

DIVERGENT/ CONVERGENT  
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Journal of the University 101 Students  
Fall 2009

## DIVERGENT/CONVERGENT

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University 101 is a program that offers free, non-credit, academic courses to students who have faced barriers to post-secondary education. Respect and value for the students’ knowledge, experiences, and differences are the foundations of the program. The courses strive to be inclusive and to foster collaborative learning. To find out more about University 101:

email [uni101@uvic.ca](mailto:uni101@uvic.ca) or go to [www.uvic.ca/uni101](http://www.uvic.ca/uni101)



University  
of Victoria

# University 101

thoughtful  
intentional  
expressive

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**One of the pleasures of being Dean of a university Faculty is that people come to you with great ideas, you listen to them, you say “Great idea!” and you tell them to go away and do it. Kristen Semmens came to me one day a few years ago with the vision of University 101. Now, I am so glad that I said, “Great idea!” Just look what this has produced. It’s taken tremendous commitment and passion from those who have been involved but they have every reason to be extremely proud of what they have done for members of our wider community.**

**- Dr. Andrew Rippin**  
Dean, Faculty of Humanities

**what if this is it  
right here  
right now  
your defining moment**

**by Brittany-Jean Campbell**

## A Curious Traveler's Guide to Uni 101

*by Wendy Anthony*

So, you're planning a journey to satisfy your curiosity and desire to learn? Let me give you a tip that requires no need to travel any farther than your own community... Have you ever entertained the idea of going to University, to study contemporary topics with other like-minded individuals? What? You have no budget for school? No transportation to get there? No one to look after your kids? Too hungry to go out for an evening class after an already long day? Didn't finish high school? Been away from school too long? Don't know what to study? Do you experience difficulties learning in conventional classroom settings? Do your differing physical abilities create barriers for your participation?

**So, you're planning a journey to satisfy your curiosity and desire to learn?**

Well, have I got the place for you! If you've never heard about Uni 101 or seen one of the brochures, then let me be the first to tell you about an amazing opportunity to discover something about the world we live in and how it got to be the way it is. All the while understanding a bit more about ourselves and our views, as well as how to think creatively and critically, to interact with the world, and, perhaps, even initiate change. All you need is interest, a motivation to learn, and a willingness to participate in a journey of discovery.

**Wendy Anthony**

Uni 101 is offered through UVic's Continuing Studies, with the support of the Faculties of Humanities, and Social Sciences, and other generous communities sponsors, who provide the necessary resources, including school supplies, weekly readings, a student card complete with privileges for borrowing library material & using computer labs, dinner, snacks, and hot and cold drinks.

If you'd like to know more, sit back, and let me take you on a guided virtual tour of a typical day at Uni 101.

If you arrive at UVic by bus, a short walk across the Ring Road will take you through the parking lot beside the library and up the broad front stairway to the Clearihue building; open the doors on your path to higher learning! You may recognize some fellow students who are arriving for a one hour, once-a-week, late afternoon tutorial.

Today's topic is editing and refining our writing skills. Arriving in the spacious classroom, you choose a desk with an attached side table, and open your notebook to get ready to learn some editing tricks.

**A thinking brain requires  
food and energy; dinner is  
only a building away.**

A thinking brain requires food and energy; dinner is only a building away. Browsing the menus with a cafeteria meal voucher in hand, you see choices that seem almost endless, though the lineups are not. Heading to Uni 101's private section of the cafeteria, you can join a table for companionship and discussion, or review the readings before the upcoming class.

Each week involves two evening classes with a UVic Professor, who prepares an engaging lecture, including discussion questions with relevance to current issues, and a weekly assignment which is returned with thoughtful comments and suggestions. The professors seem genuinely interested in our viewpoints by encouraging engagement, challenges, and questions. Students contribute as much as they are willing and able to, depending on their level of interest,

while graduate students, who volunteer as Teaching Assistants, help with questions and facilitate dynamic small group discussions. Time passes quickly in this fascinating environment of exploring new ideas, and before we know it, it's already 9 pm – time to pack up and go home, with a mind full of ideas and excited by the challenges to learn new things.

We all arrive by different paths on this life-long adventure in learning. We are each challenged to overcome our individual barriers. Thank you, for being gracious fellow-travellers, and for being willing to share your time, knowledge and curiosity. You just never know where this all may lead to.

## What I Learned In University 101

*I learned to use my brain again, testing and learning  
new pathways to my memory;  
I learned more about how I learn, and began to develop  
my creative and critical thinking skills;  
I learned the persistence needed to get beyond difficulties,  
to find the real gems of learning;  
I learned to be more open-minded about other  
viewpoints and ways of doing things;  
I learned to participate, engage in discussions, and  
to step out of my comfort zone;  
I learned to challenge some of my world views and to confirm many others!  
I learned how to map concepts to help me view the world in different ways;  
I learned that I can make connections way beyond the obvious!  
I learned that I don't always have to agree with the "experts" ... Imagine!  
But, what I learned most of all, is that I am curious and that I like to Learn;  
... I hope to continue to learn something new every day of my life!*

## New Beginnings

*This is the story of my labour with my daughter.*

*by Belinda Rose Collins*

**I**t all started when I was 14, I had miscarriage after miscarriage all up till I was 20 when I found out I was pregnant again. The doctors told me that I should just give up and get an abortion because like all the rest of my past pregnancies, I probably wouldn't be able to go to full term. So of course I told the doctor no. If I could go to full term and have the chance of having a baby, my miracle baby, then I would go through that. Plus, I don't believe in abortions. I believe if God wants you to have this child, He would let you, and if God thinks you are ready to have a child that He will let you have this child. So, to get into my point for this essay I am going to write on the experience of me going through labour with my daughter.

...frankly I thought I was going to die.

It all started November 21, 2006. It was a sunny day I woke up with bad pains in my lower back and frankly I thought I was going to die. My mom thought I might be going into labour. She thought if I was going into labour that making me walk to the hospital would speed up the process. My mom, Angela Dumont, said that we would walk the easy way. Little

Thankfully the construction workers guessed that I was going into labour and walked my mom and I through to the other side of the construction site.

did she know that, the road was under construction. Thankfully the construction workers guessed that I was going into labour and walked my mom and I through to the other side of the construction site. Typical, when we got through to the other side the sun went away and the sky got dark then it started pouring down rain. It was horrible. First off I was in tons of pain; I didn't want to have to walk in the rain too. But twenty minutes later we were finally at Victoria General Hospital where they hooked my belly to a machine to monitor and see if I was have any contractions. The machine showed that I was not having any contractions, so the doctors sent me home. My mom called my dad at work to pick us up; when he got there he asked what happened so we told him. That night I didn't sleep I was in too much pain and couldn't get comfortable. When my mom woke up the next morning she watched me carefully and noticed that I was indeed having contractions. She called my dad and told him to come home from work because she has a feeling this baby is coming today.

When my dad got there we were all ready and waiting for him. We went to the hospital once again, and there were no rooms available. They had to put me in the recovery area for the C-sections. Once again they hooked my belly up to the machine and it didn't show anything so they were going to send me home again. This time my mom told the doctors to check to see if I was dilated at all. After



a small argument with the nurses my mom won and the nurses checked to see if I was dilated. I watched the nurse's face and knew something was wrong; she looked shocked. She turned to me and my mom and said that I was 6 cm dilated. They needed to get

**"I am fucking pushing"**

me in a room as fast as they possibly could because she thought this baby was going to be born in a matter of minutes. When another mother gave birth, they cleaned her up and the room so they could move me in to it. After an hour they told me to walk up and down the halls for a little bit to see if that would help since the baby didn't want to come. So my mom and I snuck out side to have a smoke. Then came back up stairs and started walking up and down the halls. I was getting tired and hungry. I was in too much pain earlier to eat so I didn't eat at all that day. We talked to the nurses to see if I could eat, they said no just in case I went into labour. So now I was in pain and hungry and nothing could have been done. I wasn't dilated enough do have an epidural and I

wasn't allowed to eat because I was having a baby. That they were going to break my water now that the pains in my low back were worse. It

hurt so much that I didn't even want to go any farther. I wanted to give up but knew I couldn't. When it was time for me to push I had my mom there helping me through. Telling me everything was going to be fine. After awhile, it seemed like a million hours went by, with me being in pain and pushing, the doctors told me to keep pushing. This got me mad so I said "I am fucking pushing," which my mom and the rest of my family in the room with me started to laugh. Shortly after that I can hear my cousin Brianna telling me she can see the baby's head. I was getting tired and restless. When she said that I just kept on pushing and pushing but nothing was

**"You have been saying  
you see her head for  
over 3 hours now"**

happening. I was getting stressed, my body didn't want to push anymore, so I said "You have been saying you see her head for over 3 hours now" my mom leaned down and whispered in my ear that everything is going to be fine you need to calm down and just focus on myself and my baby girl, don't pay attention to what everybody else says. Shortly after that I heard the doctor say, "Belinda don't push,"

the baby is coming. But my mind heard, *push, the baby is coming*, so I took a deep breath and then gave

**I heard the most beautiful sound,  
the sound of my baby girl crying**

2 big last pushes then I heard the most beautiful sound, the sound of my baby girl crying. The doctor laid her down on me and she lifted her head and looked at me as if she knew I was her mother. I started to cry and I said "she looks so beautiful." The doctors grabbed her and I heard them say she's not breathing, which scared me and I started freaking out. But she was ok in the end, they just didn't clean out her air way properly. Then the nurse came in and asked what her name was going to be. I said Angela Grace Rhoda Collins. Angela was born at 12:15am on November 23, 2006, 9pounds 1 ½ ounces, and 21 inches long.

## The Conviction of Socrates

*by Glenda-Lee Pickit*

If only the law be studied,  
In which Socrates was charged,  
Would they see it was muddy?  
Would they believe it was marred?

If only heard by men as wise,  
Would they believe him and know?  
Would Socrates then meet his demise?  
Or would they have let him go?

Dear Socrates, if only another chance,  
To examine that law, so long ago,  
To examine their stance...  
If it were to me, I would have let you go.

## Living

*by Vivian Lacey*

Shattered  
Scattered  
Hope was lost  
my spirit broken  
at such a cost

Robotic  
Catatonic  
I felt like a slug  
Oh, what terrible  
hole I had dug.

Sliding  
Gliding  
hoping to find ground  
What will I do  
with the freedom I have  
found?

Hiding  
Biding  
pretty much done  
I think I'll try  
Uni 101

Conversation  
Revelation  
my synapses spring open  
nothing feels more  
omnipotent

Living  
Giving  
feeling life regain  
thanks to the  
help of Becky  
and the brains

Vivian Lacey

## open doors....

*by Brittany-Jean Campbell*

what if this is it  
right here  
right now  
your defining moment  
what if every event, heartache, and mistake  
was perfectly planned to lead you  
into the situation you presently find yourself

what if mystic voices whispered answers  
while you sleep  
and people are carefully thrown in your path  
all for the evolution of your greatest good  
whether you like them or not  
what if it did not matter what you did  
or said or felt in the past  
what if it was not an accurate prediction of  
what your future will look like  
what if you were not the only one feeling this way  
tired and lost  
joyful and free  
all at the same time  
what if others were also thirsty  
for the same soul balm you were craving  
what if you could meet them simply by

## you could finally meet the raw, naked version of yourself

following your own truth  
what if the reason you don't fit in  
feel outside the box  
outside the norm  
is because you were not built to fit  
but to create your own molds and make  
your own set of rules  
what if they were wrong  
the mean voices that live in your head  
that say things like  
"no you can't"  
and "that is not possible" and  
"what a stupid idea"  
what if those voices do not belong to  
you but some hurt angry child you never met  
that needs love and care  
what if your faults  
were also your assets  
disguised as flaws  
what if nothing was random  
not even a spilled cup of coffee  
or a broken heel on the way to work  
what if there is no one left to  
impress

what if there is nothing wrong with you  
and nothing wrong with them  
what if it was all striped away  
your comforts  
distractions  
addictions  
and praise  
so you could finally meet  
the raw, naked version of  
yourself  
who is much stronger and bad ass than  
you expected  
what if this helps you see  
what you are really made of  
and you realize  
that is it not only more than enough  
but that you  
yes  
you  
dear  
soul  
are nothing short of extraordinary

## Teaching Assistant Reflections

by Colette

Uni101 gave me the skills and confidence to pursue anything. The class dynamic was great. Having the professors attend weekly sessions opened up my understanding of subjects I ordinarily would not tackle.

For my journal entry, I chose to interview TAs because they play an important role. Most of them attend on a weekly basis. The TAs each gave unique answers. They have been instrumental as group facilitators. If I needed clarification, they were more than willing to help. It has been an enlightening experience.

I have had an awesome experience being involved in the Uni101 program. It has afforded me the opportunity to expand my knowledge and to meet people of diverse backgrounds. As an adult student, I came to believe that higher education is vital. Being at University twice a week has been life changing.

*What were your first impressions the first day you attended Uni101 as a TA and what did you expect or what surprised you.*

The first day I attended the class I was struck by many experiences from young and old.

“I was moved by the diversity of the people attending both as students and as Teaching Assistants. The first class reminded me of when I went to college as a mature student, and how vulnerable I felt as a new student. It also made me grateful for sticking with my studies, because many great opportunities followed.” - **Richard, Education**

*What will I take away from Uni101?*

What I will take away from this program is the belief that I can do anything I set my mind to. It has given me the confidence to accomplish anything that comes my way.

One TA responded, “that when I leave the class I’ll remember the respect, tolerance and patience the students had for the perspectives of their professors and their fellow students.” - **Linda, Anthropology and Sociology**

**I chose to interview TAs because they play an important role.**

*Tell me briefly about yourself and how did you hear about Uni101?*

I am an adult student taking a break from school full-time in order to get back to work at Eric Martin Pavilion. I have a diploma in Medical Office Assistant acquired in 2006.

“I’m finishing up my MA and have some spare time this semester. I believe that everyone I met seemed to be trapped inside the walls of the university.” - **Carl, English**

“I worked as a teacher for 5 years and really enjoy being involved in the learning process.” - **Jeneanne, Education**

“I heard about University 101 from the graduate advisor in the History Department.” - **Amber, History**

“I just finished my Bachelors at Uvic and now here in the Political Science Department. I strongly believe that each province whether it’s a college or university needs to implement such a program. From many of us we do not have the means to study for years and get financial help. From what I have seen in Uni101 most of the students are single parents, married, have some sort of disability. Uni101 offers a second chance at life...

in a fair and just society, education should be available to everyone.”  
- **Kara, Political Science**

I need to acknowledge and quote some of the TAs’ beliefs that they have benefited from this program.

*What do you hope to take away from your experience in Uni101?*

“I hope to become a better facilitator and learn effective ways of sharing information.” - **Meleisa, History**

“I see this program as a consolation match for people who have just abstained from joining the first round.” - **Yoko, Political Science**

*What are your thoughts re: starting up programs such as this one throughout Canada? If this were to be implemented are there specific groups that would benefit more than others?*

What an opportunity it would be for every college or university to have a program such as Uni101 implemented. Just like myself, it would give diverse groups of people the chance to venture out, to experience life at a university. I believe it gives purpose, courage and self-esteem.

**It has given me the confidence to accomplish anything that comes my way.**

“Uni101 is a chance for people to get back into formal education. It caters to the students, allowing them to control the workload and the hours.” - **Kara**

“I think other programs like this should definitely be set up throughout Canada. Because I am a part of a conventional university, I do not know which groups are being excluded unnecessarily.” - **Amber**

“As a Japanese student, I hope this kind of program should be implemented not only in Canada, but also in Japan. Since there is an extremely difficult exam to enter universities, there is no way to go back to school after years of absence from an academic world in Japan.”

- **Yoko**

In closing, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Becky and her assistants, the TAs, the Professors and above all my classmates. I enjoyed writing this piece because I felt like I needed to do it. To give credence to a program that is so important for a lot of people. It has been my honour and pleasure to be part of it.

Thank you

**funny how we  
can't grasp the  
permanence of  
non-existence.**

**- Jeff Hendren**

## Acid Indigestion

*by Craig Ellermann*

**M**ay 14, 1980: a day that would become a milestone in my long and illustrious career of drug abuse. The dare was to take LSD at high school and somehow make it through the first 3 classes without being “outed” by any of my teachers. Peer pressure to teenagers is what migrating back to the stream of their birth is to salmon: a natural and irresistible force that results in reckless behaviour. By taking drugs such as pot, mushrooms and now the big one, LSD, I was being accepted into the elite group of cool druggies who only last year knew me as the weird fat kid who worked at his parent’s Dairy Queen (and consistently wore the wrong brand of jeans). I ingested the tiny purple pill at 8:15am that morning, remembering from previous efforts that the LSD would take about an hour to take effect.

a natural and irresistible force that results in reckless behaviour.

The first class of the day was English 10, taught by Miss Whittaker. I had a tragically huge crush on Miss Whittaker. She was the subject of my best wet dream so far. My worst dream was of Betty and Veronica from the Archie comics (after that dream I was traumatised into thinking I was abnormal and would be diagnosed as a “comicphile”).

The class went smoothly until about 9:15 am when various halos and flying snakes began circling around Miss Whittaker’s beautiful head as she explained a subplot of George Orwell’s

Craig Ellermann

Animal Farm. The panic set in as I realised the acid was hitting me harder than any I had ingested so far. Uncontrollable and alternating feelings of euphoria and terror were now upon me. I made a snap decision to get the hell away from school as soon as English class was over. The next class was P.E. and I figured if I could make it through attendance I could slip away during the field exercises.

As I bolted from English class at the sound of the bell I realised I was in no state to deal with people as their faces were now grotesquely distorted and pulsating with orange light. I had to get away from everyone, get to a private place and regroup. I shuffled along as slowly as possible to the nearest washroom as the between class traffic swirled around me. Inside the washroom I was struck by more terror and confusion, but was happy to be the only person in there.

The sound of water rushing through the old plumbing was deafening, as if I was standing at the bottom of Niagara Falls.

I stood in the middle of the room trying to ignore the falls and swirling colours coming from the window and focus on my strategy to get out of there. I then began to think something had changed with the washroom from the last time I was in there. Was it just the acid or had the washroom somehow been renovated since yesterday? I stood my ground and tried to focus on what, if anything, was different in this roaring washroom with its magic, psychedelic light show window.

Twirling around in a circle, I took inventory of all objects, whether real or generated from the acid: several stalls, a garbage can, the familiar white

**Nothing seemed out of place,  
yet something was missing.**

condom dispenser and sinks and mirrors. Nothing seemed out of place, yet something was missing. I twirled around for a second time stopping to focus on each object when I noticed strange writing on the condom dispenser. I stepped up for a closer look and the strange writing came into focus: “Kotex tampons, 50 cents.” I caught my reflection in the mirror. My eyes were buggy—all pupils and bloodshot like a road atlas map. My palms sweating and my heart pounding, I looked around the room again and at once realised what was missing: URINALS!

A loud voice in my scrambled mind cut through the roar of the running water: “You’ve got to get out of the girls’ washroom, you stoned comicphile!” I had to avoid contact with people at any cost so leaving through the door was not an option. I scrambled atop the stall closest to the psychedelic window and managed to squeeze myself through it. Then I plunged hands first towards the ground and landed with a loud thump when I heard the familiar voice of the P.E. teacher shouting “Craig, get over here, you’re on the skins!”

I looked up and took in the surroundings. There in front of me was the playing field with my P.E. class engaged in a soccer game. My knees began to tremble and my stomach felt as if I had swallowed battery acid. I was toast. I was not able to weasel out of P.E. and spent the rest of the soccer game standing in one spot like a traffic cone, terrified the ball would come towards me.



## Through My Eyes

*by Jennifer Johnson*

When I look around the room  
What do I see?  
A bunch of humans  
Trying to make it in society.

When you look at me  
I wonder what you see?  
As I am just a human  
Trying to make it in society

When I look around  
All I see  
Are a bunch of strangers  
Sitting next to me.

Helping you helping me,  
Getting through  
All these old memories.

I talk to you  
You talk to me  
Together we can  
Make it a better society.

When I look around the  
room what do I see?

Jennifer Johnson

## Choices

*by Elisa Thibodeau*

I give everything to my children  
They are everything to me  
Every choice I make defines them  
Molds them to who they will one day be

They fully depend on me  
I watch them grow each day  
My choices affect their future  
It's my job to show them the way

I woke up one morning thinking  
I realized they needed more  
I wanted to be successful  
This could open another door

My feelings were contradictory  
Be a good mother by staying home  
Why leave them with a sitter  
While you go out and roam

Your children are your priority  
You are no longer first,  
But going to school gives opportunity  
A new life we would never curse

So I made a choice to try  
Uni 101 was that door  
My children are fine with this choice  
Now I want to go to school more

While I am bettering myself  
I improve my children's life  
Getting my education and a quality job  
Will remove financial strife

My children will always love me  
I will always give them what they need  
By becoming who I want to be  
Maybe I will plant a seed

When they get older  
I hope they always know  
That schooling was my decision  
To help our family grow

I realized they needed more

**There is an alley  
on Lampson... It's  
lined with thorns,  
and littered with  
glass. The needles  
protruding from  
the shadows tell  
me to stick to what  
I know. There is  
fear in darkness.**

**- Patrick Loewen**

## Words written in a room after the light goes out

*by Jane Currie*

Concept – Inept

Contrite – Good night

Contract – Can't go back

Contact – On the wrong track

Effect – Reflect

Protect – Deflect

Perhaps – A lapse

Confuse – Diffuse, You snooze, I lose

Consume – Perfume, you work the room

Diverge – My urge, you binge...I purge

Converge – A surge of courage, but lost for words

Reflected – Collected, your lies undetected,

A moment neglected, I never suspected.

My prose – Your cons

The pain prolongs

The Lies – The screams

The specter it seems, a broken ghost

In waking dreams

Jane Currie

## Winter Lake

*by Jane Currie*

“Do you know it’s been 19 years? . . .”  
You say to me as we talk on the phone.  
Your voice so soft and close,  
Eyes closed,  
I can almost imagine your warm breath in my ear.  
Carried by signals through cables, wires and switches.  
I am transported through time.  
It is winter.  
Snow covers the ground,  
Making the world look clean, unused.  
We come to the edge of a frozen lake.  
The cold air freezes in our nostrils and makes you snuffle.  
I reach to take your arm.  
Looking at each other  
We stand for a moment, as if waiting for a cue  
Like a couple in an impromptu,  
Unchoreographed skate competition.  
Walking on ice that was not so thin back then,  
We are slipping, sliding, laughing.  
Holding each other’s hands for support,  
And just for the chance to hold hands.  
Fingers entwined in woolen gloves, palm to palm, radiate heat.  
Our cheeks are glowing, flushed and red.

Not from wind or the frigid air  
That envelops our bodies on the snow swept ice,  
But from a spark started long before winters touch  
Turned the frozen blue water on which we stood,  
To our own private Olympic venue.  
Trying to do our best without stumbling or falling,  
To lift your partner high when you must  
And try and keep smiling at the same time.  
We know this is no game  
There is no score, no competition,  
No corrupt officials to bribe, or rules written out.  
There are no bleachers, cheering fans or gold medals.  
There are just you and I and our deepest thoughts.  
Inner feelings that burn as brightly as the Olympic flame  
Warming the quiet Christmas card landscape.  
We slip, almost falling, holding on tighter  
Our laughter rolls out in steamy breaths of air,  
Floating like clouds, towards the mountains at the end of the lake.  
Echo's rising in the still air like  
Trumpeter Swans paired for life,  
Leaving for their summer nesting grounds.

**There are just you and I  
and our deepest thoughts.**

# The Inkwell of Loneliness

*by Jane Currie*

You write poetry with my blood.  
Reams of paper, binders filled with notes,  
Recycling bins filled with my life.  
Shredders tear me apart.  
I am a thin strip of paper  
Left to blow down wet streets.

You write poetry with my blood,  
It runs in ribbons...  
Like your long red hair,  
On to your pure white pulp.  
Blood drops stain paper  
Words form,  
Deconstructing and re-constructing  
Theories stories.  
Poems about the “new”  
    revolution, the oppressed,  
Mayhem in the world

You write poetry with my blood,  
Poems about breaking hearts,  
    broken promises,  
Your tortured life in small dusty towns

Your aching poet soul,  
Like a grounded star that  
    dreams of the sky,  
Longing to shine in Orion’s belt.

You write poetry with my blood.  
Rich and dark like a Citrine,  
A diamond transformed by pressure,  
And the heat of thousands of degrees,  
Its matter changed.

You write poetry with my blood,  
Stories, theories, and poems  
I have been bled,  
By a cohort of vampires  
The virus in my blood leaves them sated,  
Yet unaffected  
Free to move on.  
The inkwell is emptied.  
You leave with your poetry,  
Blood, drying on paper.

## My Bus Ride Home

by Patrick Loewen

**M**y name is Patrick Loewen, and I am a proud student of University 101, because I have experienced obstacles in obtaining a post secondary education. Imagine a thousand watt light bulb running on a watch battery, and you'll have a very abstract impression of how powerless I feel in this situation. I work a fifty hour work week, with an hour commute each way on foot. I cook all day, and walk home to cook dinner for my family. We have an eleven year old boy, whom I didn't father but I love being his dad, as well as our new born baby who was three months premature. I live in Esquimalt, where I have had head lice twice, bed bugs twice, and scabies once. Two people died in my building last year, and police are always in the lobby for something. I have found two dead bodies in my life: one on Sannich Road, and one in Beacon Hill Park last summer. There are needles everywhere I go, and meth addicts keep stealing the light bulbs from my lobby. That's right, they steal the light bulbs.

### Imagine a thousand watt light bulb running on a watch battery

Twice a week I take a late 26 bus home from UVic, back down to Esquimalt. All the students get off way before me, and the bus refills a couple of times with much less radiant faces. Every turn the bus makes takes us onto a street darker than the last, and the vibrant blue seats of the bus turn a more Peruvian shade in the twilight. As I walk across campus to my bus stop,

Patrick Loewen

I marvel at the forest of lamp posts in sequence with the maple trees. So well lit are these trees, that not one leaves shadows falling upon the autumn grass. The path is so well lit, on every side of every pebble. It's so inviting to exploration and open to discovery.

There is an alley on Lampson Street and, on a dark night, its steep incline disappears into a sea of night. It's lined with thorns, and littered with glass. The needles protruding from the shadows tell me to stick to what I know. There is fear in darkness.

The lamp posts on campus are short, in fact any shorter and we'd be blind. But the light has little distance to travel, and there are few obstacles in its way. The street lights in Esquimalt loom far above our heads, a great source of power hangs over us like a little sun, or a search light, or a god. Who built these lonely structures, so far apart, with their hanging heads gazing down upon me like sad giraffes? As you get closer to Esquimalt, these lights are progressively higher up, and fighting through the carbon in the air. As you get closer to Esquimalt, these lights are progressively further apart, and the shadows become so much closer together. In such a dim light, it is often hard to tell where one shadow ends and another begins. All the straight lines of man blur into the master plans of nature.

Of course the bus drives very slow, and the distance between these two places is vast, so the fade from light to darkness is unnoticeable to most people. I see it, though, and to me it is unbearable.

The light at UVic is constant. It never sleeps, or blinks. It is an intense white glow that floods the buildings, washes out the windows, and spills out the doorways. The lamp posts radiate in 360 degrees, with highly efficient compact fluorescence. The stadium beams proudly under the starry sky of

**There is fear in darkness.**

spotlights, and the square screens twinkle in the glowing eyes of the Mac lab. There is no buzz or hum, just a glow. It is an inescapable glow that is there to show all for what it truly is. The air outside my bus stop hums and buzzes under the orange fog of a high pressure sodium bulb. These lights pulse, too fast for the human eye to register, but I feel it as soon as I step off the bus.

I'm on a dark street, standing under a traffic light. Like many of my neighbors, this red-amber-green means nothing to a person who is not in control of their own vehicle. It's just another light; over my head, out of my reach.

Two structures glow down the street from me. That familiar white light, (in this world, the world under your world's bed) means that someone is selling something. At this hour, it's gas, booze or cigarettes. These stores sparkle like diamonds in the coal mine that I call home. Oh the prices we have paid for the vices we choose to illuminate. There is a blinking yellow hazard in the distance, and the canyons between apartments are glowing dimly in the blue TV screen light that paints itself upon the curtains as it flickers.

**This burnt out bulb only enhances the shades of over worn burber carpets, and nicotine stains down the walls.**

The front door of my apartment is almost always pitch black, or flickering under bad wiring at best. How would ships sail if the lighthouse was maintained with such regard? How am I to see the key as I fumble in the dark? At least no one sees me sneak into my tears.

As I walk down the hall towards my door, I pass under a burnt out bulb. Nobody cares. My hallway glows orange. Like all the lights here, it's subtle, but I have a monetique eye for color, even at it's most illusive. This burnt

out bulb only enhances the shades of over worn burber carpets, and nicotine stains down the walls.

I am reminiscent of the unbiased spectrum of light which emanates from even the most obscure corners of UVic. The campus possesses a solid white light, which is equally unbiased to all. This light contains all the fundamental colours necessary for an object to project itself upon the human eye; for what it truly is in all its entirety. I love to feel this light upon my face. I love knowing that every cell on the surface of my being is given every opportunity for colours to reflect, and in turn shall be received for what they truly are. Artificial light has never felt so natural to me. The halogen light at my bus stop plays tricks on your mind. I wonder, if I had written this under those lights, would an orange pen express my thoughts, or would certain colours just disappear into the night?

My neighbor has problems with skin colour, and in this light, I feel sorry for him.

## Human Bill of Rights 101

*by Valerie Smith*

I never thought I was of the scholar mind,  
but with this chance I find,  
I have the right of the human kind.

This course has taught to me,  
that it's hard to be free, have Liberty –  
With all the racism, politics and  
peer pressure on TV.

We have the right to change and grow,  
free to learn,  
Let the stigma go.

We have the right to be happy,  
proud and free –  
This is the Human Bill of Rights to me!

We have the right to change and grow,  
free to learn,  
Let the stigma go.

Valerie Smith

## Permanence

*by Jeff Hendren*

It is a hard and terrible thing looking at blank page and wondering how to despoil the flawless white expanse in some manner that will convince the fickle reader to follow your lead down a rabbit hole, to stay with you to the punch line. Conversation is easier, more in tune with the organic ebb and flow of two people breathing, jazz to the constructivist, architecture of the written word. And too, a bad joke or a conversation that slides off the rails is either forgotten or can be adjusted on the fly, but once the thought hits the page, the word is made manifest and is there for all to see, the off colour joke, or precious or pretentious or self indulgent flailing of fingers on the keyboard, left like coffee spilled on your aunt's white rug, a record of not only your clumsy thoughtlessness, but the very idea of white deep pile carpeting. But publishing lends itself credence, legitimacy. The permanent record is in fact a permanent record, and never more so than when the permanent record is illusory since printed poems and stories last only as long as the paper they are printed on does, and the fleeting posts and tweets and blog entries and responses all exist for all time on a server somewhere in the great diffused, distributed \*n\* space of the internet... funny how we can't grasp the permanence of non-existence. I was thinking about these things because I have friends who are feverishly writing novels in a month, and taking the act of writing seriously enough to talk about the act of writing and possibly even defining themselves as writers when they are

not at home to guests, and I was thinking that I can't define myself as a writer because I don't write, despite the efforts of these friends (some of them) who think I could do it, because I don't write. Its hard to look at the page and think that this legitimacy that the little black text on the white page confers on the thoughts and/or dialogue and/or humour and/or whatever else is happening in the story/poem/article/whatever is terrifying. Once I saw a pull quote in an interview with David Bowie where he claimed to prefer playing cheap instruments instead of name brand guitars and such because playing an expensive guitar was intimidating. And I believe it. I don't know what this has to do with convergence or divergence, beyond the feeling that the act of writing anything

## the act of writing anything exists at the convergence of what could happen and what won't happen

exists at the convergence of what could happen and what won't happen, the point where ambition meets limitation, where coulda might meet shoulda, and ending a story or poem or anything else is like hearing the bell at school when you are eight, the feeling of relief makes me want to run screaming out of the house and into the playground in the park behind where I live, I want to go ride bikes and drink slurpees and not think about anything at all -- about sheets and pages and word counts and spell check or trying to figure out if I could actually construct a document in a coherent prose style or a poem that rhymed or followed some sort of metrical order or form -- I don't think that haiku counts, since unless you can write in court Japanese about cherry blossoms, translate it back to English and make people weep for the beauty of it all, what you are doing is knock knock jokes. And I can do that, I even did one as a plot synopsis of John Capenter's Halloween, but I won't bore you with it here.

## A coulee walk

*by Jennifer Reyes*

sitting in front of a panorama  
the coulees speak to me.  
in the far distance I see,  
a coyote wandering through the snow  
while a deer silently walks in peace;

The remembrance of my present self:  
why did I come here?  
why do I feel so lonely?

silence and desolation is what I see  
it feels peaceful  
peace that it brings me fear,  
while every small sound I can hear

I know is not a threat to me,  
is just the snow melting under my feet  
slowly, slowly...

there is not one else,  
all the sweet grass is covered with snow  
I cannot recognize the smell  
since it is not familiar to me.

The geese painting in the sky  
the way south,  
I want to go away too  
I want to go home  
if I raise my voice to the loudest  
sound,  
still not one could hear  
I am not in my comfort zone.

# Memories of the Prairies

*by Jennifer Reyes*

I.

The days went by in a desolate land,  
flat as coin, with no money I walked  
the powder under my feet,  
so cold that I felt frost in my ears.

the insulated clothes were not enough  
since I felt the breeze through my bones  
like when you have a hole  
in your pants.

it was hard to talk with my  
frozen nose and lips.  
the humidity of my soft skin was gone,  
never understood the use for  
lotions or hand creams  
but the sweet smell, fragrance left behind  
so people notice you and perhaps  
have memories attached

This time it was important for me,  
because my hands hurt  
dry and dry  
needing love and care,  
as much as I did.

II.

the sky was open, blue and white  
reflected all around, so quiet, so bright,  
The wind howling...

the trees dancing, not leaves flapping  
the trees dancing  
but this time, not leaves at all  
the trees bare, only the  
branches dancing,  
dancing with the wind  
as they are refreshed by a chinook...

it makes me wonder  
why everyone is in a home?  
why everyone will drive a car?  
and not experience the natural sound  
the smell of the early winter breeze  
the birds that still make it  
through the cold days?  
why?  
is it just me?

## Race in History, West Indies

*by Jennifer Reyes*

So much taken for granted  
feeling it is the end of the world.  
So many of us don't know  
what others have suffered.

Dictators, rulers and philosophers  
try to take it all apart.  
Injustice and untruth still lingers  
with no one to trust.

When do we talk about love,  
Do we really know?  
Many give away  
the child they bear.  
Other have no choice  
but to be a slave again.

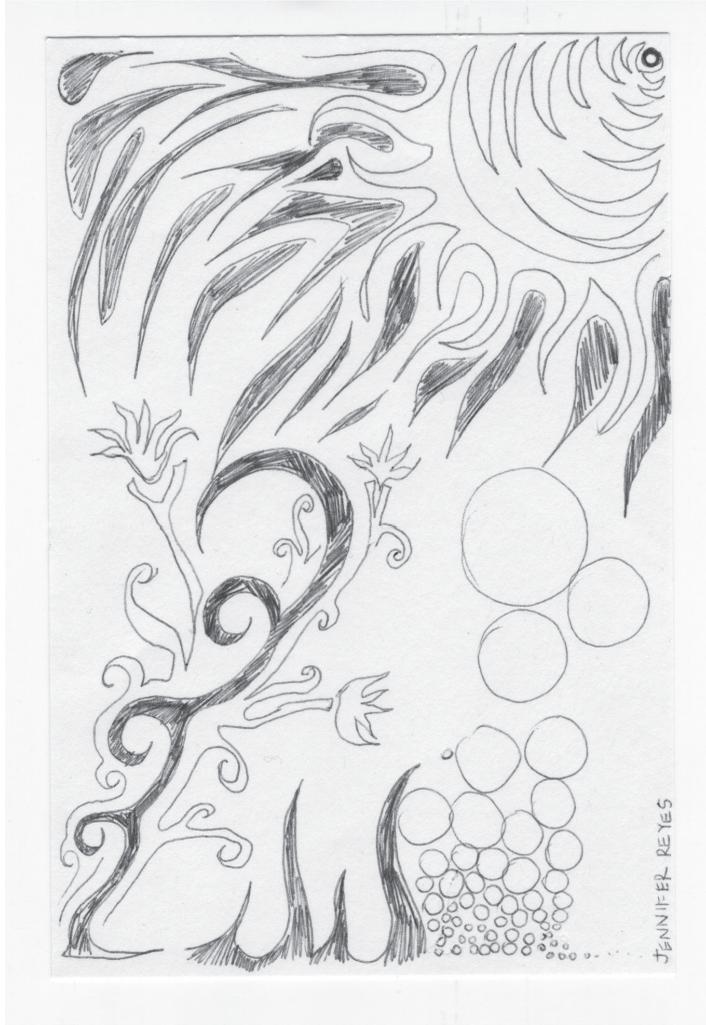
No one was educated  
but yet, they knew when  
the rain came.

No one got to hear,  
Yet the land was the ears  
of many that suffer  
of many that fear.

How and when will we know  
one another?  
How and when will we  
trust if we ever knew  
what trust meant.

Many in the cold die.  
Many searching  
for freedom  
Still been one hundred  
years old,  
no one hears...

How and when will we know one another?



## Bipolar Affective Disorder

*by Louise Maclaren*

B. A. D.  
In and out of the garbage pale  
Put I my creation  
Be it lively. Be it stale.  
Sadness or elation  
It does not need to be filled with jubilation  
As my friends it has been said that I  
Am Manic  
But please friends don't Panic  
I've been up down and distressed  
It's much worse being depressed  
Now society has labeled my condition  
B. A. D. Bad  
Oh God how this makes me sad  
So now that I've been diagnosed  
With this Affective Disorder  
I really wonder what the Doctors  
Will prescribe to bring me into order  
So I've taken this time to share  
But I really wonder  
Does anyone care

I really wonder what the Doctors  
will prescribe to bring me into order

## A Learning Experience

*by Louise Maclaren*

**D**uring our time in the humanities 101 course, one of our assignments was to write about an event which had a significant impact on our life. I chose to describe the time in my life when I was working as a nurse in the emergency department at Vancouver General Hospital. I became ill, was diagnosed with the mental illness, bipolar disorder, and was hospitalized. It was a slow and painful recovery and one of the reasons was that I discovered there was a very negative stigma associated with mental illness. I decided that I would become a mental health advocate at that time. When I returned to work as a nurse I began working in the field of psychiatry. I thought I could be empathetic and compassionate with my patients and that I would learn a great deal about mental health from working in psychiatry. I also took several courses to

learn about advocacy and human rights associated with mental illness. I began giving presentations and workshops. My goal was to educate the public about mental illness and to decrease the

negative stigma. Another goal was to assist persons with mental illness in achieving their personal, academic, and career goals. I wanted to assist all persons with mental illness in their recovery process, especially youth. It is very important for persons with mental illness to be able to achieve their goals in life. I have found that by partaking in the humanities 101 course that I have been able to accomplish some of my goals, namely keeping my mind stimulated and improving my memory. It is a very interesting course and I have really found the writing assignments to be beneficial. It has been helpful to receive feedback from the instructors. I realize I enjoy writing, especially poetry, and I have included one of my poems that is related to my experience with bipolar.

**I decided that I would become a mental health advocate at that time.**

## The Groomed Students

by Maria Rosaria Csizmazia

*The year was 1984; I was 17 years old, waiting at a bus stop in the West end of Vancouver.*

The area I stood in looked well manicured: the grass was cut shapely around the edges, there were no weeds in the flowers, the streets, were clean and freshly maintained. The people were elegantly dressed. The smell of ‘richness’ filled the air.

I came from the East end of Vancouver, commonly known for its immigrant communities.

The West-enders were usually highly educated and had better housing. I was standing at the bus stop with my black granny boots, black leggings, and a turquoise sweater, covering my mid-section and buttocks. Covering my sweater was a black leather jacket and over my right shoulder hung a black purse. On my head I wore a wild rocker hair-do, with gold hoop earrings. On my lips I wore a nice shade of red lipstick.

Hence, I call them “the groomed students.”

The bus approached from a distance and inside I saw a mirage of school uniforms. At that same moment, it seemed like butterflies were hatching in my stomach. They proceeded to do a latin dance.

The bus stopped, and grudgingly I stepped in. A wave of energy vibes overwhelmed me. It made my arm hairs stand on their ends.

The bus was crowded with private school students. The girls wore knee level skirts, the boys wore dress pants. The girls' hair was neatly groomed into fashionable ponytails. Hence, I call them "the groomed students."

The students' beady eyes were upon me, suggesting that I was not supposed to be there. I was an outsider to their society.

The groomed students' haunting stares raised the small hairs at the nape of my neck.

I gave the groomed students a confident, yet stern, non-threatening glance. My stare conveyed an unwritten statement, "I am not here to bother you, so don't bother me. I'm tough."

**Throughout the ride, the butterflies continued dancing in my stomach**

For the remainder of the trip I kept my ears perked and avoided eye contact. At that point, the bad vibes suggested that to make eye contact would be to engage in a battle.

It would start verbally, escalating to shoving, re-enforced with punching. From past experience on my turf, that's how the conflict would develop. I was on their turf and alone, so I didn't make eye contact.

Throughout the ride, the butterflies continued dancing in my stomach and formed a conga line in my esophagus. I started to feel nauseated, so I took a deep breath to relax.

I decided to sneak a peek at them. The girls were swaying their hair and giggling. When our eyes did meet it felt like an arrow was directed at me, with a judgment riding on its back. In that moment, I felt their fear towards me, a "rocker," until they realized that I was alone, which eased their fear. Plus, I did not look like a mad rocker, so they kept their distance.

I started to tune in on their conversations...the school uniforms didn't seem to care who heard them.

My ears burned in disgust.

My face turned all different shades of red.

What the groomed students said made me sick.

“My mum is such a \*%#^.” “F\*#@ \$ parents.” “I wish they were dead.”

“F!\$%^ dad.”

“They better give me my new car.” “They f\*%^# owe me.”

The groomed students’ profanity was not just towards their parents, but other family members. They made manipulative plans for their parents. They planned to lie, sneak, and hide to get their material needs met.

**The groomed students’ haunting stares raised the small hairs at the nape of my neck.**

On a sad note, the students did mention their parents being away on trips without them.

I found it odd and hypocritical of the groomed students who looked at me like I was the bad seed because of the way I looked. They should have looked at their own character.

The students and I were all high school kids or teenagers. I was from a different part of town and had no choice but to travel the bus route to the West end for an important doctor’s appointment .

The groomed students description of their parents and family made my skin crawl. I came from a family where you did not speak such vengeful and disrespectful words about your family, unless they committed a serious wrong. Never would I have said such things in a passing conversation to colleagues or friends.

We were neglected at times, and did not have money. These students saw themselves as a superior class because of their wealth, their special private school and what they could acquire.

I might not have been able to acquire materialistic objects or a private school education. What I did acquire was a better sense of right and wrong, a respectful politeness that I had not noticed until confronted with these students. It seems they taught me a lesson about myself.

As the groomed students descended from the bus, their negative energy slowly subsided. As I stepped off the bus, the refreshing cool air washed over me and cleansed the last bit of negative residue. Overwhelmed with a sense of relief, I felt a lot better about myself: I learned another lesson, from an unlikely source. It was not their intention; nevertheless they taught me that I *do* have a good heart and I can wear whatever I want. It was also a much needed reminder, not to be too quick to judge.

*The memory of waiting for the Westender bus, presents itself to the best of my recollection of what I believed I saw and felt at the time.*

# Busy

*by Maria Rosaria Csizmazia*

How does the world justify being busy?

Creating product to exercise in 4 mins.

For a 40 min workout

To justify our busy schedules

What are our busy schedules?

Do we really have to work every minute of the hour? For what?

To have a great economic society

To have a smooth running household

Do we need this business to raise well-rounded children?

Or has the media influenced people

Allowing people the need to be busy

Hence corporations inventing products

To give people our time back

But only to invent more products or situations

To take a little time back

Inventing more products to sell

For the extra coin in their pockets

So people become, or are,  
ignorant of serious worldly issues

Corporations allow this influence  
So people become, or are, ignorant  
Of serious worldly issues,  
Hence their control

For if we weren't such busy people  
A clarity of would-be sanity  
And wrong doings would not be tolerated

Therefore people would not need a 4 min workout  
Instead they would go outside  
Socialize with people, not television  
And people would accept themselves as a humanity of differences

Humanity would say, with an intensity of authority,  
“Every thing is alright, we're content.”  
For the people and countries to be healthy of mind, body, and soul

Ah! The RAPTURE of it!

## A year ago: UVic & I

*by Mercedes Espineira*

One of those days when my path crossed the StreetNewz's vendor at Douglas and Yates, I stopped to buy the magazine. Sitting in my table with a cup of coffee and some time to spare, I started taking a look to that humble messenger. And there it was: The University of Victoria was offering free courses to all who would like to attend.

Since I left my country, I didn't have the opportunity to enter a classroom again. And there, in that piece of paper, the doors of this campus appeared opened to me. I had my interview and I was accepted. Excited and happy, I traveled to visit my family and I took the letter of welcoming with me. My family knew how much it meant to me to at least breath the air of the campus. Now I use to share with them my comments about these courses. But what they know is how grateful I am, how moved I feel for the possibility to enjoy lectures of the highest quality in this High Center of Studies.

Next January it will be a year when I started coming here. And it have been a plentiful year of knowledge. Every course was designed in different ways to give as much

information as one can conceive in such short weeks. I became humbled by the amount of up to date data I was provided with.

I met young and not so young Master Degrees and Doctors who came to our classroom as volunteers to give the precious value they accumulated during their lives as researches and teachers. Thanks to all of them for the generosity of thinking that the only way to find our path is to know and knowledge is the most valuable gift anyone could receive.

Thanks to those, whoever you are, for thinking of our needs and providing for them.

Thanks to my classmates to whom I am in debt for giving me the opportunity to share with them this year and providing me with the privilege of their company. I met wonderful human beings that lifted my hopes that a better world is possible and is also closer than we use to think.

And thanks to you, Becky, for being there everyday, with your kindness and charm, always in the disposition to help us.

God bless you all.

**And there,  
in that piece  
of paper,  
the doors of  
this campus  
appeared  
opened to  
me.**

## by any other name

*(or don't call me Pocahontas)*

by MARLENE R WILLIAMS

from as far back as i can remember, i had thought of myself as pretty run of the mill. that was until i realized that i had been sorted, categorized and then labeled. i realize now that no one escapes these judgments. for this had been happening already through my relatively few years of life. i had no name to go with the sinking feeling of shame. until that first dawning realization of prejudice that hit me like the proverbial brick wall.

through no fault of my own, i had chosen “Indian” parents. silly me. on top of this shame was placed embarrassment. my first grade teacher, a montessori nun, told the class about “Columbus” and explained that he had “found” North America, and the Indians. (this is assuming one can lose an actual continent from under one’s feet.)

then the nun referred to the natives as heathens. well i did not know what a heathen was exactly but from the tone, it did not bode well for me. although i do remember seeing a beautiful painting in the office at school of a lush, tropical, verdant paradise populated by natives emblazened with the words “Are the Heathens Really happy?” (yes i thought so) so myself and two other brown-ish classmates with the nickname ‘heathen’ kept to ourselves for the remainder of our time there.

from that point onward in my life, i had to stomach varying degrees of bigotry and racist experiences. i’ve endured everything

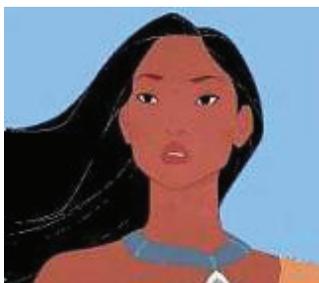
through no fault of  
my own, i had chosen  
“Indian” parents.

from merely ignorant innuendo to actual physical altercations. throughout this, i was still grateful to those who helped me learn tolerance and patience.

truth be told that along with these hard won virtues came other rather ignoble ones. self-preservation in the shape of deception began to emerge. the white lies that began like little drops soon became a little stream.

this all began rather innocently, of course. upon being introduced, a number of people would automatically try to guess what nationality that they believed me to be. words were slow to leap from my tongue, as they were so recently let loose with that darn cat in the bag. i was painfully shy, and so hesitant to correct any mistake they put forward, as to my lineage.

diplomacy was the ideal i held for myself. to claim to be of a more acceptable heritage, silence implied that their guess was correct. far be it from me to make someone feel bad about his or her judgment. among my favourites was to be of hawaiian origin. this worked swimmingly until my cover was blown



when asked exactly which island i was from. i could feel the cold sweat and then a sinking feeling in my stomach. my mouth felt so desert-like that it would not have surprised me to see tumbleweed or two fall out. i must have taken on the look of a deer caught in headlights, as the interrogation had then begun in earnest. pouncing on my stammering reply and then with vehemence i was then called a liar. reminder to self “if you are going to lie, don’t get caught.”

now we are living in a time when it is not only acceptable to be indian, but it is cool. i cannot count the number of people who have introduced themselves as being one-sixteenth “Blackfoot” or “Cherokee”, or perhaps at least they think their great granny’s half sister was “Cree.”

the word Indian. for me i am finally getting used to the label “Indian”, after only so recently becoming an indian myself. truth is that i am from canada and not the actual continent of india. First Nations, First Citizen, Aboriginal,

American Indian, Amerindian, Indigenous, there are so many names that i cannot keep track of what is in vogue these days.

over several occasions i raised the ire of many a militant “Indian.” according to some native friends of mine, i am not “Indian” enough. i do know that is the truth. my idea of roughing it is a two star hotel. i will eat bannock, but have yet to create an edible batch of it; my attempts end in a slippery sludge sticking to stove, spoon, and self. although i have attended pow-wows, the extent of my dancing ability is restricted to the local nightclub where i will fling myself around with reckless abandon to the bass beats of the dance music with good old disco stu or disco student.

i look at my status card (yes i am an indian, yes i am status, i do just call myself “Status,” has a certain ring to it, don’t you think?) and there in black and white is the definition from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. “Williams, Marlene Rose”

is an Indian within the meaning of the Indian Act, chapter 27, Statutes of Canada (1985). there we have it folks, let me call myself “Indian”, please contain the involuntary gasp of shock.

these days of political correctness seem contrived at times. for example one of my first visits to camosun college was highlighted by an exchange with an information lady/woman/person. (information assistant perhaps?) frustrated by this woman’s inability to answer any of my questions, i asked her where i might find the “Native Counsellor.” a fair question i thought. the woman then visibly bristled and then told me i could find the “First Nations Advisor” in the next building over. i had to respond with “Sorry Blondie, I didn’t mean to offend you.” then i laughed because this all reminded me that that “Shakespeare guy” was right, about the rose i mean.

**there are so many names  
that i cannot keep track of  
what is in vogue these days.**

## A Dog Story

*by Trevor Jones*

This story begins in 1993, when I bought a home, just outside the town of Mill Bay. It was a nice, big home, on 2 acres. The home needed some upgrading, and the property needed a lot. The first year I was there, I had a new front lawn installed; I fenced the property, and added vegetable and flower boxes around the house. Over the next number of years, there was an orchard, a barn and a pasture added. When this work was finished, it was turned into a beautiful home.

In the first year, after the vegetable and flower boxes were planted, I learned of a serious problem: an abundance of deer.

Now, many people mistakenly think of deer as beautiful animals to see. Not so. They eat everything that grows. A neighbour told me, that the best way to control these invading problems are to get a dog. The scent of a dog will keep the deer away. I took this man's advice, inquired at the SPCA and ended up with a puppy: a yellow Labrador retriever named Chloe.

Chloe, quickly grew to be quite a large dog, with a great disposition and a very friendly personality. She became an instant friend of all the local children, their parents, every other dog in the neighbourhood and even a few cats. She seemed to get along with everyone, except the deer. The deer disappeared.

Chloe was a great swimmer. Whenever we got close to the water, she was ready for a paddle. I worked a nightshift, at the newspaper, and I used to start every day, getting up at the crack of noon. I would then have breakfast and go to the beach for a run. I would always take Chloe with me. I would run about 10 kilos and Chloe would swim the same amount. It was a great way to start the day. Chloe, my girlfriend Christine and I would go on many memorable hiking, camping and canoeing trips. Our four-legged friend would always keep us in stitches.

In 1998, I became quite ill. I have had juvenile diabetes since the age of 12. I had always thought that things were managed well and had always felt well. I had dealt with this disease for 30 years, at this time. I quickly lost most of my sight and was informed that I had also developed kidney disease. Shortly after this news, I was told that

I was put on a waiting list for dual organ transplantation, mostly because my health was generally good. I was excited about the possibilities.

**Our four-legged friend would  
always keep us in stitches.**

Now, back to my old friend Chloe. I now had to learn to travel and manage without sight and alone, in a rural area. This overly large, overly friendly, sometimes un-coordinated dog was amazing. We travelled everywhere. We walked the same routes, travelled busy areas, even across the TransCanada Highway, because we had to, that was where the beach was. I walked with so much trust and confidence, comfort and safety; she just seemed to know what to do.

In 2000, I sold the little hobby farm and moved into the city. In 2004, I had a kidney and pancreas transplanted; I no longer had to take insulin after 36 years. Sadly, in 2006, my old friend Chloe died of cancer.

I certainly feel that I have gone through some ups and downs, successes and challenges, as almost everyone does, but I will never forget the wonderful

support, assistance and companionship of my old friend, through the most difficult times.

Six months after my dog had died, I inquired and applied for a guide dog in Oregon. I had some health concerns involving transplantation before I left and because I couldn't travel in a new city, without familiarity, I did not receive a dog. Sadly.

The school told me that I was welcome to come back, but must improve my travel skills and orientation.

In the last 2 years, I have done exactly that. I have also wondered if it was too soon to learn to work with another dog.

After writing my story, I have re-applied at the same school; it feels like the right time to try again. If I am accepted, I will start again, hopefully next spring. Thanks for the encouragement.

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