving back to anything else. We often get lost in the obligations and people around us day-by-day, and take for granted the

person we wake up and go to bed with every single day for the rest of our lives. The greatest investment we can ever contribute to is ourselves, even if it's only 15 minutes of meditation in the morning, or a walk after dinner to move your body. This way, we are able to give back to the world with the full fuel to allow for ourselves."

And her proudest moment? "One of the proudest moments in my life was when I ran my first half marathon in 2021. I have always loved running since high school and prioritized movement in my life, but this accomplishment at the time was a level outside of my comfort zone that I could have never imagined reaching. It gave me the reminder, mentally and physically, how capable I am of doing hard things in life even if it appears to be miles away (literally). It also gave me a sense of gratitude for the world of possibilities that our bodies can do for us." Best of luck Melanie!



At times, in an online learning environment, it can feel like you are all alone, but across the nation and around the globe, students just like you are also pursuing their Athabasca University (AU) studies! Each week, *The Voice Magazine* will be bringing you some of these stories. If you would like to be featured next, do not hesitate to get in touch!

*Natalia Iwanek (she/they) is currently completing her Bachelor of Arts in English with a minor in Political Science at Athabasca University.*

## Scholarship of the Week

Digging up scholarship treasure for AU students.

**Scholarship name:** Horatio Alger Canadian Scholarships

**Sponsored by:** Horatio Alger Association of Canada

**Deadline:** March 15, 2023, 12:00 pm ET

**Potential payout:** \$5000

**Eligibility restriction:** Applicants must be Canadian citizens, be full-time grade 11 high school students (or first year CEGEP students in Canada), be intending to pursue a bachelor's degree program at an accredited university, demonstrate financial need, and maintain a minimum grade percentage of 70.

**What's required:** An online application form, including financial info, a form completed by a supporting reference, high school transcript, along with a short essay on adversity, and a personal statement.

**Tips:** Check out the [FAQs](#) for detailed info on application requirements.

**Where to get info:** [horatioalger.ca/en/scholarships/about-our-scholarships-programs/provincial-programs/](https://horatioalger.ca/en/scholarships/about-our-scholarships-programs/provincial-programs/)



## Ableism in Our Textbooks A Course Review

Jessica Young



Recently I took the AU course PSYC478: Autism Spectrum Disorder. As the mom of a little guy with autism, I thought this would be a great course for me to learn more about my son's disability. While my tutor was excellent, I was dismayed to find that my course materials were riddled with ableist language, sentiments that devalued people with autism, and heavily promoted a highly controversial form of therapy.

First, I took issue with the repeated use of the term “high-functioning autism” throughout the text. Many people in the autism community have expressed that this kind of labeling is harmful. When an autistic person is labeled as “high-functioning” it can minimize their—very real and difficult—struggles; while labeling a person as “low-functioning” is insulting, could make them feel embarrassed or powerless, and dismisses their strengths. People labeled as “low-functioning” can still be extremely intelligent, creative, funny, wonderful people—something that this label does not imply. This is not to mention the connection to the Nazi regime's “euthanasia” campaign against people with disabilities

(which I have also [written about](#)). A more accurate, kind, and inclusive way to communicate the abilities of someone with ASD would be to refer to their level of support needs—as in, they have high, moderate, or low support needs.

Second, the text heavily promoted ABA therapy—a highly controversial form of therapy that many people in the autism community find abusive and traumatizing. ABA therapy asserts that children should be in therapy 20 to 40 hours per week. 40 hours per week is the equivalent of a full-time job. While I understand that there is research supporting that children can make significant gains in this time, I wonder how this would affect their mental health? Might some of these children grow up to feel like they spent their entire childhood “working”? How do the results of ABA therapy compare to less intense, gentler, or more incidental teaching/therapy styles? These are some of the questions that I would have loved for PSYC478 to address.

Furthermore, the videos of ABA “training” that were required for the course made me severely uncomfortable—in my opinion, these therapists look like they are training dogs, not teaching innocent, vulnerable children. I would not allow a therapist or teacher to treat either of my children that way. This is not to mention the story mentioned in Unit 10, about a little boy named Cooper being physically restrained at a table for “table time” while he screamed and tried to get away. This practice is supposed to facilitate play skills—but how is a child supposed to learn (or play, for that matter!) if they are experiencing that level of distress? Did Cooper actually learn to calm himself at the table, or did he just shut down?

Third, the author refers to autistic children and their “healthy” siblings on page 200. My son is not unhealthy. He is neurodivergent. His sister is not the “healthy” sibling. She is neurotypical. Using “healthy” and “unhealthy” as a descriptor further insinuates that there is something wrong with the autistic person, or perhaps there is something that parents could have done to change the diagnosis.

Finally, no where in the text or course commentary were the voices of people with autism represented. It is baffling that AU would feel that it is appropriate to talk about a group of people without including them in the conversation. I think that it is important to note that Indigenous voices have been represented in every Indigenous Studies course I have taken (which is wonderful!)—but why aren't the same provisions made for people with disabilities? Do they not also deserve the chance to speak for themselves?

I love going to AU—I would never have been able to get my degree without it. While I don't want to show my amazing school in a bad light, I also think it is incredibly important for institutions to be held accountable when they miss the mark. I would hate to think of a student who had little or no lived experience with autism, or perhaps a parent of a newly-diagnosed child, taking this course and leaving with an inaccurate, outdated, and frankly—negative perception of what autism is. Language is extremely important when spreading awareness and advocating for people with disabilities.

I am sure AU should be able to find a new textbook to be used for this course that presents a more balanced view of autism and incorporates the voices of people on the spectrum. If this is not possible, perhaps a more thorough course commentary that addresses these issues, or directing students to outside resources is in order. I believe AU has a responsibility to remedy this situation, not only for the students who are paying to receive an education, but for everyone in the autism community.

*Jessica is completing her Bachelor of Human Resources and Labour Relations degree while pursuing her passion for writing and drinking coffee.*

### Defunding the Police, Part IV The Lesson to be Learned

Alek Golijanin



Last week in the Voice Magazine, I finished summarizing my experience navigating various structures around policing and the different forms of resistance I came across after submitting a criminal complaint. It was quite difficult to always be on top of things, especially since I was learning on-the-go, but there is no easy time when it comes to doing hard things. However, I believe that by sharing the insights I gained from my experience, those key takeaways can be leveraged by others who also choose to chase after a better tomorrow.

To conclude this four-part series, I will go over the idea behind power and influence, from the perspective of Harvard Business Professor Julie Battilana, as well as my approach for navigating bureaucratic systems.

#### **The Story Behind Power and Influence**

This past summer I had the opportunity to participate in a professional development program created by Harvard Business School professor, Julie Battilana, centered around social innovation and change initiatives, with a focus on power and influence. My participation in the program had to do with a healthtech tool I helped co-create that focused on addressing systemic inequities in Canada's health care system and addressing the issue of children inheriting the outcome of not having a designated family doctor. To my surprise, the program takeaways stretched beyond my

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immediate reason for participating and they helped me expand the way I think about chasing results, and there are four specific takeaways I want to share with readers.

First, we need to dispel three misconceptions about power. Power is not inherently dirty, it is not something you always possess, and it is not only for those at the “top”. Additionally, it is important to understand the three sources of power: positional power in the form of a role, personal power in the form of an individual, and relational power in the form of relationships. The case study we examined to get a better grasp of these aspects was former US President, Lyndon Baine Johnson. I definitely recommend reading up on the original LBJ and the man that gave way to the “Presidential Rolex” moniker, but the most interesting thing about him had to be the infamous “Johnson Treatment”. However, be wary of applying the “Johnson Treatment” in 2023, unless you have that type of charm that only people who are from a place called Hope tend to have.

Second, one of the most important frameworks that we were introduced to was the idea of “power mapping”. Power mapping is a way to better understand power relationships and power dynamics. The cool thing about “power mapping” is that you can apply this strategy for everything, ranging from acquainting yourself with a new workplace to determining the best course of action for societal improvements. Simply put, you are figuring out who you can turn to and for what.

Third, it is important to understand people and the drivers behind their actions. These can be motivated by material resources, status, autonomy, affiliation, achievement, or morality, or any combination. Equally important was the concept of trust and just how big of a role trust played in getting things done. Trust is the currency that you deal in when it comes to working with other people. If you are ever seen as untrustworthy, nobody will want to work with you.

Lastly, it was important to understand the nature of power hierarchies and the relationships between power-advantaged groups and power-disadvantaged groups. Power hierarchies often alter the psychologies of both groups, which results in the upholding of the status quo instead of working toward the betterment of society. There was a strong emphasis placed on identifying ‘legitimizing’ myths and deconstructing them to get a clear picture of a situation. The term “legitimizing myths” referred to the importance of not taking longstanding assumptions at face value, which is often associated with unconscious biases.

One part of the program required us to discuss the best course of action for change initiatives and our entire cohort seemed to think raising awareness and bringing attention to issues was the best approach, except for me. When I shared my thoughts on change initiatives, I focused on three key concepts: the need to understand a challenge at its core, the need to understand the structures around the challenge, and the need to understand the limitations of current legislation related to that challenge. And it was only through a complete understanding of the conditions around a challenge that we could begin to build a change model that led towards lasting change.

To my surprise, my course inbox was inundated with notifications, all of them positive. One of the more memorable messages I received came from a participant who was living stateside and who thanked me for the way in which I broke down the importance of understanding the conditions around a challenge, and that this person was going to be sharing those ideas with others whenever they had the opportunity to do so. It felt cool knowing that I helped expand another person’s thinking when it came to addressing societal challenges, and I bookmarked the topic for a future article in *The Voice Magazine* – now here.

## Standing up for other people matters

Standing up for other people, often against the status quo of power and influence, matters because it is one of the only ways to break the vicious cycles that get imposed on other people. Although some people might find it unimaginable that they would let another person walk all over them, it is important to understand some of the reasons why others struggle to stand up for themselves. Reasons can include feelings of shame and embarrassment, fears of retaliation, worries of not being believed or being labeled a “snitch”, thoughts that it might not help or that it might make the situation worse, or a vulnerable sense of self. Whatever a person’s reason may be, nobody deserves to be victimized because they are vulnerable or incapable of standing up for themselves.

When it comes to standing up for other people, that act can range from physical interventions to intellectual outmaneuvering. The course demonstrated that immediate “standing up” tends to require more of a physical intervention, whereas long-term “standing up” requires intellectual outmanoeuvring because it attempts to address the more complicated parts of the challenge, but intellectual outmanoeuvring demands knowledge and experience. Additionally, standing up for other people can have quite the impact on their lives, but what happens when we fail to stand up for other people? Well, there are real-world implications to doing nothing. The most obvious is that the harming of communities often leads to outcomes like radicalization and violent exchanges. Whether it be racial extremism, religious extremism or any other form of extremism, people can only become radicalized under the right conditions. Those conditions revolve around uncertainty and chaos, and those are the conditions that many people who are unable to stand up for themselves find themselves in.

In Canada, policing is largely a provincial matter, but all of the structures around policing that are created to ensure accountability are provincial organizations including the Board, the Law Society of Ontario, the Ontario Civilian Policing Commission, and the Office of the Independent Police Review Directorate. When these organizations responded by saying my criminal complaint was outside of their jurisdiction or mandate, it seemed as if they were just copping out, and that is how a provincial matter became a federal matter and a matter of national security.

Most Canadians are unlikely to be aware about just how big of a problem organized crime is across Canada. The problem was so bad in the province of British Columbia (B.C.) that their Attorney General sent a letter to the federal public safety minister in 2019 that called for Us-style racketeering laws that were credited for dismantling organized crime groups in New York.

## AU-thentic Events Upcoming AU Related Events

### Library Chat

Tues, Feb 14, 10:30 am to 2:30 pm MST

Online

Hosted by AU Library

[www.athabascau.ca/library/index.html](http://www.athabascau.ca/library/index.html)

No pre-registration needed; access through chat box on home page

### Writing Forum:

#### Organization and time management strategies

Tue, Feb 14, 12:30 to 1:30 pm MST

Online via Microsoft Teams

Hosted by AU's Write Site

[www.athabascau.ca/write-site/writing-forum.html](http://www.athabascau.ca/write-site/writing-forum.html)

No pre-registration needed; access through above link

### MBA Application Webinar

Wed, Feb 15, 10:00 to 11:00 am MST

Online

Hosted by AU Faculty of Business

[news.athabascau.ca/events/online-mba-application-webinar-20230215/](http://news.athabascau.ca/events/online-mba-application-webinar-20230215/)

RSVP through above link

### Library Chat

Wed, Feb 15, 10:30 am to 2:30 pm MST

Online

Hosted by AU Library

[www.athabascau.ca/library/index.html](http://www.athabascau.ca/library/index.html)

No pre-registration needed; access through chat box on home page

### Developing Your Research series Session 5: Research Data Management

Wed, Feb 15, 12:00 to 1:00 pm MST

Online

Hosted by AU Library

[www.facebook.com/AthabascaUniversityLibrary/events](https://www.facebook.com/AthabascaUniversityLibrary/events)

Register through above link

### BComm / CPA Webinar

Wed, Feb 15, 12:00 to 1:00 pm MST

Online

Hosted by AU Faculty of Business

[news.athabascau.ca/events/bcomm-cpa-webinar-20230215/](https://news.athabascau.ca/events/bcomm-cpa-webinar-20230215/)

RSVP through above link

### An Introduction to Operation Black Vote Canada

Wed, Feb 15, 5:00 to 6:00 pm MST

Online via Zoom

Hosted by AUSU

[www.ausu.org/event/an-introduction-to-operation-black-vote-canada/](https://www.ausu.org/event/an-introduction-to-operation-black-vote-canada/)

RSVP through above link

### Library Chat

Thur, Feb 16, 10:30 am to 2:30 pm MST

Online

Hosted by AU Library

[www.athabascau.ca/library/index.html](https://www.athabascau.ca/library/index.html)

No pre-registration needed; access through chat box on home page

*All events are free unless otherwise noted.*

Although the issue of organized crime has been receiving more attention over the past few years, B.C.'s Gaming and Policy Enforcement Branch was raising the issue of organized crime years earlier, it resulted in a senior director being fired without cause and for doing his job. However, an independent gaming report put together for the Attorney General of B.C. in 2018 found that the fired director was correct in his positions and that the silence shown from the politicians and bureaucrats who ran the B.C Lottery Corporation and the ministry had real-life consequences.

Although B.C. is full of wild stories, like when the RCMP anti-illegal gaming unit (IIGET) was defunded and disbanded after a report had argued that IIGET should be able to target legal casinos instead of just illegal ones after "a businessman connected to Asian organized crime" was approved by a B.C. government employee to buy a part of a B.C. Lottery Corporation casino. No province is immune to organized crime seeping into its private sectors and public sectors. In Ontario, there was a member of parliament who was investigated by the RCMP for significant gambling, for amounts much higher than he was earning, and he eventually resigned, but identifying and going after leads has been a challenge for policing agencies across Canada. The natural question this leads to is why are policing agencies being prevented from pursuing leads related to organized crime and matters that seem to implicate individuals in positions of consequence, and at the expense of underprivileged groups?

### Navigating bureaucracies

Today's challenge with some institutions and regulatory

bodies is that they have fallen victim to individuals who always intended to leverage them for their own self-interest, and it has resulted in many institutions and regulatory bodies being viewed as less trustworthy. A lot of the challenges stem from these structures having aspects to them that are solely rooted in 'assumptions', and a refusal to reevaluate these 'assumptions'.

For individuals who are selected to serve as the face of an institution or regulatory body and who are entrusted with those powers, they will often fight tooth and nail to avoid having certain 'assumptions' examined more carefully. These "gatekeepers" do this because any examination of their 'assumptions' could expose them for what they are, preferential policies, causing the assumption to implode, and subsequently those with "skin in the game" to potentially fall from a very high standing to a very low standing. Once you start digging around and questioning the "gatekeepers" and what they represent, they start playing politics, and that is what makes navigating bureaucracies so difficult.

My approach to navigating bureaucracies is always rooted in respect, I never allow anything to become personal, and I always stick to the facts. I do this because I expect to come across individuals who will be passive aggressive, who will gaslight, and much more. These types of

actions are not incidental, and they are often done in an attempt to discredit a person. Although it may feel good to respond in a troll-like manner or to be disrespectful, you do not want to match their energy since the end goal is what really matters.

To succeed requires you to be heard, but there are people out there who will try to silence your voice by getting you to act out of character. Once you act out of character it is over; people are less likely to hear your message, and will focus on your actions instead. All of this brings us to the reason why most people are infatuated with individuals that have the ability to keep their cool and stay composed, because it is hard, but it is also a skill that everyone can master, over time and with discipline.

### Finding Inspiration

This series on “defunding the police” was inspired after seeing an Ottawa defence lawyer’s tweet criticizing the eligibility requirement that prohibited defence lawyers from sitting on a police services boards. Had it not been for my interaction with the Ottawa Police Services Board (the Board), I would not have been able to realize the significance of that tweet, and I do believe that if a defence lawyer had been sitting on the Board instead of appointees who had no background in policing, that my complaint would have been handled much differently.

What my experience shows is that, sometimes, doing things right guarantees nothing, and the only way to address systemic barriers is through legislative changes. Changing the funding strategy of the police is unlikely to yield significant benefits in stopping poor police behaviour so long as the systems that conduct oversight are not themselves held to account.

I hope this gives a better understanding as to what it really takes to address the very grievances that gave way to the “defund the police” slogan. Although there may be countless ways to approach societal challenges that are holding us back from the society that everyone deserves, if the end goal is lasting change, then we really need to dig deep. Going after systemic barriers is never easy and resistance is to be expected at every turn, but if you persist, and do it the right way, you will get results.

*Alek Golijanin is an AU alum who considers himself a gentleman first, a scholar second, and a combat sports fanatic third. In that order.*



## Unearthing classic articles from previous issues of The Voice Magazine—Valentine’s Edition!

With Valentine's Day coming up next Tuesday, we delved into the archives to find articles that touched on the essentials: love and chocolate.

**Chocolate for happy hearts.** Katie D'Souza outlines the health benefits of chocolate. "In addition to flavonoids, cacao also contains serotonin, a neurotransmitter that's important in maintaining a positive mood; perhaps that's why chocolate is often seen as an aphrodisiac." [Health Matters –](#)

[Chocophile](#), February 10, 2012.

**Romancing the card.** Christine M Frey provides tips on writing romantic literature and love letters. "When you're writing a love letter, always keep in mind that your audience is someone you know and love. You're writing to show that person how much he or she means to you." [The Writer's Toolbox – Dear Lover](#), February 14, 2014.

**[blue rare]**  
**Alive in the Realm of the Senses**

**Oliver Moorcraft-Sykes**



Sight, hearing, taste, touch, and smell: they are our only means of bearing witness to and possibly gaining some understanding of the surprising pageantry of the weird world we find ourselves plunged into. This sensory input provides us with the raw ingredients which time distills, and which our mind, that arcane mixologist, stirs and crafts into complex cocktails of dreams, memories, imagination, and emotions. A flash of lightning; a lullaby; a creaking floorboard; the smell of a wet dog; a burst of laughter from an adjacent room, distilled over time; might form a sonnet, a dance, a dreamscape, or a song.

A hedonist through and through, I am continually enthralled by the immeasurable pleasures of the senses. The taste of dark chocolate or ice-cold water from a mountain stream. The smell of roasting coffee, fairground popcorn, woodsmoke, ocean brine, summer rain, freshly dug truffles. The sounds of distant trains and steel guitars. The warmth of a touch, the feeling of early summer sunshine on an upturned face. If these things aren't magic, they are close enough.

And for me, few things compare to the primal enchantment that is cast by light. I have a dodgy memory for names, faces, and dates, but an eerily good one for specific qualities of luminescence. The neon glow of Chinatown in the rain; the luminous silvered lamp of a full winter moon; gold and blue flames dancing along crackling logs in a ski lodge in the Rockies. The bright pictures are projected like magic lantern slides on the inside of my head.

My earliest memories of storytelling involve being taught to use a table lamp to cast shadow puppets - a rabbit, a wolf, a bird - bringing rudimentary fairy-tales to life upon the walls of my childhood bedroom. Despite a Catholic mother, the closest I have come to being profoundly moved by any of the trappings of Christianity are recollections of sunlight pouring through stained glass windows, the glimmer of multicolored lights adorning a Christmas tree, the radiance of hundreds of candles burning in an Italian cathedral. If there is a holy ghost, I believe she flits about from place to place as both a particle and a wave.

I think we can agree that it's often enough a challenging and mystifying existence. Looking for a meaningful life, time and again we are let down by intellectual abstractions. At best the twists and turns of our overthinking, over analyzing minds are a distraction from whatever joys are to be found. At worst, our convoluted brains can become a bewildering labyrinth: its twisting passages leading us far away from the real world, through dark chambers filled with monsters.

Philosophies and perspectives come and go. Faith ignites and burns itself out. It's the profound, visceral pleasures of sensory experience, though, that will heal us if we let them. It's they that have me desiring to live, have me wanting to keep coming back for more. Waking up each day, if only to see, hear, smell, taste, and feel what new wonders will be revealed next.



## I Love Criticism

**Marie Well**



I don't love giving criticism. In fact, I avoid doling it out altogether. That's because I love all people and refuse to see their flaws. But I'm coming to love receiving it. When I receive criticism, I reflect deeply on it. Sometimes I'm ready for the criticism to trigger change; other times, I'm not. But I've developed a model to effectively address criticism, which I will share with you if you are interested. All in all, I love criticism.

**Criticism nurtures my sense of responsibility.** For example, I read that a military school allows first-year students to say only one of three things to their commander: "Yes, Sir!" "No, Sir!" "No excuses, Sir!" These choices of words are powerful. When criticized, the no-excuses point of view helps me take full responsibility when things go wrong. That's because I can influence finding a solution.

**Criticism helps me get the hard job done.** It ensures I take corrective measures to get the job completed. Even when the obstacles seem insurmountable, I'm more likely to achieve the impossible if I take on a "No excuses, Sir!" approach.

**Embracing criticism prevents victimhood.** Loving criticism ensures I'm not a victim, casting blame and making excuses. Instead, it helps me focus on my own growth and not the flaws of others. After all, we can't change others, but we can change ourselves.

**Criticism helps me to stay neutral.** No matter what we do in life, we get knocked back and roughed up sometimes. The joy is in taking these experiences with love and equanimity. It's where I discipline myself to not get attached to the praise or criticism but instead accept it with joy. That way, I stay centered. In martial arts, the key is to not get swept away by the wins or losses but to remain neutral. The ideal place of neutrality is one of unconditional love, I believe.

**Enjoying criticism helps me to love the criticizer.** And love for all souls is the state of mind I must always maintain. I especially love my criticizers, as they help me to address areas for growth. After all, everyone has a right to their opinions. Therefore, it's essential for me to respect and appreciate everyone's points of view, even if they conflict with my own. That's what makes life rich: the splendid uniqueness of every soul, as every life is precious.

**Here is a system to ensure growth from criticism.** This model is partly based on a logic course. First, write down the criticism. For instance, one that has me reflecting is, "I'm materialistic." Next, reverse the criticism: "I'm not materialistic." Then, if it doesn't quite appeal to me, I revise it to something that can help me grow. For instance, I could alter it to "I seek a high income to give most of what I earn to others." And then, I'll do what it takes to make the change: read books on philanthropy, take courses on philanthropy, search YouTube, and likewise. Perhaps not today, but at the right time. At the very least, it's now in my consciousness as a goal.

But, with all criticism, a person is sometimes not ready to make change. Or the flip side has no appeal. If it is genuinely a flaw, a catastrophic event may eventually arise that forces us to address it. But until then, embracing criticism through early self-examination is a way to bypass the inevitability of a major roadblock.

## Problems with Being a People Pleaser And Three Tips to Circumvent it

Xine Wang



I'm guilty of being a people pleaser. I spend a lot of time trying to please others. Disappointing others was almost a crime in my books when I was younger.

It's a term used to refer to those with a strong urge to ensure satisfaction of people around them. This might mean going out of their way to make sure people are happy with your performance. For example, this might mean being agreeable to errands that one might not have time for. Or it might mean when confronted with an upset classmate, colleague, professor, or client, we go to extreme lengths to make sure they like us. For myself, I find it hard to say no. For example, if my boss asked me to run errands that mean putting in extra hours or dedicating a weekend to a project at the cost of my mental health, in the past I was very prone to saying yes. Sometimes, I would agree to do things when I knew it wasn't in my capacity. I somehow always believed I would

figure it out.

This is different from acts of kindness, generosity, and selflessness. It's about not setting good boundaries for yourself and, in turn, either burning ourselves out trying to meet others' expectations or not being able to meet those expectations in the end anyway.

While most people want to feel loved and valued in close relationships, constantly striving to ensure others' happiness can be detrimental to our mental and physical health. It means that we're giving money, time, or energy to a cause. When it's not a cause that we value but one that others value, our motives are not aligned. Saying yes to multiple extra projects at work or saying yes to caring for family members that don't appreciate or value what we do takes a toll on the person.

But how do we change this natural and seemingly harmless lifestyle?

### **Say No to Lack of Boundaries:**

Boundaries are essential to healthy connections. It's a sign of respecting ourselves and others. When we voice our opinions to loved ones, family, friends, colleagues, and other relationships in our lives, it helps protect our own mental health. When boundaries are broken, it means part of our own values are compromised. Whenever a boundary is broken, make sure that it is clearly communicated. For example, if it's a boss that is asking you to shoulder extra projects say "To be frank I am having a difficult time with the existing projects. Would we be able to adjust some deadlines?" People don't realize that, often, pushbacks help people around us realize that a boundary is crossed. Most healthy relationships will also support you in finishing the task at hand.

### **Reflect on What is Important to Us:**

Taking the time to reflect on what causes we want to give our time and energy to is important. This means that we can focus on goals first before saying yes to others. It means that most of the hours of the day is spent working on ourselves.

## Practice Saying No:

For every “yes” we freely give out to others, we’re saying no to ourselves. Others around us will adapt to our “no”s and, over time, we will become better at saying no many times a day. Practicing saying “no” to others will allow us to be more comfortable saying it in the future.

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



## Fly on the Wall Taking Enlightenment to the Outhouse

Jason Sullivan



### What Lies Beneath

Wisdom is easily dispensed and sometimes bitterly believed. No matter our education level, others may disagree vehemently with our conclusions on many a topic. For Michel Foucault, an attitude of enlightenment requires us to adopt a stance of bravery in the face of external opposition and internal beliefs. These latter may have worn themselves so deeply into our being that they now appear as self-evident. Certainty academia requires critical thinking.

Foucault decided that enlightened reasoning is when one can “dare to know” by utilizing enlightenment as an epistemic attitude, a *way* of knowing rather than a summation of our acquired knowledge (online).

Enlightenment, for Foucault, is an action verb rather than a passive noun.

Part of this daring is simply being open-minded; remember, beliefs and facts only hurt people who are uncomfortable with themselves. For instance, a brick-and-mortar sociology of crime course I attended was flummoxed when key urban myths about gun ownership were muddled and debunked by the textbook. An example in present day is how, instead of guns being more of a risk to their owners, gun possession was found to deter perhaps 40% of possible break-ins. This, according to a study of criminals in custody: “40 percent of them had decided not to commit a crime because they ‘knew or believed that the victim was carrying a gun.’” (online). Packin’ heat, bro. A tough pill to swallow, though, for students wedded to pacific beliefs about the dangers of an Americanization of self-defence. Why not just put up a security camera, an enlightened interlocutor asked? Facts are about adding knowledge; nothing is absolute in society, all is flux. Being brave in the face of this flow is key to what Foucault described as an enlightened life stance.

Students daily find themselves in a quandary where what the textbook states does not match their lived reality. For instance, in sociology, a lot of truths about race and gender are dispensed that may not jive with one’s hillbilly, *er*, rural realm. Years ago, I cheerfully described some garden variety feminism at my fire pit. Pallets were piled nine high, the brews were a-flowin’ and empties piling up, and class was (so to speak) in session. I described Simone de Beauvoir’s *The Second Sex* concept that under patriarchy women become passive, consumable, objects of subjective masculine desire while men, no matter how filthy or uneducated or underwhlemingly-hung they were (this last bit received guffaws from the peanut gallery), feel empowered to dominate in their roles. Ol’ Simone didn’t go over so well with the attending ladies at this redneck

gathering; these huntin' and fishin' dames felt plenty empowered *precisely* because they were obsessed over and generally desired by the menfolk. They wanted to be adored, by men, and that adoration gave them power to choose among assorted life options. Why be chaste when you can be chased? And sometimes, as one put it, "to just be ravaged" was just what they wanted. Laws of the jungle where everybody wins, it seems.

Cultural studies hit home in moments of real discourse with real people, far removed from the predictable confines of a college classroom. What seems enlightened within brick-and-mortar settings, like de Beauvoir's feminist view on reality, can appear positively preposterous when we apply our reasoning out in the field (no pun intended). Enlightenment is about accepting opposition rather than being stubborn, being brave enough to accept differences and to tolerate notions we're uncomfortable with. Do we want the facts, or do we want to be politically correct? Theory meets truth (sic) when we apply it personally.

In fact, who doesn't want to be looked at and maybe even, just sometimes of course, treated exclusively as an object of desire? Clearly, this business of favouring active subjects versus receptive objects is more complex than one theory can account for. Foucault noted that this intersection of power and privilege and desire is something that enlightenment can only usefully dissect when it takes into account a divergence of realities each inhabiting particular (rather than universal) individual sensibilities and historical epochs. "For the attitude of modernity, the high value of the present is indissociable from a desperate eagerness to imagine it, to imagine it otherwise than it is, and to transform it not by destroying it but by grasping it in what it is. Baudelairean modernity is an exercise in which extreme attention to what is real is confronted with the practice of a liberty that simultaneously respects this reality and violates it" (online). Liberty and enlightenment appear precisely within ambivalence, not as an outgrowth of final answer certainty.

Education adds to our selves and our social reality but it also teaches us to respect that all beliefs are valid because society is myriad in form. Gathering data and drawing conclusions in the social sciences doesn't preclude multiple points of view, it simply allows us to make statements of probability. Provisional truth requires bravery because it incites opposition; you think but you don't know for sure, someone can always say. And plus, people don't much like to be pigeonholed.

But as we accrete evidence, we do learn things that can, personally and in practice, provide opportunities for us to be truly enlightened. On the other hand, to share our learning must include an acceptance of oppositions. As soon as we march into a social setting and announce that we've some reforms of mind and practice that we'd like to have adopted by others, as soon as possible given these reforms (to us) moral necessity, we've already taken our enlightenment to the proverbial outhouse in the eyes of others. Like or lump it, enlightenment (as Foucault implies) is problematic precisely because it's changeable. Alteration and change is core to enlightenment's ethic and it takes bravery to accept that we won't know for certain things that we'd previously held for keeps. And that, ladies and gentlemen, is why our diploma is so much more than just a sheet of paper.

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*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.*

## Homemade is Better Enchiladas

**Chef Corey**



My wife came across a unique enchilada recipe. It was unusual because the chicken was cooked in the sauce and then shredded. I thought it was an exciting concept, so I looked at it, then checked out a few other recipes and put together a recipe that we all enjoyed immensely.

We only seem to have fajitas and tacos in our house; thus, it was a nice change of pace to get into something different for dinner. This recipe didn't require a lot of unique ingredients like my mole recipe, and I feel like I was able to capture the idea of a great enchilada that you'd find in a local Mexican restaurant.

As I write this recipe, I'd had a hard night with insomnia the night before. So, this week I'm going to keep it short and sweet (no pun

intended). I hope you make this and enjoy it.

### Enchiladas

#### Ingredients:

1.5 lbs chicken breasts  
 1 tbsp vegetable oil  
 1 onion, diced  
 2 cloves of garlic, minced  
 1 green bell pepper  
 2 cans of crushed tomato sauce  
 2 tsp Chili powder  
 1.5 tsp smoked paprika  
 1 tsp cumin  
 1/2 tsp cayenne pepper (optional)  
 2 bay leaves  
 1 can of black beans  
 3-4 sliced pickled jalapeños  
 10 - 12 flour or corn tortillas  
 1/2 cup of sour cream  
 2 cups of shredded cheddar cheese  
 Salt and pepper to taste

#### Directions:

- 1) Preheat your oven to 350F.
- 2) Grab a Dutch oven or large pot and turn your burner onto high.
- 3) Season the chicken breasts with salt and pepper.
- 4) Brown the breasts a few at a time so you do not crowd the pot.
- 5) Once the chicken is browned, set it aside.
- 6) Add the vegetable oil, onion, garlic, and bell pepper to the pot.
- 7) Stir to heat through until the onion starts to turn translucent.





8) Add the tomato sauce, chili powder, paprika, cumin, cayenne pepper and bay leaves.

9) Stir until the sauce begins to boil. Add the chicken and simmer for 10 to 15 minutes on low.

10) Remove the chicken and let it rest for five minutes.

11) Remove the bay leaves and add the black beans and pickled jalapenos.

12) Shred the chicken with a fork and set it aside in a bowl.

13) Grab a 9'x9' dish or pan and put enough sauce in the bottom to cover it.

14) Grab a tortilla and add the shredded chicken, 1 TBSP of sauce and some cheese; roll the tortilla and place it in the dish.

15) Repeat this step with the rest of the tortillas or until the dish is full.

16) Add the sauce to the top of the dish, top with more cheese and bake for 15 minutes or until the cheese is melted and bubbling.

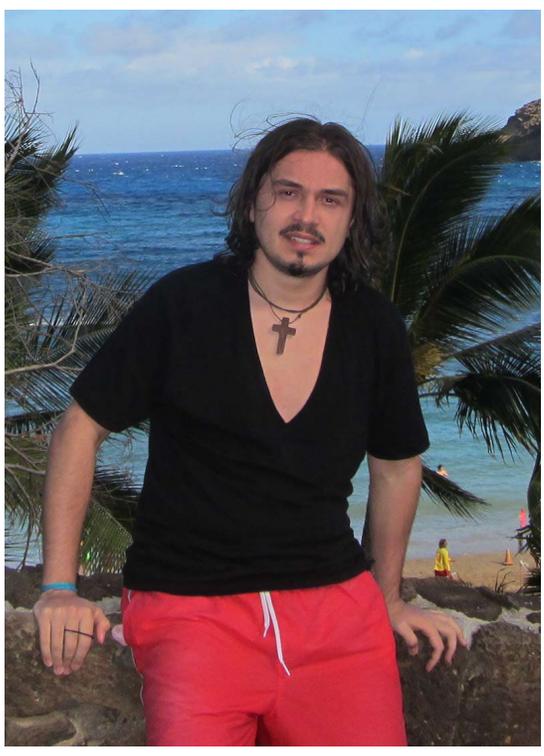
17) Remove from the oven and allow the dish to rest for five minutes, then serve with sour cream and guacamole if you like.

18) Enjoy!

*Corey Wren is a student at AU's school of business management and a stay-at-home-parent of three who graduated from NAIT's culinary arts program in 2007.*



## A Valentine’s Day Special – The Gospels of a Gentleman



Usually, I stick to writing about sciencey things or my “Philadelphia lawyer” moments so that other people can leverage my experiences for better outcomes. However, this is a special article written for my fellow gentlemen, on how to best position oneself to experience success on the “international day of luvín”, also known as Valentine’s Day. I will do this by sharing my secrets, mastered a lifetime ago, when I use to look like the masked avenger of early California, Senor Zorro.

Many summers ago, back when I attempted to find myself a young Catharine Zeta Jones, I grew out my hair like a young Antonio Banderas and combined it with a swashbuckler facial hairstyle, but I realized I needed more. So, I went out and bought all of Antonio Banderas’ colognes. I was convinced that my “flow” combined with Banderas’ scents would lead me to having an epic outcome similar to what was seen in the 1998 film *The Mask of Zorro*, where Zorro, played by Antonio Banderas, is ambushed by Elena, played by Catherine Zeta Jones, and challenged to a sword fight, which turns out to be more of a “strip duel”.

Just imagine being caught up in that type of a bad romance. Toxic relationships are the best, right?



Señor Alejandro, the ladies’ man, with Zorro's hair and Banderas' cologne.

It is important to note that looking and smelling like Zorro will only get a gentleman so far, and the real success comes from listening like Zorro—that is if they want to be successful on the “international day of luvín”. The Zorro scent amplifies one’s pheromones, which naturally

attracts the gals, so when the gals get to talking, a gentleman must let the conversation go the way of a confessional, listening and responding with probing questions, like Zorro did with Elena. During the “confessional session”, the choice words some gals may end up using may catch some gentlemen off-guard, but it is important to play it cool.

Although Zorro was known to be quite the dancer, these days a gentleman is better off moving like Jagger than like Zorro. For Valentine’s Day, a gentleman is best off trying to mimic the swag seen in the opening scene of the 1977 movie *Saturday Night Fever*, where Tony Manero, played by John Travolta, swings his can of paint while walking through downtown New York. By continuing to build one’s confidence, it is possible to max it out and to reach Heart Break Kid status. But before a gentleman can reach those heights, it may be necessary to polish up one’s dancing skills, and that can be done by rewatching the 1987 movie *Dirty Dancing*, where Johnny Castle, played by Patrick Swayze, has the gals falling for him, including Babe Houseman, played by Jennifer Grey. It is a sure-fire way to experience success, and soon, you may have other people referring to you as a real-life Speedy Gonzales.

### **A Bleu Nuit Playlist**

A true gentleman always has a repertoire of songs that they can fall back on for any situation, but some readers are still likely to be a gentleman-in-training, so I will share my playlist, le bleu nuit. These are songs that I listen to any chance I get, from getting amped for a gym workout to rendezvousing with the gals. Time to open Spotify and to create a new playlist.

The first three songs are remakes with a touch of Latin sensuality to them, and they are Hotel Beunavida’s salsa remake of Train’s “Hey Soul Sister”, Marco Puna’s bachata remake of Charlie Puth’s “Marvin Gaye”, and Rhythms Del Mundo’s bolero remake of Maroon 5’s “She Will Be Loved”. After that, we transition to some disco classics with Cindi Lauper’s “Girls Just Want to Have Fun”, Sister Sledge’s “He’s the Greatest Dancer”, Donna Summer’s “Hot Stuff”, and Point Sisters’ “I’m so Excited”. The next series of songs is influenced by oldies and it starts with a doo-wop classic by The Velvets’ “Tonight”, followed by Clyde McPhatter’s “Lover Please”, The Drifters’ “Save The Last Dance For Me”, Johnny Tillotson’s “Send Me The Pillow You Dream On”, Bobby Darin’s “Dream Lover”, Pete Shrayder’s “Where’s The Girl For Me”, and Bobby Rydell’s “Sway”, and The Jumping Jewels’ “Wheels”. However, the soul of le bleu nuit is found in the final stretch with the following rock and roll classics, Roy Orbison’s “Pretty Woman”, Elvis Presley’s remake of The Gladiolas’ “Little Darlin’”, and my personal favorite, Elvis Presley’s remake of Al Hibbler’s “Unchained Melody”. After a night of listening to these classics, a gentleman should still be able to overcome the impediment of not having a magic touch, the kind of magic touch that someone like Fonzi from Happy Days would have had.

Now, all these songs are great, but there is only one Elvis, and he was the man. So much so that even Fonzi from Happy Days had to acknowledge his greatness. One thing that does not add up about Elvis is how he managed to avoid getting mononucleosis, especially after seeing the King of Rock in action, like when he sang “Love Me Tender” to a packed house in 1970.

### **Converting “Top G’s” into Gentlemen because Gangsta’s Paradise is not a real place**

In the process of writing this insightful piece, I happened to come across a few “Top G’s”, aka “top gangstas”, at least according to them, at the budget-friendly gym where I work out. They were asking me about my “rizz”. At first, I thought the word “rizz” had something to do with Snoop Dogg, like “fo’ shizz-le my nizz-le”, but it turned out that it was short for charisma and being popular with the gals. I instantly felt less cool upon learning that it had nothing to do with Snoop Dogg, but it was also at that moment that I realized just how many lads had been sold wolf tickets

to gangsta's paradise, so I felt obligated to stage an intervention and preach to them the gospels of a gentleman.

For starters, the "G" for gangsta, had to go. When I asked for a definition of a "G" or gangsta, everyone had a different definition, and their definitions were the opposite of how major English dictionaries defined the word. It was important to enlighten them and make it clear that there was nothing positive about being a "G" and that almost no one in Ottawa had a mean streak long enough to even be considered a gangsta. If you think about it, it makes sense since we are living in the most prosperous time in human history, in a country full of opportunities.

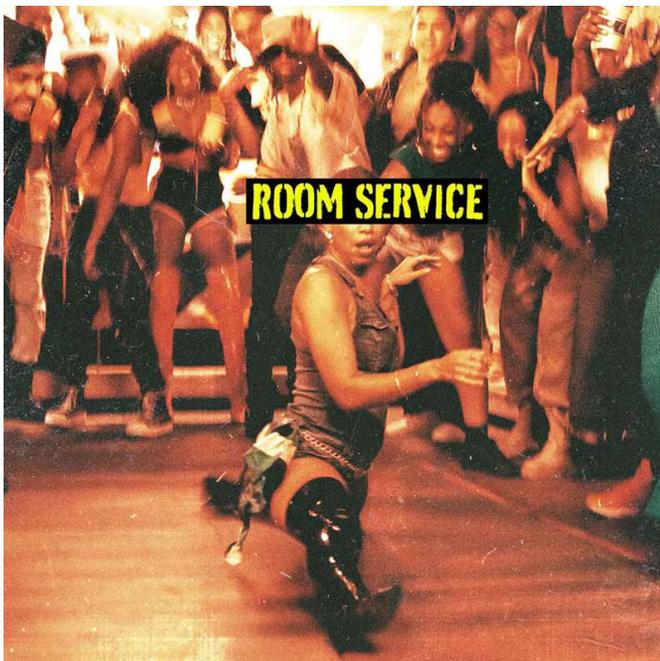
What truly helped make this a successful intervention was accounting for the frequency that American popular culture influences Canadian popular culture, so the "Top G's" were prescribed short talks by Khamzat Chimaev and Khabib Nurmagomedov have said about gangstas, and that gangstas lack familiarity with the war experience. Seriously, gangstas are not anywhere close to being at the top of the food chain, like they often pretend to be, and a lot of people eat gangstas for breakfast and digest them by dinner, which is precisely why gangstas have to stick together like a school of little fish in a big ocean.

My intervention seemed to be working, the lads had decided to drop their "Top G" monikers. They were beginning to understand that by trying to be a "G", it was actually repelling the gals and it was creating a vicious cycle, which is why so many "Top G's" rage internally about not getting any gals, and that was the real reason why "gangstas" always looked so angry—not because they wanted to intimidate people. And just like that, the lads had successfully transitioned from "G's" to "Gents"

And really, there you have it. That is all it takes to experience success on the "international day of luvn", also known as Valentine's Day. So, be in touch with your true self, go after what you like, but for Cupid's sake, do not go around trying to be a gangsta.

## Music Review—Room Service

Jessica Young



**Single:** Room Service

**Artist:** Haviah Mighty

Canadian rapper, singer, DJ, and producer, Haviah Mighty, has released a new single titled "Room Service". The single is available for streaming anywhere you get your music.

Haviah Mighty is from Brampton (apart of the GTA), which is actually where I was born and spent the first few years of my life. Small world! In 2019 Haviah released her debut album, *13<sup>th</sup> Floor*, which earned her the title of the first black woman to win the Polaris Music Prize for "Best Canadian Album of the Year." Haviah went on to win a JUNO award for her 2021 mixtape, *Stock Exchange*. With a musical style that incorporates "profound introspection" and socio-political critique, Haviah continues to push to carve out spaces that defy

gendered expectations for women in hip-hop. Now that's an impressive resume!

Of her new single, Haviah says, *"This song reflects on the many phases of denial that I experienced going through a recent breakup. My self-worth was shattered, I convinced myself that things weren't as bad as they seemed, and that it wasn't my fault. I was fully aware that this person had already let me go, by their mannerisms, the shifts in attitude, and the conversations we had. I knew their heart wasn't in it anymore.*

*But it wasn't official. Because of that, I had this glimmer of hope - as if the energy wasn't loud enough, and as if I didn't know what the outcome would be. For me, this song grew into an anthem of lust, wonderment, desire and delusion. The sultry lead melodies pull you in as I plead for my lover to wait for me. Just hold on. The bouncy synths playfully suck you into a vortex of heavy-hitting 808s and afro-style grooves that remind you that I'm not just a rapper - but also a singer, Jamaican, and Toronto-born."*

"Room Service" is a tender, R&B- and Afrobeat-influenced track. I think the switch-up from her usual rap/hip-hop sound makes the song interesting and adds an element of depth—as if the person she is singing about is so important to her she had to change the style of music to align with her feelings. The only other track of Haviah's that sounds similar (at least that I have heard) is "Wishy Washy" from the album *13<sup>th</sup> Floor*. Her usual sound reminds me of artists like Cardi B or Megan Thee Stallion, while "Room Service" reminds me more of SZA.

Overall, I really enjoyed "Room Service." It's honest, heartfelt, and relatable, while still being great to dance to. I absolutely love the inclusion of Haviah's culture with the Afrobeat influences. I will mention that this song is definitely NSFW—it is heavily sexual and uses multiple swear words (including the "N" word)—so be mindful of who you listen around.

Check out Haviah Mighty on [TikTok](#).

## Student Sizzle — AU's Hot Social Media Topics

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



### AthaU Facebook Group

**Fallout.** Several threads convey reactions, thoughts, and opinions on the recent AU president switcheroo.

### Discord

**Collecting voices.** In the #general channel, a student shares a link to a petition opposing direct political interference in the affairs of AU.

### reddit

**Extra work for degrees.** A student working on what they thought was their final course discovers that DegreeWorks doesn't agree; replies suggest that glitches in the DegreeWorks report do happen and recommend following up with AU to sort it out.

### Youtube

**Meet the new boss.** AU posts a four-minute video announcing [Dr. Alex Clark appointed president of Athabasca University](#).

## Beyond Literary Landscapes Modernist Literature

Natalia Iwanek



From my early beginnings as a young introvert, the public library has always been a bit of a refuge. Years later, not much has changed, albeit with an additional affinity for endless hours spent scouring second-hand bookstores to add to my ever-growing “to-read” pile.

From one bookworm to another, this column will be underscoring and outlining various literary genres, authors, and recent reads, and can serve as an introduction for those unfamiliar with these works, as a refresher for long-time aficionados, and maybe as an inspiration for readers to share their own suggested topics. Do you have a topic that you would like covered in this column? Feel free to [contact me](#) for an interview and a feature in an upcoming column.

### Who

The Modernist period in art, dance, and literature took place from the late 19 to the mid-20 centuries. The period was characterized by “a growing alienation incompatible with Victorian morality,

optimism, and convention.”

Features of Modernist writing includes experimentation, such as stream-of-consciousness and non-linear narratives; individualism; free verse; varied perspectives; and the use of a great deal of literary devices.

Examples of Modernist writers include T.S. Eliot, James Joyce, Zora Neale Hurston, Virginia Woolf, and F. Scott Fitzgerald.

For further reading, consider Ernest Hemingway, E.E. Cummings, and Ezra Pound.

### What

Some examples of Modernist Literature include *The Waste Land* by T.S. Eliot, *Ulysses* by James Joyce, *Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston, *To the Lighthouse* by Virginia Woolf, and *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald.

### Where

These novels are set throughout the United States and well as Great Britain.

### When

These works take place during the 19th, and 20th-centuries.

### Why

These novels may attract AU students who enjoy experimental literary styles, such as stream-of-consciousness and multiple perspectives, and would like to learn more about where these particular styles originated. The works may also be of interest for learners who would like to know more about the general morale following the first world war, and the subsequent themes and topics that developed in literature. Some examples include disillusionment, loss, as well as revolutionary experimentation.

## How

AU's wide range of diverse courses make it easy to study this topic in depth. Courses related to Modernist Literature are available in a variety of disciplines, including one's that may fit into your Degree Works. (Always check with an AU counsellor to see if these particular courses fulfill your personal graduation requirements!)

AU students interested in learning more about this topic may enroll in ENGL 395: The Nineteenth-Century English Novel, a six credit, senior-level course, which "introduces the student to some of the major English novels of the nineteenth century."

Students may also consider ENGL 393: The Early Twentieth-Century English Novel, a three-credit, senior-level course, which "focuses on the first four decades of the twentieth-century British novel, its history and development, its rich variety of forms and techniques, and the ideas and events that influenced it."

In addition, ENGL 344: American Literature I, a three-credit, senior-level course, which "introduces students to American literature, its history and development" and ENGL 345: American Literature II, a three-credit, senior-level course, which "continues the exploration of the history and development of American literature and its rich variety of forms and techniques," may also be appealing. (Note that for all the above-mentioned courses, several prerequisites are required, including ENGL 211: Prose Forms and ENGL 212: Poetry and Plays or a first year English course.) Happy reading!

*Natalia Iwanek (she/they) is currently completing her Bachelor of Arts in English with a minor in Political Science at Athabasca University.*

## Ideas on How to be Happy

### Marie Well



I'm learning to be a critical thinker. I'd like to show you how to apply critical thinking to achieving an AU degree. You may want an undergraduate or graduate degree but feel apprehensive about pursuing one. If so, here is a process for critical thinking you may benefit from applying:

First, you take that goal—finishing a university degree—and write out all the obstacles it yields. Here is a potential list of barriers to the pursuit of an undergraduate or graduate degree:

- I don't have the time available for my loved ones.
- I must work to finance the lifestyle I desire.
- I won't be healthy on a poor diet.
- I might have anxiety attacks that thwart my goal.
- I won't have the office supplies I need to do a good job.
- I've lost the excellent study habits I once had.

---

So, the next step is to invert those goals into their opposites. So, this is what they now look like for getting a graduate or undergraduate degree:

- I have the time available for my loved ones.
- I finance most of the lifestyle I desire on a student income.
- I am healthy on a lower income.
- I know techniques to keep anxiety at bay.
- I have all the office supplies I need.
- I have more study skills now than ever.

So, now that we have these opposite objections, we can begin to solve them. So, the basic idea is that you now have reverse objections. And the goal is to live up to them.

To explain, let's take the first one: How might you have all the office supplies you need? You can gradually acquire all the essential office supplies you need before enrolling. As another example, how might you learn techniques to keep anxiety at bay? You could take part-time instead of full-time studies for the degree program. And, yet another example, how might you fund the lifestyle you desire but on a lower income? You could have an inexpensive home gym, a public library card, and a meditation routine. Regardless of your preference, when you take the above steps to problem-solving, you can readily see that your dreams are realizable.

So, what if you had a goal of earning a million a year, although you are presently on low-income support? Have you ever told someone you dreamed of making six figures, and they quipped back, "Why not a million?" With that in mind, here are three obstacles to the million a year salary goal.

- I need to gain the skills for leadership roles in big companies.
- I have disabilities that could hold me back.
- I only do well in remote work.
- I don't want to give up exercise to perform at my peak at work.
- I don't know what jobs will take me to that goal.

The list goes on. So, here are the opposites of the above:

- I have a solid knowledge of the skills needed for leadership roles in big companies.
- My disabilities benefit my income-earning potential.
- I do well in remote and office work.
- I exercise while I work, which helps me perform at my peak.
- I know what jobs will take me to million dollar goal.

Then, take each one and find ways to realize them. For instance, you can exercise at work by commuting on a bicycle or cycling under your desk.

So, that's the start of a way to solve problems. No problem can hold you back from trying to realize your dreams. Honestly, I believe your potential has no upper limit. And infinite opportunities are everywhere.

## Cat Tails

*Dear Barb:*

*I think I may have read something similar in a column, but I can't remember your advice. My husband and I adopted a kitten from a cat rescue organization six months ago. Ginger was three months old when we got him. We had just lost our dog and decided we would get a cat this time. We felt too tied down with a dog and thought a kitten would work for us. We were so happy when we got him as he filled a void in our life. However, I didn't realize it when we got him, but ginger cats are known for being climbers and very active. His climbing has escalated to the point where we must clear everything off dressers and bookcases and put away anything that is sitting out. When he is calm, he is a sweet, loving cat, but when he gets wild we have considered returning him. My husband seriously thinks we should give him back, but I don't. I think he will outgrow this phase and become a sweet boy. How can I convince my husband that we need to keep Ginger and give him a chance? I don't think we should just get rid of him, but rather we work on controlling his behaviour. What are your feelings on this? Thanks, Dawn.*

Hi Dawn:

Great question, but not an easy answer. Cats will be cats, and one thing they do is climb. It is very difficult to stop cats from doing a behaviour that is natural and normal for them. Cats like to be in high places, and they are built for climbing. You can try to deter the behaviour, but sprays,

yelling, or hitting your cat often do not work and only makes them fearful of you. Cat trees and window perches work well and give your cat the option of seeing the world from up high. Also, it's a good idea to make sure there is no food or crumbs on your countertops. If you do catch him on your counter or some other area where you don't want him, quickly pick him up and put him on the floor. Do not pet him or talk to him. He will then learn that he does not get the attention he is craving. Also, when giving your cat treats, make sure he is on the floor, so he will associate getting a treat with being on the floor and not on the countertop or other place he should not be.

As another option, aluminum foil is said to be a deterrent for cats on countertops. I personally have tried that, and my cat perches on top of the foil and is still happy to be able to keep an eye on what is happening on the counter. This is an issue you and your husband will have to resolve together. There is no black-and-white answer. All pets have some quirky behaviours, that's all part of owning a pet.

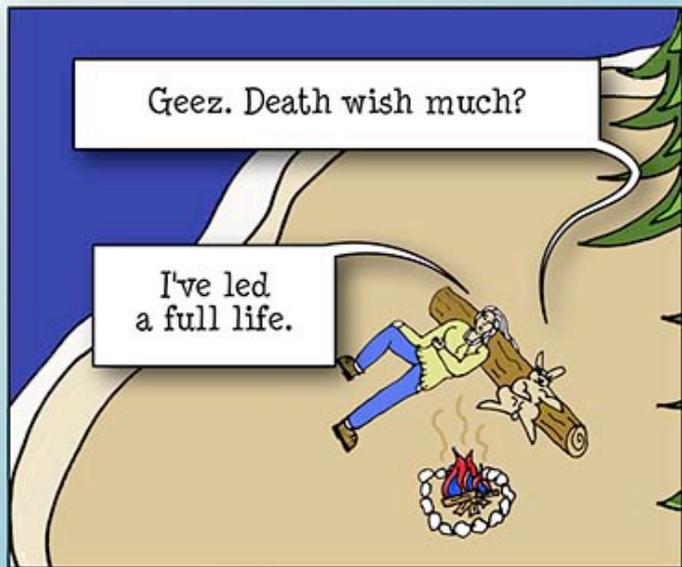
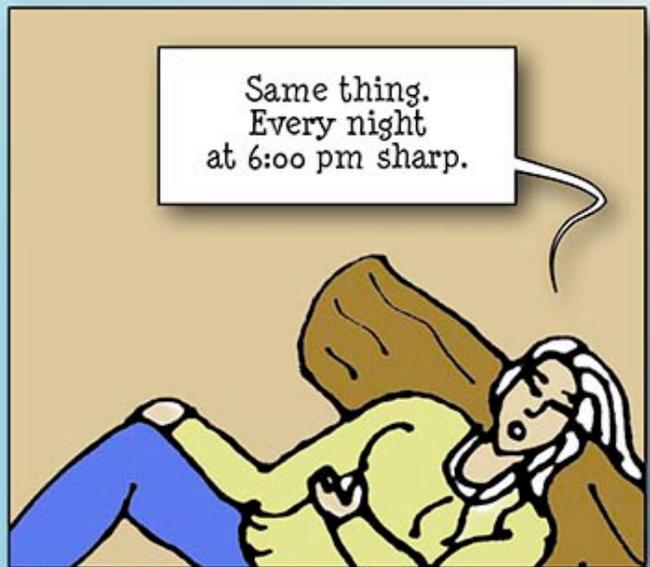
Best of luck Dawn, sorry I couldn't resolve this for you.

*Email your questions to [voice@voicemagazine.org](mailto:voice@voicemagazine.org). Some submissions may be edited for length or to protect confidentiality; your real name and location will never be printed. This column is for entertainment only. The author is not a professional counsellor and this column is not intended to take the place of professional advice.*



Poet Maeve  
Spy Balloon

Wanda Waterman





"In the end we will remember not the words  
of our enemies but the silence of our friends"

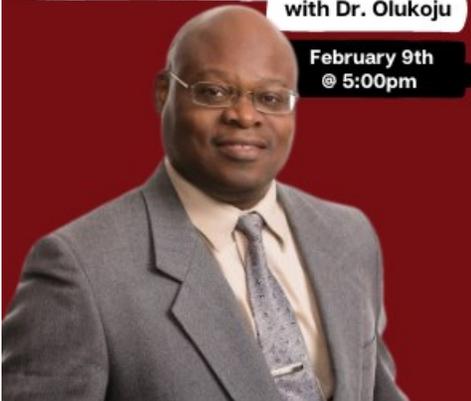
- Dr. Martin Luther King Jr

**AU  
SU** February Events

**RSVP On  
Eventbrite**

Politics, Voting, and Inclusion of the Black  
Community in Canadian Governance  
with Dr. Olukoju

February 9th  
@ 5:00pm



Join us on Feb. 9 at 5 p.m. MT  
on Zoom and celebrate Black  
History Month with Dr. Olukoju  
from AU as he discusses [Politics,  
Voting, and the Inclusion of the  
Black Community in Canadian  
Governance](#). Dr. Olukoju holds a  
Ph.D. in Public Policy and  
Administration and a second in  
Theology.

[RSVP on Eventbrite!](#)

Velma Morgan on  
**OPERATION** 

February 15  
@ 5:00pm



Then return Feb. 15 at 5 p.m.  
MT to celebrate with Velma  
Morgan during [An Introduction  
to Operation Black Vote  
Canada](#). OBVC works to ensure  
that equity is activated in our  
democratic institutions in order  
to create opportunities for  
Black Canadians to fully engage  
civically at all levels in Canada.

[RSVP on Eventbrite!](#)

**AU  
SU** Athabasca University  
Students' Union

**2023 By-Election  
BECOME A  
LEADER  
ON STUDENT COUNCIL**

**Nominations Open February 13**

**Council By-Election Nominations  
Open Feb. 13**

Feb. 13 is the start of  
the 2023 Student Council By-  
Election with nominations opening  
for all AU undergrads like  
you. Voting will take place March  
16-21 to fill two (2) available seats  
on AU Student Council. More  
details to come! Questions?  
Email us at [ausu@ausu.org](mailto:ausu@ausu.org).

Provided by

[ausu@ausu.org](mailto:ausu@ausu.org)

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# CLASSIFIEDS

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Classifieds are free for AU students!  
Contact [voice@voicemagazine.org](mailto:voice@voicemagazine.org) for more information.

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## THE VOICE

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Ph: 855.497.7003

**Publisher** Athabasca University Students' Union  
**Editor-In-Chief** Jodi Campbell  
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Jason Sullivan, Wanda Waterman, Xine Wang and others!

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