

# THE VOICE

## MAGAZINE

Vol 22 Issue 12 2014-03-21

**Read with Speed**

No App Required

**Subscribed?**

New and Improved

**Virtual Cures**

Faking it can Work!

*Plus:*

*The Mindful Bard*

*The Writer's Toolbox*

*and much more!*



# CONTENTS

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

## Feature

Reading For Speed: *You Don't Need an App for That* ..... 6

## Articles

Editorial: *Subscriptions and E-mail* ..... 3

## Columns

Writer's Toolbox: *Getting Possessive, Part III* ..... 9

Primal Numbers: *Virtual Care* ..... 4

From Where I Sit: *'Nuff Said* ..... 8

Dear Barb ..... 13

Mindful Bard: *Palestinian Music and Song* ..... 11

## News and Events

Did You Know? ..... 10

International News Desk ..... 5

Click of the Wrist ..... 7

AUSU Update ..... 16

## Comics

Chazz Bravado: *How to Talk to Women* ..... 14

***The Voice  
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# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



**We love to hear from you! Send your questions and comments to [voice@voicemagazine.org](mailto:voice@voicemagazine.org), and please indicate if we may publish your letter.**

## EDITORIAL

Karl Low



## Subscriptions and E-mail

Are you subscribed to *The Voice Magazine's* mailing list? If so, you may be wondering why you haven't received an email lately. Part of the ongoing upgrades to *The Voice Magazine's* website has moved us to a new email server, but unfortunately, the new one has its own problems, and some of you may have noticed you're not getting your weekly update for when *The Voice Magazine* comes out.

Obviously this needs to be fixed, and some of you have already received an email from me about the situation. If you haven't, and you're on our subscriber list, then expect to get one over the next few days making sure that your email address is good, and, more importantly, that you want to be on it. (If you're wondering why it'll take a few days, it's because we've determined the problem we're having is that when we mail them all out at once, many servers think we're just sending spam, so I have to send them out individually.) Once that's done, the subscription list will be moved to MailChimp, a company that is used by AUSU and a lot of companies because it has a good track record of not only making sure it doesn't get used for spam e-mail, but also for keeping its information secure. This will be happening very soon, because we recently discovered that our subscription sign-up isn't working right now either. Fortunately, MailChimp will address that issue as well.

In other news, the UN has declared that today, March 21, is world poetry day, and it is in the spirit of that that *The Voice Magazine* is happy to present a set of Haikus from Barbara Lehtiniemi about life at AU. You'll find the best ones scattered about the pdf version of *The Voice Magazine*, but if you want to see all of them, check out the "Haiku for AU" article on the website.

*reading with intent  
a model of self control  
hark, did facebook ding?*

Also this week, you'll find articles on how to improve your reading speed, dealing with fears by simulating exposure, and our always helpful Writer's Toolbox continues exploring how to use (and just as importantly, how to not use) an apostrophe in your writing. Then, The Mindful Bard reviews a book on the meaning behind Palestinian music, Dear Barb provides an outside look at some tricky situations, and Chazz Bravado gives us a lesson in how to talk to women. That plus other bits and pieces through-out *The Voice Magazine* should give you some good procrastination material.

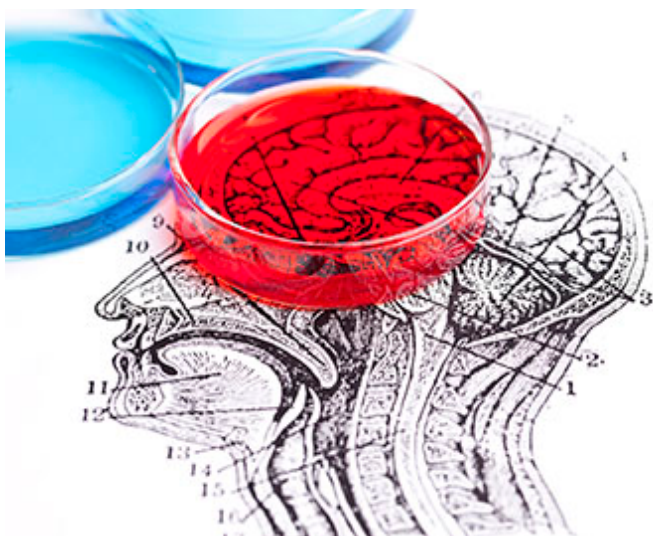
But what I'm really excited about is what's coming up. Our new logo is now proudly displayed on our facebook page, and starting next week we will be running a weekly column, "Meeting the Minds", where we'll have interviews with various tutors, academic experts, and faculty members from AU. We have marathon runners and badminton players, moms and grandfathers, you may be surprised to find that the people teaching you at AU are as varied as the students!

*Karl*



## Primal Numbers

S.D. Livingston



might begin by looking at drawings of a snake, then photos, and eventually be able to stand in the same room as a snake without having a fearful or panicked reaction.

Some fears, though, can be a lot trickier to be safely exposed to. Scared of flying? It would be hard to gain exposure slowly—say, by sitting in a plane or taxiing on a runway. And what about astraphobia, a fear of thunder and lightning? It's impossible to control the weather, so sufferers can't gain exposure in five or 10 minute sessions.

Enter virtual reality, a tool that most of us still associate with 3D gaming. Users wear a special headset that immerses them in a computer-generated environment, one so realistic that it causes the same physical and emotional responses as a user would have in the real setting. Creating virtual snakes and airplanes is easy, and so is providing controlled exposure to them in a safe environment.

But can a computer simulation truly have the same effect as a real-life experience? Or is virtual-reality therapy just one more way that technology is invading our lives, pushing human interaction aside in favour of computers? After all, according to a 2013 Ipsos [poll](#), Canadian smart phone owners already report that “they spend an average of nearly 90 per cent of their free time staring at one of the many screens they own.” And excessive screen time has been linked to serious, negative changes in the brain, as this *Psychology Today* [article](#) shows.

Given those trends, should we be relying on more screens to help alleviate mental health conditions? Based on results so far, the answer is a resounding yes.

From fear of flying in business travellers, to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in soldiers, virtual reality is proving to be an effective treatment. As this *New Scientist* [article](#) reports, research at the University of West Virginia, Charleston shows that “exposure to a virtual reality environment does help subjects to overcome their fears.” And the Institute for Creative Technologies, at the University of Southern California, is finding success using [virtual battle](#) scenes to treat war vets with PTSD.

Yes, virtual-reality therapy is one more screen among many; one more step away from the physical world. But unlike countless hours spent surfing YouTube, virtual-reality therapy involves close interaction between the

## Virtual Cure

For some people, fears and phobias are limited to avoiding black cats on Friday the 13th. For others, excessive fear of things like spiders or escalators can make daily life a misery. Help might be at hand, though, thanks to virtual reality.

The theory behind this treatment is [exposure therapy](#), a well-known technique that uses gradual exposure to a feared situation as a way to desensitize the patient safely. Someone with an excessive fear of snakes, for instance,

patient and a therapist. Another major difference is that screen time is limited to a particular session, not carte blanche to stare at your smart phone all day.

It might seem counterintuitive, but using virtual reality to face our real-world fears could be just what the doctor ordered.

*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.*

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS DESK

### At Home and Abroad



#### At Home: David Hancock become Premiere

If you've been following the news at all, you're already aware that the Premiere of Alberta, Allison Redford, has resigned from the leadership position. She'll be remaining on as an MLA, but no longer leading Alberta's government. In six months or so, the Provincial Progressive Conservative party will have a leadership campaign to determine who their next leader (and Premiere until the next election) will be. Until then, however, Deputy Premier and Advanced Education Minister Dave Hancock is stepping into the role.

While it would seem like having the serving Minister of Advanced Education at the helm could only be a good thing for post-secondary in the province, in reality, the PC party will very likely be far more concerned with attempting to right their sinking ship before the next election. And with Premiere Redford's

record of slashing post-secondary funding despite promises made during her campaign, coupled with her statements on leaving which essentially blamed the party apparatus for preventing her from achieving her goals suggests that any help to come for post-secondary education in Alberta is unlikely to come from the PC party unless this coming election gives us a significant shift in membership.

A recent poll showed the Wildrose party to be the top contender to replace the government currently, but with an election close to two years away there is still a lot of room for change.

#### Around the Globe: Alberta Unions not the Only Ones Unhappy

When you think about iceland, you probably think about glaciers, perhaps fishing, the 1994 Winter Olympics, or maybe even the Netflix series *Lilyhammer*. One of the things you probably don't think about is any sort of civil unrest. But on March 17th, teachers in Iceland went on strike according to a report by *Education International*. The strike aims to improve the teachers' salaries and working conditions, with the union pointing out that new regulations in Iceland require teachers at any level to now hold a Master's degree, and that their wages are, on average, 17% less than other university educated workers in the public sector.

Meanwhile, in Alberta, the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees, which is the union that the administrative staff of Athabasca University are part of, are protest changes unilaterally imposed by the Alberta government that would take the current cost-of-living amounts that applies to pension benefits and change them from their current guaranteed status to a target that the government hopes the fund can meet.

*essay ideas  
waiting for inspiration  
a blinking cursor*

## Reading For Speed: You Don't Need an App for That

Barbara Lehtiniemi



The tech world turned a page last week with the announced launch of the speed-reading app *Spritz*. As this [CBC article](#) describes, the *Spritz* app will move e-text on the screen so that your eyes don't have the chore of moving. Instead of average reading speeds of 200-300 words per minute, *Spritz* users can look forward to reading up to 1000 wpm.

Not every reader is excited. Jian Gomeshi of CBC radio expressed doubts about the new app in his March 13 opening [essay](#) on the popular radio show "Q." "Surely," Gomeshi mused, "the nuances of human communication and most certainly of literature require a little...inefficiency; a little space to think and to feel; to

consider and reconsider." With electronic words flashing by at an unvarying speed, what will happen to the opportunity for reflection that reading at your own pace provides?

While a faster pace helps keep the reader's attention centered on their reading, I won't be lining up for the new *Spritz* app. There are free reading techniques that increase speed without sacrificing reflection and comprehension. Here are a few:

**Follow your finger.** Once thought to be the mark of a slow reader, following your finger through text can actually speed your reading. The movement of your finger pulls the eye along at the rate your finger (or pen or other device) is moving, encouraging greater speed. The challenge of keeping up with your finger forces a focused alertness.

**Skim across the top of words.** Most of the visual clues in the letters of each word are contained in the top half. You can test this by covering the bottom half of a line of text. In most cases, the text is perfectly readable with only the top visible. Your eyes move through text more quickly when you don't try to focus on full letters. It takes practice to train your eyes to skim across the top half of the words, but you'll increase your speed substantially.

**Read phrases, not words.** It's estimated that meaning is contained in as little as 4 to 11% of the text. Your eyes can take in more than one word at a time, especially since many words are only there to make key words look good. Instead of moving your eyes from word to word, broaden your field of attention and move from phrase to phrase. You'll take in more information with fewer eye movements, allowing you to move through text more quickly.

**Minimize sub-vocalization.** Do you hear the words in your head as you're reading? This is sub-vocalizing and it slows you down as you mentally enunciate each word. Sub-vocalizing is useful when you're first learning to read, but it's a habit you can discard once you've mastered reading. Alternatively, you can sub-vocalize selectively by mentally "saying" only the key words you wish to emphasize.

**Read the first sentence and skip through the rest.** In academic texts, the most important point is often contained in the first sentence of each paragraph. Read the first sentence, then let your eyes skip through the rest of the paragraph. Search out key words and points, then move on to the next paragraph. This technique is useful for research as well as a pre-exam final overview of material already read in detail.

**Scan vertically.** One of the harder speed-reading methods to learn, scanning vertically involves moving your eyes down the page instead of across each line. Using your fingers or a small piece of paper, move your hand down the page and let your eyes follow. If you've mastered the "read phrases, not words" technique, you may be ready to take in each

line's critical information at a glance. Remember that most words play a supporting role and your eyes don't need to focus on them to understand the starring words.

Most reading techniques require practice to master. Different techniques may be more suitable for some types of reading than others. Reading for comprehension often requires reviewing information several times. It's beneficial to vary the reading method on each read to avoid mentally zoning out (like you do when you drive the same route to work every day.)

One advantage of these techniques is that you're in control. You can dive in and read in greater detail when necessary, and you can pause for reflection or to re-read an important point. You can speed up, slow down, or change techniques—whatever suits you for what you're reading in the moment.

Whichever way you read, a minute or two of mental preparation will help you focus. Taking a few deep breaths and reminding yourself of what you're going to read and why gives a focused purpose to your reading. Sitting comfortably—upright with both feet on the floor—improves your attention. Reading with a slight smile on your face causes your pupils to dilate, which improves your ability to absorb information (and if nothing else, it will make people wonder what you are up to.)

A bit of practice to update your reading skills can improve both your speed and comprehension. And you don't need an app for that.

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

### Click of the Wrist

**It's spring—according to the calendar, that is. But though real spring weather might still be a few weeks away, it's hard to shake off thoughts of fresh air, sunshine, and gardening. This week's links will help you plan your gardening season while you wait for the snow to melt and the warm winds to start blowing.**

### How Does Your Garden Grow?

### Colours of the Wind

Flower gardening's as much about personal style as it is about natural beauty. Whether you want your garden to match your personality or you're hoping to make a particular statement, this *Canadian Gardening* article explains what the different flower colour palettes might say about you.

### Watch the Signs

The science of phenology, according to the USA National Phenology Network, studies “key seasonal changes in plants and animals from year to year . . . especially their timing and relationship with weather and climate.” Phenology data, though, relies on observations not just from scientists but from observers everywhere. The USANPN's Nature's Notebook program is seeking observers to help keep its data current; visit the link to sign up.

### An App for That

No, really—there is. In fact, tech and social media are transforming gardening and farming. The main link gives an overview of gardening apps for the iPad; if you're an Android type, check out [these apps](#) and get your garden plan going!







### 'Nuff Said

Have you ever concentrated on something so intently, with so much ferocious focus that later you realized you hadn't even blinked for what felt like hours? And no, a marathon session of Spider Solitaire doesn't count. I usually do *that* until my forearms cry out in pain.

I'm talking about serious work with a deadline snapping at your ankles and the success or failure of the entire---okay, your---world hanging in the balance. We're not talking about invigorating physical work outside in the fresh, clear air. We're not talking about a would-be-nice-to-do-someday project.

We're talking about butt nailed to chair in the soul-destroying atmosphere of an office, even if it is home-based and quite lovely. We're talking about drop-dead external deadlines. Such and such is due no later than 4:30 close of business on March 15th but if the 15th falls on a weekend the deadline is extended until the following Monday. Government deadlines. Foundation deadlines.

Such has been my life recently. I'm not sure if the cold sore I've been treating is the result of the public presentations I had to make two nights this week. Or if working on multiple grant applications did me in.

I'm also not sure if the work I'm doing is building brand new synapses in my brain or frying to a crisp those I'm hoping will last as long as I do. I reassure myself that this challenging mental work is staving off the onset of dementia and other mental decay. Am I gonna be ticked if it doesn't.

Out of necessity, and because I love a challenge, applying to government or foundations for funds for our festival has fallen into my purview. And I am getting better at it. Luckily, I pay attention to detail, am not afraid to ask for help, and try,

in all things, to hang onto my sense of humour.

But in a typical first-born Type A anal-retentive self-deprecating way I know I can do better. In case you think I'm being too hard on myself—uh, no. Well, maybe I am. But there is way more to learn and know and do.

At a recent Growing Rural Tourism conference I attended a cleverly titled session called "Grant or Proposal Writing—How to Take the Agony Out of the Feat." Presenter Karen Doyle inundated us with information, tools, and strategies to up our game. She talked about taking the time and energy to create long-term fundraising plans for our various organizations. She advised us what information to have on hand and easy to locate because it's needed for every application form. Things like the last financial statement, a list of the board members, a mission statement. The extra reading and document templates will, I'm sure, make my job easier when I have time to adapt them to our needs. In the meantime, it reminds me of an old cartoon caption: when you're up to your ass in alligators it's hard to remember that your initial plan was to drain the swamp. 'Nuff said, from where I sit.

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

## Writer's Toolbox

### Getting Possessive, Part III

Christina M. Frey



### All Proper

For the past two weeks we've discussed forming the possessive with common nouns, both singular and plural. In this week's Toolbox, we'll look at a different type of noun—the proper noun—and how it forms the possessive case.

#### General rule for singular proper nouns

Proper nouns are most easily recognizable as the names of specific people or places or specific entities like restaurants, newspapers, and so on. *Sarah* is a proper noun; so is *Canada*. So are *The Voice Magazine*, *Athabasca University*, and *Costco*.

Remember the general rule for singular common nouns? Singular proper nouns follow that same rule and **form the possessive by adding an apostrophe + s**.

*Example A: Marshall McLuhan's writings have influenced my perspectives on television.*

*Example B: Ontario's premier will be making an official statement tomorrow.*

*Example C: Datacorp's new policies will go into effect on Monday.*

#### General rule for plural proper nouns

The general rule for plural proper nouns is the same as for plural common nouns: **add an apostrophe**.

*Example D: The O'Briens' party was the highlight of the month.*

Watch, though, that you don't confuse the plural, possessive, and plural possessive:

*Example E: The O'Briens threw a great party.* This is the plural form.

*Example F (incorrect): The O'Brien's party was a lot of fun.* This applies the possessive case to the singular form of the proper noun *O'Brien*; it's incorrect because the party was thrown by the O'Briens, not "the O'Brien."

*Example G (correct): The O'Briens' party was a lot of fun.*

*Example H (correct): The Joneses' party was a lot of fun.*

#### Singular proper nouns ending in -s: *APA* and *Chicago*

For singular proper nouns ending in -s, it's a little trickier; which rule you use depends on which style guide you're following.

APA and *Chicago* styles, which are used in books and in the academic world, **form the possessive by adding apostrophe + s, even when the proper noun ends in –s**. It might look weird, but that is the accepted current practice for APA and *Chicago* styles.

*Example I: Dickens's work was the basis for my research project.*

*Example J: Kansas's senators are making an announcement today.*

There are two major exceptions, however. First, if you're using APA style and the proper noun ends in an s that's unpronounced, as in *Descartes*, you just add the apostrophe. Note that this only applies to APA style; *Chicago* no longer follows this exception.

*Example K (correct in APA style): Descartes' writings influenced Bob's philosophical outlook.*

*Example L (correct in Chicago style): Descartes's writings influenced Bob's philosophical outlook.*

style, commas, quotes, rules  
writing solutions packed in  
the writer's toolbox

The second exception involves singular proper nouns already ending with an apostrophe + s, like *McDonald's*. In this case, you do not add anything to form the possessive:

*Example M: McDonald's fries can be addicting.*

### Singular proper nouns ending in –s: AP style

If you're following AP style—as is done by many publications—you'll form the possessive of a proper noun ending in s by **adding an apostrophe only**.

*Example N (correct in AP style): Dickens' work was influential.*

That's it! In next week's issue we'll wrap up possessive nouns by looking at some special situations, including idioms and expressions and acronyms. Add these rules to your cheat sheet, and remember: whatever style guide you're using, the key is to stay consistent.

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

### DID YOU KNOW?

### AUSU's AGM



Athbasca University Students' Union is holding its annual general meeting (AGM) on March 26<sup>th</sup> at 5:30pm by teleconference.

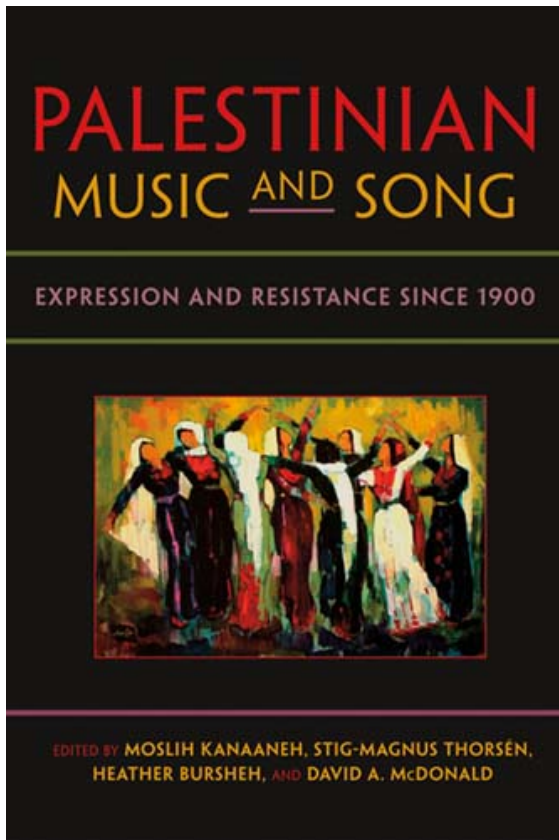
Each year, AUSU is required to hold this meeting so that members (any student currently enrolled in an AU course) can have direct input into what our union is doing. AUSU will present its audited financial papers, overview of what they've done over the past year, and present ideas for going forward.

More importantly, they'll also be looking for ideas from us, the individual members on directions we think the organization should go. Contact [ausu@ausu.org](mailto:ausu@ausu.org) to be given more information on how you can participate

## Mindful Bard

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

Wanda Waterman



**Book:** *Palestinian Music and Song: Expression and Resistance since 1900*

**Editors:** Moslih Kanaaneh, Stig-Magnus Thorsén, Heather Bursheh, and David A. McDonald

**Publisher:** Indiana University Press

### Reflecting and Shaping a National Identity

Palestine's struggle is, to some extent, the story of every nation. So rare is it to find a country or ethnic group with no memory of ever having been colonized.

And as this book makes abundantly clear, the very survival of a tradition of songwriting and performance within a colonized culture is itself an act of resistance—a reaction to oppression as well as a kind of parallel to political discourse—that makes any serious discussion of music in Palestine a relevant topic for mindful bards the world over.

Not all Palestinian songs can be identified as songs of resistance, but love songs, funeral songs, lullabies, and work songs are all evidence of community spirit and a call for autonomy that refuses to be silenced.

The book project began in 2007, as a discussion among a number of acquaintances, both European and Palestinian, with vested interests, some academic, some artistic, in Palestinian culture. The idea that emerged was to host a symposium to which they would invite smart people to present essays on the subject of Palestinian music, with the results going into a book.

In 2010, a three-day symposium was held in Jordan. The reason Jordan was chosen was that it was the closest country that would admit speakers from both Palestine (and those barred from re-entering Palestine) and Israel (and those barred from re-entering Israel). After the speakers presented their essays, lively debates and discussions explored the ideas they presented. This helped other thinkers hone their own ideas and also helped the speakers further refine their work for publication.

Not pointing the finger too steadily in the direction of Israel, the book reveals how Palestinian music developed in response to a number of influences, a significant one being a whole slew of past colonizers including Persia, Greece, Rome, Turkey, and Great Britain, and every one of whom contributed elements to the music's development.

Other key components of the Palestinian music's evolution are globalization, and the rise of Arabization and political Islamists, both of which share the goal of neutralizing regional differences in the interests of creating a



pan-Arab culture. Another influence on the development of Palestinian music is the West's financial support for the arts there, a liberality often suspected of being a ploy to neutralize active political resistance.

An important observation brought out in the chapter by Issa Boulos ("Negotiating the Elements: Palestinian Freedom Songs From 1967 to 1987") is that although in the early half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the question of whether art should be created for art's sake or to bring about social change was as intense a debate in the Arab world as it was in the West, it stopped being in question after 1948, when musicians expelled from Palestine began showing up in other Arab countries to share their stories. Arab musicians, writers, and artists quickly rallied around the cause of Palestine liberation and supported it with their creations and performances. It was no longer just about the art.

But obstacles to freedom of expression don't always come from the colonizers. Musical artists in Palestine share the universal plight of marginalization within their own groups. For example, Palestinian folksinger Reem Talhami tells interviewer Heather Bursheh that she faced great opposition to her dream of singing from within her own family and community. They saw a singing career as low in status and economically precarious.

*it's quite like working  
being educational  
reading The Voice mag*

Reem's social conscience began to merge with her music after the first Intifada (Palestinian uprising) in 1987. She describes being in a group that put music to the words of noted Palestinian poets and how this put her in demand as a performer. In the end, the same community that had once discouraged her from singing now welcomed her to their concert stages and theatres.

In the eighth chapter, David A. McDonald explains that this music of the people doesn't just reflect the people's feelings; it produces and shapes their emotions, their identities, and the connections between them.

The writers in this book are agreed that music is a common expression of humanity and, at the same time, a way of asserting difference. On the one hand, music is humanity's common language and there seems to be no limit to the amount of collaboration and syncretism that can occur among the most disparate of genres. On the other hand, a group's music is sometimes a way of saying, "We're not like you."

*Palestinian Music and Song* manifests six of the Mindful Bard's criteria for books well worth reading.

It poses and admirably responds to questions that have a direct bearing on my view of existence.

It stimulates my mind.

It harmoniously unites art with social action, saving me from both seclusion in an ivory tower and slavery to someone else's political agenda.

It displays an engagement with and compassionate response to suffering.

It renews my enthusiasm for positive social action.

It makes me appreciate that life is a complex and rare phenomena, making living a unique opportunity.

Wanda also penned the poems for the artist book **They Tell My Tale to Children Now to Help Them to be Good**, a collection of meditations on fairy tales, illustrated by artist Susan Malmstrom.



## Dear Barb:

**Dear Barb:**

*I am a forty year old mother of three and lately I have been losing my zest for life. I have gained a few pounds that I can't seem to lose, my hair is going grey, my eyesight isn't as good as it used to be, and I know I'm going to have to wear glasses soon. I just feel like I'm falling apart physically and emotionally. My friends can't understand why I feel the way I do. I have a great husband, my kids are all healthy, I have a job that I love, but I still feel that I'm missing something in life. My husband attends church regularly and I used to go with him, but I just don't feel like going anymore. Nothing seems to make me happy. Not sure what I can do to get out of this slump.*

*Feeling sad, Dina*

Hi Dina:

My first reaction is to ask if you have discussed this with your family doctor. You need to make sure there is nothing physically wrong with you. Many physical conditions can cause depression and feeling low. For example, a condition called hypothyroidism can really mess with your metabolism and cause low energy, weight gain, and just an all around sluggish feeling. Also, at forty years of age you may be in perimenopause and that could cause many of the feelings you are describing. Both of these conditions can be treated with medication. So begin with your family doctor. Once physical causes are ruled out you may want to

speak to a counselor or life coach. Many women reach your age and start to burn out from spreading themselves too thin with taking care of children, career, and household responsibilities. Perhaps you need to find your passion to help bring back your zest for life. This could be anything, from learning to play a musical instrument, writing a memoir, horseback riding lessons, the possibilities are endless. Remember, it's important to take care of Dina as well.

**Dear Barb:**

*This might be a dumb question, but my 18 year old cat needs to be put down but I can't seem to bring myself to do it. My veterinarian has advised me it is time, and I know my cat is struggling but I just keep hoping she will pass in her sleep. How can I get in the right frame of mind to do this?*

*Thanks, Ashok.*

Hello Ashok:

Your question is not dumb! Your cat has been a part of your life for 18 years, and that's a long time. I think we all hope our pets will naturally pass away in their sleep, leaving us off the hook for having to make that final decision. Since your vet has advised you to put your cat down, he/she must feel strongly that it's time. Veterinarians do not advise to put a pet down unless they are convinced it's the right thing to do. Most likely your cat is not eating or drinking very much and may be in a lot of pain. You have to focus on your cat and his/her quality of life. Your feelings have to become secondary.

Believe me, you will get over this and know you made the right decision.

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

## Comic

Wanda Waterman

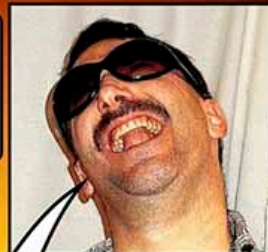
# CHAZZ BRAVADO IN: HOW TO TALK TO WOMEN

WHEN SHE SAYS . . .

YOU SAY . . .



I love you in a  
Platonic way.



Me, too! Cuz I know how frisky those ancient  
Greeks were! Hyuk!



I just want to be  
friends.

That's all I ever wanted,  
baby— to be your friend.  
Your very special friend . . .

You're not my  
type.



You haven't seen me in my "fleshtoned  
polyester jumpsuit."

I'm looking for  
Mr. Right.



If Mr. Right  
walks into this  
bar right now  
and sees you  
with me, he'll  
totally respect  
you!



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](mailto:ausu@ausu.org).

*I'll do it later.  
Promises, promises? Or  
procrastination?*



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# CLASSIFIEDS

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

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## THE VOICE

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