

THE VOICE

MAGAZINE

Vol 21 Issue 48 2013-12-20

Tradition!

After what came Before

Dream Christmas

Reality of the Movies

Grammatical Greetings

The Last Word on Holidays

Plus:

Primal Numbers

The Mindful Bard

and much more!



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



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

EDITORIAL

Karl Low



Year's End

Welcome to the final issue of *The Voice Magazine* for 2013. Next week we'll be enjoying Christmas, and I'm hopeful that you will be too. So *The Voice Magazine* will be on hiatus. That will take us into 2014, with the first issue on January 3rd being the Best Of issue for 2013. All of which means that the next all new issue of *The Voice Magazine* won't be reaching you until January 10th.

In the new year, I hope to start a series of tutor interviews, and perhaps bring some short fiction into the mix. Barbara Godin has also returned and will be writing an advice column to help out with those tricky personal situations, because sometimes an outside opinion is exactly what's needed to clarify the smart course of action.

We'll of course be keeping our usual batch of insightful and useful columns including The Writer's Toolbox that, this week, takes a look at helpful tips for ensuring your season's greetings are correct. Also this week, S.D. Livingston's Primal Numbers explores just what happens to all those electronic gadgets that we're finding under the tree, and some alternative ways of dealing with them. Barbara Lehtiniemi reminds us of the importance of tradition, both old and new, and Hazel Anaka's From Where I Sit watches the movies of the season and how they can tie us to our lives.

Elsewhere in this issue you'll find the true final part of Wanda Waterman's interview with Kamal Benkirane, in french. I know I said last week was the final installment, but there was just so much to go over that she wasn't able to fit it all in three. This one is particularly interesting to me as it speaks about his opinions on the new Quebec Charter of Values. We round out the issue with our Antboy comic and an installment of the Mindful Bard if you're looking for something a little more thought-provoking to watch for Christmas fare.

I strongly encourage you to check out this week's Did You Know? section, as Code.org is not only a pretty good organization, but the site is chock full of activities both educational and interesting, no matter what your age.

One thing you will not find in this issue, however, is the winner from our Voice Survey. The name has been drawn, the email has been sent, but as of this moment, I've yet to receive confirmation of the address or that I can publish the name of our lucky reader. I will tell you, though, that the winner needs to check the gmail account they have listed in their AUSU membership information and get back to me at voice@voicemagazine.org.

So enjoy this last issue, and have some happy holidays, folks!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Karl'.



The Christmas of Your Dreams

Since late November, I've watched several Christmas movies. And by several I mean more than twenty. And by watched I mean caught snippets, previews, or chunks of movies as I went about my day. Some people have ear buds permanently attached to their heads; I've got the TV playing in the background of my life providing the white noise of distraction.

It would be sooo easy to pull the whole cynic act (and trust me I do a great cynic) about the sappiness of the movies. You can see the happily-ever-after ending miles before the closing credits. The idyllic, not always snowy scene opens with a bustling streetscape or lovely two-storey farmhouse with veranda or boardroom in a Manhattan office tower. If you find the thought of a green--as in no snow--Christmas unnerving, don't worry. I guarantee delicate little flakes will fall before it's over.

It's also a safe bet that the heroine's name will be Noel, Joy or Holly. The older male star will be Chris (as in Kringle). If there isn't a marriage as part of the plotline, there is surely love, usually lost and re-found, as the main subtext of the story. Redemption is another strong storyline as the over-working, family-ignoring, hard-hearted executive with a drinking problem or black-sheep history sees the light. Think Scrooge.

If we're lucky, there is a boy and a dog involved—as in *Christmas with Tucker*. I could identify with this one because of the rural setting, the severity of the weather, and the work ethic required with this lifestyle.

Other movies are set at the North Pole, in a toy or Christmas ornament factory, or in a large department store. In *Finding Mrs. Claus*, Santa treks to Las Vegas in search of his wife. Apparently even marriages several hundred years old need reinvigoration every so often.

The notion of swapping houses during the holidays is repeated in *The Holiday* and *Trading Christmas*. Naturally, love follows for the widowed and the heart-broken.

There is no shortage of buffoons, red necks, or competitive Christmas decorating maniacs. Over-the-top light displays, ugly sweaters, and the stereotypical Christmas- threw-up-in-here look abound. In-laws usually figure prominently.

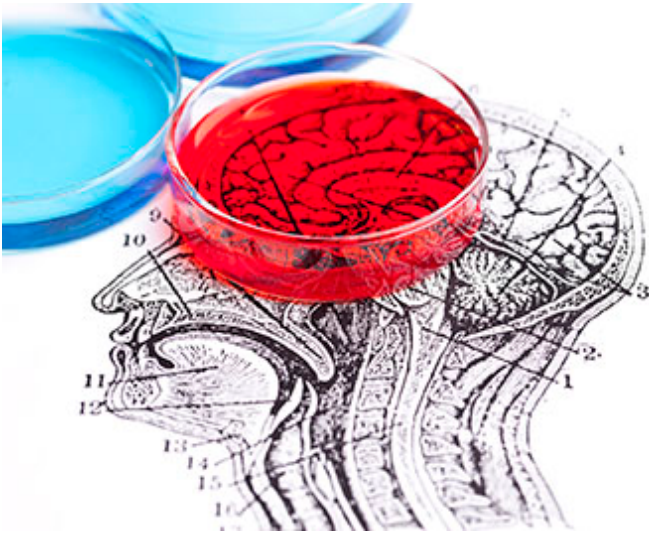
So, even though the settings, the plotline, and the players may not be something I can recognize in my own life, I've come to love this cornucopia of holiday movies. Maybe it's the hope they offer; the possibility of a Christmas miracle. Maybe it's the exaggeration of the characters portrayed: the badness of the bad guys, the virtue of the good guys. The notion that, deep down, the only thing any of us really wants is someone to love and someone to love us. How that looks for each of us, in our own non-celluloid lives, is up to us to determine.

My wish for you is the Christmas of your dreams spent with the ones you love. Hopefully, that includes a few movies, from where I sit.

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

Primal Numbers

S.D. Livingston



Ring Out the Old

'Tis the season for gifting and giving, and we're sure to find all sorts of digital goodies under the tree. Yet when we toss our old toys aside, they often become a gift that keeps giving—but not in a good way. With 50 million tonnes of electronics waste generated in 2012 alone, it's a growing problem. So how can you enjoy the new while doing some good with the old? Pour a glass of eggnog and read on.

From tablets and TVs to smart phones and PlayStations, people around the world love their

gadgets. Part of what makes those gadgets work, though, is a chemical conglomeration of things like copper, lead, lithium, zinc, and other precious metals. That might not be so bad if we kept our devices for 10 or 15 years, but the average consumer now keeps their smart phone less than two years before buying a new one.

As this [Guardian article](#) notes, that's creating a toxic pile of electronics waste around the world. In Europe, one environmental agency "estimates between 250,000 tonnes and 1.3m tonnes of used electrical products are shipped out of the EU every year, mostly to West Africa and Asia." In the US, consumers threw away just over 258 million "computers, monitors, TVs, and mobile phones in 2010, of which only 66% was recycled."

Wait a minute. Two thirds of that electronics waste was recycled? That doesn't sound so bad. Well, yes it is, because many so-called recycling services are anything but. In fact, the same *Guardian* article reports that most of those discarded items "were shipped to Hong Kong, Latin America and the Caribbean," places where people often work for pitiful wages in dangerous conditions to dismantle our old phones and electric toothbrushes.

There's a lot of money to be made with such schemes, and geography's no barrier. In July 2013, one California company was fined more than \$4 million (and had two executives sent to prison) for illegally dumping electronics waste in China. As *The Denver Post* [reported](#), the company collected "electronic waste from private households, businesses and government entities," then dumped it overseas. All the while, the company had "told costumers that collected waste would be disposed of safely and responsibly."

If all that has you feeling like the Grinch, cheer up. There really are some useful (and reputable) ways to dispose of your electronics waste while enjoying those shiny new gifts under the tree, and many of those programs are creating new jobs right here at home.

In Canada, Newfoundland and Labrador has developed an electronics recycling program. Not only has it been designed within the province, it will be operated there too. And while many provinces have hazardous waste depots, your unwanted electronics can have an even bigger impact if you live in BC, Alberta, or Ontario. [Habitat for Humanity](#) has a long list of electronics waste you can drop off at 28 of their ReStores.

In the US, you can check out the Electronics TakeBack Coalition. Not only do they have a great [guide](#) on how to safely recycle electronics, but they also offer a top 10 list of the warning signs that point to shady recyclers. Even better, there are at least two electronics waste recyclers that give back far more: they hire ex-convicts to work at local recycling plants. In Indiana there's [Recycle Force](#), while Isidore Electronics operates in California.

It's worth checking out their [YouTube](#) clip just for this fascinating fact: there's more gold in one ton of electronic waste than there is in 17 tons of gold ore. And the video is sure to put you in a feel-good, giving mood.

Of course, the best way to reduce the electronics waste problem is to stop ditching our old models as soon as the new ones come out. But that's not a practical solution, especially since outdated smart phones are only one small part of the problem. Many universities are turning to e-books, and students need compatible devices to study with. Hospitals, law enforcement, governments, and corporations all rely on computers and tablets to keep us safe, transmit records, and countless other tasks. Using outdated equipment can often have far-reaching effects, especially when it comes to security.

So no, Virginia, electronics and the waste they create aren't going away anytime soon. But this year, as you spend countless hours admiring the new iPhone or looking for just the right Android, spare a little time to think about what's going to happen to your old one. It might not seem like much, but it's a gift that can make a big difference.

S.D. Livingston is the author and creator of the Madeline M. Mystery Series for kids, as well as several books for older readers. Visit her [website](#) for information on her writing.

DID YOU KNOW?

Code.org



[Code.org](#) is a non-profit organization that wants to increase the number of students, particularly underrepresented groups such as women or students of color, who are taking computing science.

Their current campaign is to try to get people to learn one hour of coding skills, skills that will be invaluable in just about any career that people intend to follow in the next 20 years. After all, if you don't know the basics of how computers follow instructions, it can be very difficult to see how the instructions we give computers to do the tasks we want turn out to give us results that are anything but what we want.

The Code.org site has a number of tutorials on various programming languages, as well as tutorials and games that simply help to illustrate to people [how computers work](#), and how easy it can be to make them work for us. If you've ever felt like throttling your computer because there was some simple function that it just wasn't doing, this site can be the start to you turning that frustration into a way to fix your problem, and perhaps even help all the other people like you out there who were suffering through the same thing.

Writer's Toolbox

Christina M. Frey



Grammatical Greetings

During the holiday season, we hear a lot about ensuring that our greetings are inclusive or inoffensive. But there's not much press given to spelling, grammar, and usage errors, is there? I know, I know. It's the thought that counts. But if misspellings and mistakes turn you into a grammatical Grinch, read on.

Seasonal salutations

"Merry Christmas" is easy—unless you're in second grade and think that "Mary Christmas" is more topical (it was one of my favorite cards last year). It's the other greetings that are frequently misspelled on advertisements and signs and in (gulp!) Christmas cards from family and friends. To avoid seasonal slip-ups this year, make sure you follow these steps:

First, resist the urge to add apostrophes when they're unnecessary. Advertisers would do well to remember that apostrophes are used for possessive, not plural; so it's "Happy holidays," not "Happy holiday's." On the other hand, "Season's greetings" requires an apostrophe since it is not plural—you're wishing the greetings of (belonging to) the season.

The apostrophe problem crops up in greeting cards, too. I need to ensure that my cards are from the Freys (plural), not the Frey's (possessive). But it would be fine to tell everyone that the holidays are being hosted at the Freys' house this year—other than the fact that they're not. Surname end in an "s"? Still form the plural the normal way ("the Joneses" or "the Jones family"), never with an apostrophe.

Second, don't overcapitalize. The names of special days or holidays are capitalized—New Year's Eve, Kwanzaa—but other parts of the greeting should not be unless they begin the greeting or sentence. So while "Merry Christmas" is acceptable, "We wish you a Merry Christmas" is not (the "m" should be lowercased). And "Season's greetings" doesn't warrant a capital "g."

Finally, ask yourself what exactly you're trying to say. January 1 is a good example. It's easy to see why it's "New Year's Day" and "New Year's resolutions"—both refer to entities belonging to the New Year. But what about the traditional greeting? Since "Happy New Year" offers wishes that the new year—the whole year—be happy, it's preferred. "Happy New Year's" is a shorter form of "Happy New Year's Day," which is a rather short-lived greeting. No one wants a great January 1 and a lousy January 2 (with all the New Year's Eve partying, it's usually it's the other way around!).

The case of Hanukkah

One of the most confusing holiday spelling conundrums involves the word "Hanukkah." Although the feast came early this year, so you're probably not going to be puzzling over whether to wish someone a "Happy Hanukkah" or "Happy Chanukah," language lovers will enjoy this excellent piece on the spelling controversy. As the author (the copy editor for a Jewish publication) notes, each spelling variant comes with its own history

and set of supporters. But there's no overall consensus, so go with the spelling suggested by your style guide or favorite dictionary—or your rabbi. Just be consistent.

Miscellany

Finally, in your seasonal posting and correspondence, ensure that you're not taking a holiday from normally acceptable spelling. Otherwise you could end up with some seriously cringe-worthy stuff; for example, it's "wrapping" presents, not "raping."

Whatever you're celebrating this season, may it be happy. Just spell it right, and I will be.

Christina M. Frey is a book editor and a lover of great writing. Chat with her on Twitter about all things literary @turntopage2.



INTERNATIONAL NEWS DESK



At Home: Scientific Data Lost

The Globe and Mail is reporting that a recent study at UBC found that most scientific data gathered is lost within a generation. Researcher Tim Vines did an examination of 516 international zoological studies archived at the UBC zoology department and found that about 80% of the data over two decades old could no longer be found.

The loss stems from faulty contact information and obsolete storage devices, as most professors do not include their full data when publishing, instead providing contact information so that those who are interested can get in touch and retrieve the data from them. However, Dr. Vines found that the e-mail addresses most of the professors listed as their preferred contact method were outdated within a few years.

Additionally, even for those professors who could be found, the data was often stored on obsolete devices such as floppy disks or in older formats that are no longer accessible. To get the data off of these devices can take a lot of effort and expertise which the professors who gathered the data simply do not have available. No word has been given as to what steps are being taken to preserve the data from this study.

Around the World: Germany Trying to Increase numbers of Foreign Students

It's taken three months of negotiations, but The Pie News reports that the coalition that forms the government of Germany has agreed to a strategic document to increase foreign students in Germany by about a third, to 350,000. Look for significant marketing efforts, especially toward English speaking students, encouraging Masters and Graduate level students to study in Germany. This could lead to opportunities for mobile students like those from AU.

Tradition!

Barbara Lehtiniemi



The concept of tradition always brings to my mind the image of Tevye in *Fiddler on the Roof*. Shaking his elbows and dancing down the dirt track to his farm, he joyfully proclaims the traditions upon which he built his life. "Because of our traditions," he declares, "every one of us knows who he is." Tradition for Tevye is a solid and unquestionable foundation for life.

This time of year is steeped in tradition. Like Tevye, I find satisfaction in the continuity of custom. In a

sometimes unpredictable life, it is comforting to be able to anticipate how a scene will unfold with every participant knowing his role. I look forward to gatherings of family and friends, which, for me, make all of the seasonable bustle worth it. "Traditions are the thread that unite and comfort us," Laura Munts says in a [Huffington Post blog](#). They transcend "time and generations."

As I move through life, I find tradition is not the solid, unvarying force it once seemed. Through marriage and re-marriage, traditions, by necessity, have to bend and yield. When a couple marries, it is not just the lives of two people that merge. It is often the lives of two groups of people with different sets of expectations and practices. "New situations demand that new traditions be established" agrees Dianne Harman in another [Huffington Post blog](#). With new in-laws and perhaps step-children, "trying to please all of them can become a nightmare." Old traditions are modified or discarded. New ones emerge.

My husband's family is of Finnish origin. One unbroken Christmas tradition in his family is baking *pulla*. *Pulla* is a sweet bread, flavoured with cardamom, glazed with coffee, and baked in golden braids. His mother taught him to make it and he does so every year. To him, *pulla* is the most Christmas of things—a cherished recipe to lovingly bake and share with family.

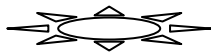
This year he is teaching his 15-year-old granddaughter, Veronica, to make *pulla*. The kitchen is full of the scents of yeast and spice. Two sets of hands, one young and one old, measure and knead and braid. As I listen to their hushed, conspiratorial voices I realize this is not just the passing on of knowledge and recipes. It is a sacred impartation of love and the creation of a lasting memory. Decades from now Veronica will pass along the recipe, together with its family love, in an unbroken intergenerational chain.

This tradition of *pulla*, so simple, will carry on. Other cherished traditions may fall away. Divorce and death sometimes bring an abrupt halt to family traditions. One friend, facing her first Christmas without her mother, mourns more than the loss of a parent. Her mother was the pillar of the family and the keeper of tradition. Now her grown up children feel adrift. In such situations, "the loss of seasonal traditions results in secondary

losses and grief" cautions Munts. Will my friend and her siblings drift from tradition or will they rally around it and draw comfort and memories from it?

In the movie, Tevye rails against the loss of tradition. His daughters move into their own lives with their own conventions. Tevye, believing tradition to be inflexible, thinks his daughters are rejecting him. At the end, faced with an even greater loss, he realizes that the thread of tradition may hold the fabric of life together, but it is the fabric that matters most. So I'll weave my traditions with care, and I'll tie the knots gently and with love.

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



Mindful Bard

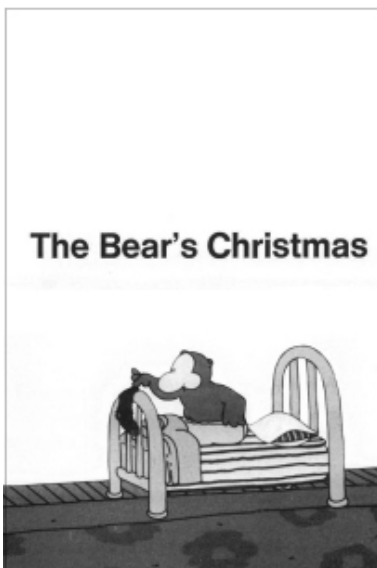
Wanda Waterman

Books, Music, and Film to Wake Up Your Muse and Help You Change the World

Four Animated Gifts from the NFB Archives

Whether you celebrate Christmas as a religious holiday or as a cultural tradition, it's a great time for moral inventory. This is reflected, if not in the marketplace, then in nearly all films produced for the annual. As usual, the moral inventory motivator prize goes to the National Film Board of Canada, whose ethical exhortations are focused on the worthy virtues of environmental stewardship, humility, simplicity, and thinking positive.

For just one evening, forego the annual television specials and Pixar flicks. Instead, spend an evening in the company of your children other enlightened family and friends, sipping mulled cider and watching NFB Christmas animation shorts. Here are some gems to start you off:



Movie: *The Bear's Christmas*

Director: Hugh Foulds

Bear witnesses the dark side of Christmas: the pressure to be of good cheer that brings loneliness into harsh relief, the commercial frenzy that leaves the needy feeling the full brunt of their plight, and the patronizing, self-righteous acts of charity that humiliate the proud poor.

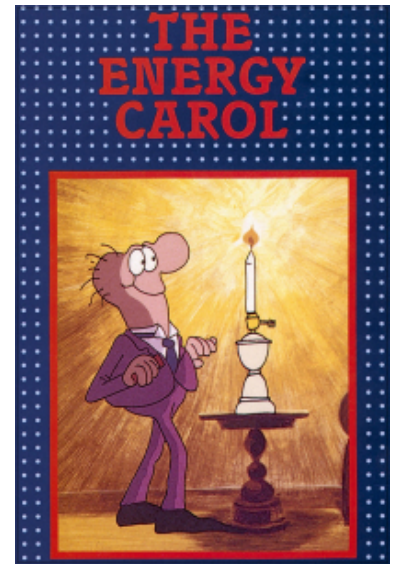
Bear has that Northern Ontario accent we love, and he's just a regular working schmo, a hoser whose butt-crack shows and who takes delight in simple pleasures. You'll love him even more when you see how his lovely, innocent optimism prevails in spite of it all.

Movie: *The Energy Carol***Director:** Les Drew

A witty Scrooge-reflecting public awareness tale, produced during the seventies energy crisis, even more relevant today than it was then, and a sad reminder that we still haven't learned. But unlike the Dickens version, this oil mogul is actually likeable—he's charming when he tells his assistant to leave the heat on in the office while no one's there for the holidays, and he delights in showering his family with electrical appliances. And when he reforms he's no more appealing; he offers turkey-flavoured gruel to his hosts so they won't have to bake a turkey.

Movie: *Christmas Cracker***Directors:** Jeff Hale, Norman McLaren, Grant Munro, and Gerald Potteton

A small collection of Christmas shorts including felt cut-outs, a sweet little stop-motion circus staged with those wonderful and dangerous (now vintage) metal toys from the sixties, and an animation on the aesthetic dilemma represented by the task of ornamenting a conifer (steampunks will love the solution), all rich with the philosophical commentary for which the NFB is renowned.

**Movie:** *Noel Noel***Director:** Nicola Lemay**Narrator:** Leslie Nielsen

A clever narrative poem about another Scrooge-like businessman who lives for the consumer debauchery of the Christmas season. He's been warned that there are certain things more precious than the things in themselves. Also a cogent insight into how men's minds sometimes work (like when we tell them what we want and they don't believe us and give us something else).

Money can't buy love, and neither can consumer goods replace loving words spoken from the heart.

Voix du Maghreb

Wanda Waterman



Kamal Benkirane, Partie IV : L'amour du Poète

Extrait du poème : « L'amour du poète » :

*Amis, que savez-vous de l'amour du poète
Qui dans sa chaumière se réjouit de se fleur ?
Par des phrases soyeuses, il incruste son pleur
Que venus resplendit au clair d'une comète*

Kamal Benkirane a commencé sa carrière littéraire dans sa ville natale, Casablanca, au Maroc, en écrivant pour des journaux, magazines locaux, et tout en enseignant là-bas. Il rejoint des sociétés littéraires et poétiques et gagne des prix littéraires en France. Il s'installe au Québec en 2001 pour étudier en Éducation à l'Université de Montréal. (Les ormes diaphanes), est son premier

recueil de poèmes. Il a été publié en 2005 par la maison d'édition (Fondation Fleur de Lys), au Québec. Il a beaucoup œuvré pour la promotion littérature francophone du Maghreb en Amérique du Nord. Il publie en 2006, aux éditions L'Harmattan, de France son livre (Culture de la masculinité et décrochage scolaire des garçons au Québec), qui a été suivi en 2010 par un autre recueil de poésie (Dans la chair du cri), publié aux Éditions du Cygne, en France, et en 2013 par un autre recueil publié en France (Feuillets de l'aube).

Kamal Benkirane a beaucoup œuvré pour la promotion de la culture marocaine au Canada et pour la création de passerelles d'échanges en ce qui a trait à l'altérité et à l'interculturalité, et à la fusion entre la littérature et les technologies d'information.

Voici son blog : <http://landalou.blogspot.ca>

Est-ce que l'expérience de l'immigration a influencé votre écriture?

Bien entendu, mon parcours migratoire a influencé mon écriture, ceci dans le cadre d'une appropriation de la citoyenneté dans un contexte interculturel, et où la diversité est plus vivante dans une métropole telle que Montréal. Je pense que l'expérience de l'immigration façonne toute la personnalité, les questionnements identitaires sont souvent présents dans l'écriture et sont posés dans ce parcours, des assignations identitaires aussi ; l'expérience de la mémoire qui voyage, le fait de faire le deuil de son passé, de vivre l'altérité en contact avec les autres, tout ceci donne une dimension nouvelle à l'écriture, une dimension où l'humain est plus présent.

Est-ce que l'expérience du racisme a influencé votre écriture?

Assurément, l'expérience du racisme est présente. La création de passerelles a été de ce fait nécessaire ; mon expérience d'avoir créé une maison d'édition électronique en ligne, E-Passerelle, est une preuve vivante de cette prise de conscience qui ne m'a jamais quitté, celle de l'urgence d'ériger des ponts, de rassembler les gens, de communiquer, de se parler pour mettre fin aux préjugés, mais dans le fond peut-on mettre vraiment fin aux préjugés ? C'est d'autant plus compliqué que la réponse à cette question n'est pas toujours évidente.

Vivre au Canada, surtout au Québec, a changé votre écriture?

Au Canada, et au Québec, mon écriture est entrée dans la phase de ce que j'appellerais « l'entre deux rives » : je suis entre deux pays, deux appartenances, deux citoyennetés, etc. Ce que je décris au Québec et au Canada, c'est

une écriture teintée non seulement d'une certaine perception du monde par la littérature, mais aussi d'une vision de la vie et de l'écriture à une dimension plus ouverte, plus élargie, en raison de l'insertion dans le moule de la diversité culturelle et de ses codes.

Quelle est votre opinion sur le projet de Charte des valeurs québécoises?

C'est un projet qui piétine les droits fondamentaux des individus, et le Parti instigateur de ce projet fait une diversion sur les vrais sujets de société, pour gagner une carte électorale sur ceux qui veulent bâtir la grande nation québécoise et ses valeurs, sur le dos des minorités. Je ne suis pas contre la laïcité des institutions, et cela rendrait les choses claires en ce qui a trait à la neutralité de l'État, etc. mais quand cela touche le droit et la liberté des individus en prétendant encadrer les accommodements par des balises posées par l'État sans qu'il y ait eu au préalable une consultations élargies auprès de comités scientifiques et accrédités spécialistes de la question. Cela rappelle les tout débuts des grands partis fascistes dans certains pays du monde et qui ont jalonné l'histoire, ils ont commencé par s'attaquer aux minorités puis après, lorsqu'ils sont parvenus au pouvoir, ils ont appliqué d'autres plans de discrimination diaboliques pour générer ensuite des guerres et des persécutions fratricides génocidaires de discrimination et de dilapidation.

Êtes-vous ou travaillez-vous maintenant sur de nouveaux projets littéraires?

Oui, je suis dedans un grand projet littéraire qui est le RACMA (Regroupement des auteurs canado-marocains) dont je suis un des cofondateurs. C'est un regroupement d'auteurs dynamique récemment créé ; durant l'année 2013, nous avons organisé plusieurs rencontres littéraires, rassemblé des auteurs interculturels au Québec, invité d'autres auteurs, participé aux journées de la culture et nous avons des projets en vue. C'est un regroupement dont l'objectif, entre autres, est de valoriser l'écrit québécois francophone et de rendre plus visibles les auteurs québécois originaires du Maroc au sein de la mosaïque culturelle québécoise.

Click of the Wrist

Winter Diversions

Winter Sprinter

Just a quick little one-button game, where you try to keep your snowman running long enough to get to the refrigerator truck. Spongelab also has other holiday themed games from previous years, including perhaps the weirdest [take](#) I've ever seen on *The Incredible Voyage*.

On Display

This is 10 of the most amazing light displays that people have put up for the Christmas Season. While I'm happy if we manage to get the tree lit, some people have a lot more energy and effort invested in making the season a show.

Resolutions Resolution

This link gives us five of the most common resolutions that fail, and ways to revamp them so that they may actually work to get what you want. If you're the type of person who has given up on New Year's Resolutions because they never seem to last, this site may have an answer for you.



Comic

Wanda Waterman

ANIBOY & HAPPY RABBIT IN: HAPPY HIPPY HOPPY CHRISTMAS



OH, MAN, THIS SEASON
HAS ME BUMMED!



DITTO. ALL THOSE ZOMBIE SHOPPERS—

NEGATORY, DUDE! THE
DOWNER IS ALL THE
DIFFERENT RELIGIOUS
HOLIDAYS. CHRISTMAS,
HANUKKAH, ROHATSU,
KWANZAA, MAWLID UN-
NABI . . . WHY CAN'T WE
ALL JUST GET ALONG?



WHAT?!

THINK ABOUT IT! IF THE WORLD COULD BE ATHEIST LIKE ME, WE
COULD BE SPENDING THE MONTH OF DECEMBER GRABBING THE
RIBBONS ON THE GREAT MAYPOLE OF LIFE AND TOSSING
GRANOLA TO THE WHITE DOVES CIRCLING ABOVE US!

GO SMOKE ANOTHER DOOBIE, PAL.



DUDE! STOP CLINGING TO YOUR
DELUSIONS!



WRITTEN BY WANDA WATERMAN

AUSU UPDATE



Dear Members,

You may have recently seen information on the internet speculating about the future of Athabasca University. These reports suggest that the Alberta government may broker a merger between AU and University of Alberta, and that this may result in drastic changes to the services and programs offered to students AU students.

We want you to know that AUSU is aware of these rumours and is actively investigating the source – we will keep you informed as we know more.

We can tell you that AU is governed via a bicameral structure with two main governing bodies: the General Faculties Council (formerly Academic Council) and the Board of Governors (formerly Governing Council). AUSU has representatives on both of these governing bodies and we can confirm that there has been no formal discussion of a university merger among these groups. The AU president, Frits Pannekoek, has also assured the press that there is no truth to the rumour. On behalf of our members, we are seeking more information from the Board of Governors, the minister, and AU executives.

At this time we simply have no evidence that a merger is being seriously considered by AU, the U of A, or the Alberta government, and we note that among the many committees and working groups of AU, planning and development for the future continues as usual.

We know that our members are worried and want more information. We will update you as soon as we know more. At this time we do not feel there is any reason for students to worry or make changes to their study plans.

Do not hesitate to contact our office if you wish to talk about this or any other issue affecting AU students.

AUSU.

This column is provided by AUSU to facilitate communication with its members. *The Voice* does not write or edit this section; all content has been exclusively and directly provided by AUSU, and any questions or comments about the material should be directed to ausu@ausu.org.

CLASSIFIEDS

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

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