

# THE VOICE

## MAGAZINE

Vol 22 Issue 14 2014-04-04

### Meeting the Minds!

Dr. Sunday Akin Olukoju

### What's Fair About It?

Doing My Part

### Transparent Texting

Talking the Walk

*Plus:*

*Chazz Bravado*

*Maghreb Voices*

*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](mailto:voice@voicemagazine.org), and please indicate if we may publish your letter.**

## EDITORIAL

Karl Low

**What's Fair About it?**

I'm angry today. If you haven't heard, and apparently somewhere around 85% of Canadians haven't, our Conservative Government is attempting to rapidly put through a new Elections law. They're euphemistically calling the bill the "Fair Elections Act", but on reading it, there's very little that's fair about it. Almost every constitutional or elections expert has denounced the bill as being damaging to democracy, including former auditor general, Sheila Fraser. As of yet, however, the Conservative government remains adamant that the bill is just fine, and that changes, if any, will be confined to minor tweaks.

If you have heard about it, odds are what you've heard has something to do with vouching. Students groups, the blind, aboriginals, all have declared that this bill has serious problems which will likely prevent large numbers of them from voting. The removal of vouching, in tandem with the removal of voter identification cards, is probably the most direct attack on our democratic right to vote within the bill, but while very serious, also is unlikely to affect many of us. There are other, broader problems with the bill, but we'll get to them in a minute.

On the face of it, vouching seems unnecessary. As has been reported many times, there are 39 pieces of ID that are acceptable, and for most Canadians, any one of them will suffice. Why then, should we care if some individual hasn't bothered to get theirs? The problem is that, at the time of the vote, many individuals are not living in their home or registered ridings. And if they've moved shortly before the election, or are living in the area temporarily (as many post-secondary students do), they may not have any proof of address. They can prove who they are, sure, but to vote, they'd need to prove they lived in that riding, and that simply might not be possible. Before this bill, somebody who was registered in the riding and knew them could then vouch for that person and they could vote.

The argument the conservatives have against this is that it is too open to fraud. However, this is actually one of the harder ways to commit voter fraud, as it requires that you find an eligible person who is not only willing to lie for you, but willing to lie when the penalty may include criminal charges and a prison sentence. As has been pointed out, a lease agreement is considered a valid piece of ID that shows your address. That and one other piece of identification is all that's needed to vote. Since you can buy blank lease agreements at staples, and since Elections Canada has no way of verifying that what's written on a lease agreement is actually true, fraud is both easier and safer without vouching than it is with it. But that's not what I'm angry about.

As troubling as that is, it is one of the lesser problems with this bill. One of the bigger problems is that this bill makes a mockery of any election spending limits we care to set. With donations of under \$20 not needed to be recorded at all, and donations of \$200 or less not needing any donor identification, donation limits are nearly meaningless. In addition, the bill now also exempts any spending during a campaign that may be used

to gain donations from being reported as a campaign expense. While Elections Canada does have the ability to determine if any particular material sent is either campaign advertising or donation seeking, the bill provides no means for Elections Canada to demand materials from a campaign. But that's not what I'm angry about.

Worse, the bill legalizes the "in-and-out" scheme that the Conservative government plead guilty to from the 2006 election. Let me restate that, the government that plead guilty to breaking a law in 2006 is attempting to change the law to match their behavior. This is little different from a mayor of a city being caught speeding in a playground zone and then choosing to remove all playground zones from the city. It doesn't make our country, our elections, any safer. It makes them worse. Under this bill, a locked-in riding, such as the Medicine Hat riding here in Alberta, can use any of its unspent campaign expense limit to purchase an advertisement for the tightly contested riding in, say, Nipissing. This might not seem too bad until you remember that we, the taxpayer, reimburse all riding associations for the bulk of the expenses undertaken during a campaign – if the campaign in Medicine Hat really didn't need the money for it, should we, the taxpayers, be paying for it anyway? But that's not what I'm angry about.

The bill also lets the winning party from the previous election determine who will act as the poll supervisor in any riding. The poll supervisor has significant power when it comes to determining if somebody is allowed to vote or not. While the conservative party notes that the current elections act already allows that to happen for other positions at the riding, those people all have to defer to the polling supervisor, who, before this bill, was hired impartially by Elections Canada. Regardless of your political party, this should be concerning because it will only benefit corrupt parties and individuals at the expense of honest ones. If you believe that the people in your opponent's party are more likely to be corrupt, this change in the law will only help to ensure that if they ever get into power, it will be much harder to remove them from it. But that's not what I'm angry about.

Another problem with this bill is that it takes investigative powers away from Elections Canada, which reports to parliament as a whole, and puts it into a parallel office that reports directly to the government of the day. Put another way, a government that wins by illegitimate means is the government that gets to decide if there will be any sort of investigation into those means. Again, whichever party you support, this should be extremely worrying. But that's not what I'm angry about.

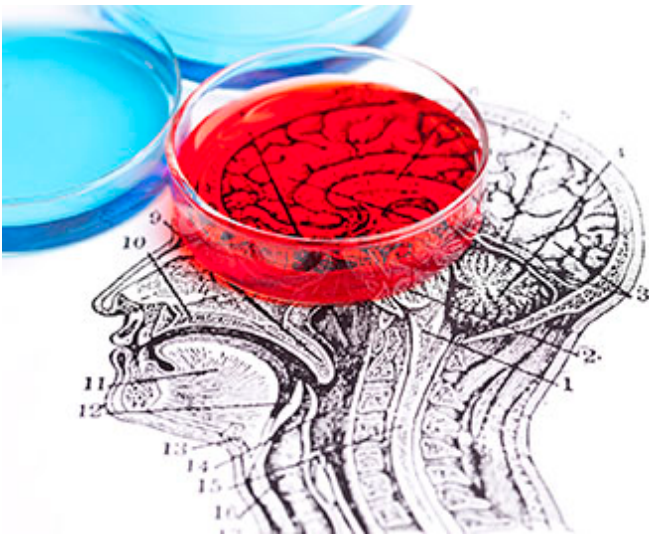
No, what I'm angry about is that despite all of this, despite how this bill, whether through malice or simple short-sightedness, is almost designed to make things better for parties and candidates who are willing to cheat, it is a concern to only 15% of Canadians. Most Canadians don't even know it's happening, and this is a massive failure on the part of our media and on the part of us as Canadians. Well, I'm doing my part. I'm telling you. Now I want you to do your part. Tell somebody. Strike up a conversation with your neighbour, your co-worker, your tutor, perhaps, and ask them if they know about what's happening here. Ask them if they want our democracy made easier for cheaters.

And when you're done doing that? Write your MP.

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



## Primal Numbers



what's in front of a Smart phone user as live video in the background of whichever app they're using—as if the phone were transparent.” Apple has reportedly filed a patent on the technology, though users can already find a similar [app](#) called Type n Walk in the iTunes store.

It might seem like a solution in search of a problem, until you consider that texting and walking has become such a danger that some cities have created laws to deal with it. This *ABC News* [video](#) reveals that the town of Fort Lee, New Jersey, has started handing out tickets for texting while jaywalking, and authorities in London, England, have padded some lampposts to prevent text-walking injuries. And as the *Los Angeles Times* [reported](#), over 1,500 pedestrians in the US “were treated in emergency rooms in 2011 after being injured while using a portable electronic device like a cellphone.”

Is transparent texting the solution? No, and it might make things worse by giving people a false sense of security.

The problem isn't texting. Nor is it walking. Most people can do one or the other with ease. The problem is that the human brain can only focus well on one task at a time. And whether you're monitoring your environment through a screen or not, transparent texting would still require you to divide your attention between composing a text and watching out for cars and lampposts.

Even worse, tech that encourages users to multitask could hamper their ability to focus at all. As *Time* [reports](#), a 2009 Stanford study found that “even when they focus on a single activity, frequent multitaskers use their brains less effectively.”

Rather than finding ways to encourage the text-walking habit, why not use technology to prevent it? For instance, plenty of smart phones now have pedometers built in. It wouldn't be that difficult to link the technology to a phone's text capability. If it senses walking, the text function won't work. Even in more basic phones, the tech could be used for that purpose alone without adding a pedometer app.

The biggest drawback is that the feature would have to be accurate enough to consistently sense the difference between walking and other types of motion. Otherwise, you wouldn't be able to text while riding in a car or train.

**S.D. Livingston**

## Transparent Texting?

Smart phones are seductive little gadgets, aren't they? In fact, it can be hard to tear your eyes away from the screen, even when you're walking or driving. Now some tech giants have come up with transparent texting, which fills your screen with a view of what's in front of you. It's an idea whose time should never have come.

According to a recent CBC blog [post](#), the technology works like this: it activates the rear-facing camera on your device, “displaying

What about emergencies? Odds are that you'd be dialling 911 rather than texting a friend. And if you really were in an emergency situation, your brain would be even less able to multitask and focus on texting while running from danger.

So even though the idea of viewing the world through your screen might sound cool, texting and walking could still land you in hot water—or straight off the edge of a pier.

*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.*



## Maghreb Voices

Wanda Waterman



**Film:** *Birds Requiem*

**Artist:** Dhafer Youssef

### A Thousand Ways to Kneel and Kiss the Ground

"Today, like every day, we wake up empty and frightened. Don't go to the door of the study and read a book. Instead, take down the dulcimer; let the beauty of what you love be what you do. There are a thousand ways to kneel and kiss the ground, there are a thousand ways to go home again."

- Rumi

Here we have one of the most remarkable recording achievements of 2013. This decade's masters of world-classical-jazz musical syncretism have been amazing (Ludocivo Einaudi, Dinuk Wijeratne, and

Kinan Azmeh, to name a few), but Dhafer Youssef is near the top of the heap.

Oud maestro Youssef comes from a humble family of *muezzins* (men who make the calls to prayer) in a small Tunisian fishing village. His amazing voice (I'm guessing a five-octave range) was first tested by Quranic recitations and gained proficiency when he became fascinated with listening to the resonance of his own singing in his mother's kitchen and in the marketplace.

When he was old enough Dhafer himself gave the call to prayer, showing himself to be every bit as vocally proficient as his ancestors. He soon started studying the oud (a pear-shaped, stringed instrument), joining a number of musical groups and attending music school in the capital, Tunis. Eventually he felt compelled to continue his musical education in Europe.

Vienna provided the multicultural stimulation his peculiar musical creativity required. He left academic studies behind, as the clubs and bars provided him with the more intensive musical training he was looking for. The connections he made among superlative musicians from across Europe and the Maghreb enabled him to produce a series of meticulous, elegant, impassioned recordings, the most recent of which is, in this listener's opinion, the fairest of them all.

The tracks all manifest an advanced musical knowledge, with elements of different folk cultures and jazz all impeccably arranged but communicating an unspeakable poignancy. The Arab aspects of Youssef's compositions and performances are the epitome of all that is distinctively beautiful about Arab music; the *maqams*, the rhythms, the soaring crescendos and decrescendos, and the poetic titles and lyrics all showcase the rich, complex heritage of Arab music.

Many of Youssef's compositions are inspired by Persian mystical poets like Rumi and El-hallaj. The affinity of Youssef's music with those words is profound; spiritual tranquility and ecstatic passion are difficult to marry together in art and their union requires a highly developed artistic sensibility.

The musicians are all phenomenal and deliciously in sync, and apparently this is owed to Youssef's demeanor; they all report his special gift for making them feel important, loved even, while they're playing with him.

Kristjan Randalu plays a heavenly jazz piano, ripe with invention, skill, and pure swing. He's probably the jazziest player in the crew, and gets more points for the way he seamlessly blends European jazz with Arab, Indian, and European folk traditions. There is a heady mix of jazz and not-jazz, sometimes squaring off, sometimes waltzing together like Fred and Ginger.

*Youssef's demeanor suggests an old soul shining with a gentle beneficence. [His] unique achievement is how he manages to communicate this to us in his music.*

The title track, Birds Canticum "Birds Requiem" Suite, is a gorgeous rhapsody in which you don't know where Nils-Petter Molvaer's ravishing clarinet ends in Dhafer Youssef's ecstatic, soaring voice begins. Youssef says he came up with the name of the album because he felt the intertwining of his voice with Molvaer's was like two birds flying in tandem. This sense of imagery emerges from the poetic mindset typical of many Tunisians, whose language tends to be peppered with similes and metaphors.

In the videos on his [website](#) Youssef's demeanor suggests an old soul shining with a gentle beneficence. I've met people like this in Tunisia—people who despite personal suffering manage to retain and communicate a deeply affirming love. Youssef's unique achievement is how he manages to communicate this to us in his music.

*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.*



# MEETING THE MINDS

## A **NEW** VOICE COLUMN



*Dr. Sunday Akin Olukoju has been a tutor at Athabasca University since mid-2011. His courses include: GLST/POEC 230 (Globalization and World Politics,) POLI/GOVN/GLST 440 (Global Governance and Law,) and GLST/POEC 483 (International Political Economy: The Politics of Globalization.) Sunday tutors up to several dozen students in these courses.*

*Dr. Olukoju was recently interviewed by The Voice Magazine:*

### **What makes Global and Legal Studies interesting for you?**

The courses I tutor are lively, real, fun, informative, and engaging. I love to discuss current issues, to analyze and evaluate how events in the Ukraine could impact decisions in Canada or the US, for example.

### **What brought you to tutoring at AU?**

Quest for knowledge: to learn, teach, exchange ideas, and grow as I tutor and help students succeed. I was a core faculty in a US university (2009 to 2010) and a Canadian university (2010 to 2011) before joining AU.

### **What are common pitfalls you see students running into?**

Many are adult students who carry many responsibilities, so I've seen some of them devote far less time to school work. Procrastination is another one—many wait until the last minute to ask a question or submit a paper. Another one is the lack of logical organization of points in essays. Students should outline their points, reflect deeply on them, and analyze critically in the course of articulating their positions and points. But I must also admit that most of my students (former and current) are very articulate and hardworking.

### **What is interesting to you currently in your academic field?**

Many things are interesting, but one that is currently the peak of the pack is the impact of globalization and its accompanying implications.

### **What are your interests outside of tutoring?**

I love fishing. I spend a great deal of time with our two boys, driving them to soccer games. I write for a community newspaper, and I am also involved at the board/managerial level in a few non-profit organizations. So, volunteering is part of me outside of tutoring.

### **What is your opinion of AU's move to e-texts so far?**

I believe the move will serve the interest of our students well.

### **What is your opinion of the shift to the call-centre model?**

While I am not totally sure of how the call-centre model will play out, I doubt if tutors will have enough time like we have now to assist students. I do not think the call-centre model will help our students a lot as they may lose the special touch of tutors, particularly as tutors spend many hours assisting students to articulate their essay topics, in addition to ongoing editorial assistance in many cases.

### **What are your thoughts on social media use at AU?**

I think every avenue to get the information out or to pass the information around quickest should be explored. Social media use will definitely improve efficiency and effectiveness, all things being equal.

### **What do you think AU should be doing to improve itself in the future?**

Invest more resources in students and teachers/tutors. Expand course offerings. Explore new markets. Partner with like-minded institutions. Devote more resources to research and professional training of staff and tutors.

### **Click of the Wrist**

**When the weather finally takes a turn for the better, we start feeling antsy about being cooped up indoors. On the other hand, how to balance the need to move with the need to stay focused on work or school? Standing desks are starting to trend again, and not only do they help keep users from the negative health effects of sitting, but they also have been shown to help focus. Take a step (stand?) in the right direction and learn more:**

#### **History in the Making**

Standing desks—and the recognition of the health risks of sedentary jobs—have been around for centuries. This brief history outlines the development of the office job and the parallel rise of the mobile workplace (and how technological trends may change the game).

#### **A Reason to Stand**

This Health@Google talk explains exactly why a sedentary lifestyle is so detrimental to the human body. An hour long, but well worth the time, it offers many options for workplace mobility (and it could save your life someday).

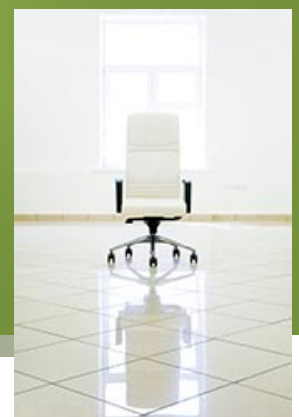
#### **Easy Hack**

You can buy a standing desk for hundreds of dollars from specialty online sellers—or you can put together a DIY version for less than \$30. This one, made from \$22 worth of pieces from IKEA, is functional and uncomplicated (be sure to read through the comments for mods and hacks).

#### **Better Focus**

Sitting may be traditional, but it's not necessarily better. This *New York Times* article profiles schools that have implemented non-traditional desk and seating arrangements. The results: happier, more productive students. It's time to take a stand!

### **Taking a Stand**



## Positively Productive Procrastination

Barbara Lehtiniemi



Ha! Caught you. Shouldn't you be studying? And here you are, reading a magazine.

"But wait," you say, "I am actually enhancing my studies by reading *The Voice Magazine*. Look at all this valuable information: writing and studying tips, news on AU, and views on music, literature, life."

Okay, you win. You may be procrastinating from something, but you are doing it productively.

Students often beat themselves up (figuratively, of course) over procrastination. They know they should be studying but get lured away by, well, anything else. The problem isn't necessarily that they are attracted to distractions. It may be they're taking a break because they *need* a break.

A student may feel that, having set aside one or two or three hours, they need to sit there for those hours and apply themselves diligently. However, seldom do they work the entire time. The mind wanders, loses focus, and thinks about other things. All of which invite some diversion.

Your mind doesn't always lose focus and wander due to lack of self-control. It sometimes wanders because it needs a break. By allowing your mind to rest for a few minutes, you can return to your studies more alert and focused. By paying attention, you can gauge how long you usually go before your mind wanders off. If it's consistently after 40 (or 20 or 60) minutes of studying, then plan a short break around those intervals. If it varies, learn to notice the signs that your mind needs a break and take one.

Not only will your studying be more productive after a refreshing break, but you can actually get something else worthwhile done. There are many positive activities you can indulge in for a 5-minute break; here are a few you can feel good about:

- read *The Voice Magazine* (you knew that one already)
- stretch, meditate, or do some deep-breathing exercises
- plan your calendar for next week
- go outside
- de-clutter your desk
- get rid of something on your to-do list
- listen to music

Resist time-wasters. If you're refreshing your e-mail, checking Facebook yet again, or aimlessly surfing the web, you're just procrastinating. The point of taking a break is to recharge your brain, not numb it out. You'll feel better if you engage in a positive, productive activity.

Get away from your desk and set a timer to limit your break to 5 minutes. You can achieve a lot in that amount of time. When you return to your studies, you'll feel refreshed and, more importantly, you'll feel good

about how you spent your time. If you need some extra willpower to stick to your studies, set the timer for your study period, too. Knowing that time is limited can force an amazing level of concentration.

At the end of your study period, reward yourself. Indulge in some mindless web-surfing, watch TV, nap, or whatever you want to do to congratulate yourself. Not only did you study well, but you fit in a few extras too.

So, build a little productive procrastination into your study schedule. Put your studies on "pause" and find something to take your mind away for a few minutes. Then you can return to your studies focused and ready to learn.

Now, get back to work!

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

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS DESK

### At Home and Abroad



#### At Home: High Demand Programs Expanded at NAIT

*Global News* is reporting that the Northern Alberta Instituted of Technology (NAIT) has received 1.9 million dollars in "targeted enrolment collaborative initiatives", and is using this to open up 390 seats at the school in seven high-demand programs. NAIT currently serves approximately 8000 full time students, and 20,500 for continuing education and part time courses. The "High Demand Programs", as dictated by the Alberta government are in various types of Engineering Technology, specifically, Chemical, Civil, Construction, Electrical, Instrumentation, Petroleum, and Waste & Wastewater.

By contrast, Athabasca University serves nearly 40,000 students, and received just over \$655,000 in these initiatives.

#### Around the Globe: Study Miley Cyrus for Credit

Skidmore College, in New York State, has opened a new course titled "The Sociology of Miley Cyrus: Race, Class, Gender, and Media", according to *The Guardian*. By the end of March, only three students had registered for the new course, but assistant professor, Carolyn Chernoff, has high hopes that enrollment will increase for the summer class, which will run in three 150 minute sessions each week.

Development of the idea started last summer after the controversial performance at the MTV Video Music Awards, spurred by a lecture written for the Skidmore Centre for Sex and Gender Relations, titled *The Rise and Fall of Miley Cyrus*. The course description looks at Ms. Cyrus as a "locus for discussions of appropriation, queerness, gender-stratification and the hyper-commodification of childhood. The course will also examine how the media retains a virgin/whore dichotomy, of which Miley Cyrus, who has had to hyper-sexualize herself in order to get away from the wholesome Disney image, is a prime example.

While there are no current plans to have Ms. Cyrus provide any sort of guest lecture herself, assistance professor Chernoff leaves the option open, "We'll see what happens."



## For Another Day

Roy attended a breakout session called Boost Your Marvelous Brain at the recent Alberta Seniors Housing Association conference. He brought home a handout and brochure from the Calgary Alzheimer Society. I love learning about brain function because I've grown very fond (and protective) of my own mind.

That's also why I've never understood those who willfully do things that can hurt that precious organ. Or hasten the decline that naturally comes with advancing age. Or fail to take protective proactive measures to optimize its function.

Think about those old ads showing a brain on drugs or scrambled after an accident. When I was teenager an old wives' tale insisted that 10,000 brain cells were lost each time a person got drunk. I have no idea if that was true then or now but I do know I wasn't taking any chances. I didn't think I could spare any.

There are five factors within our control as we attempt to keep our brains healthy as long as possible. They don't offer total protection against the onset of Alzheimer's disease or other dementia.

1. Challenge your mind through games like Sudoku, crosswords, puzzles, and card games. Learn a new language, take a course, play a musical instrument. Use your non-dominant hand to perform tasks.
2. Manage the stress levels in your life by getting sufficient sleep and nurturing your health and wellbeing with personal time devoted to relaxation. Spend time with friends, hobbies, entertainment. Don't fight those things you can't change, ask for and accept help, and laugh.
3. Take steps to socialize whether it's with family, friends or strangers. Join a group, club or organization. Be both the host and the guest. Initiate conversations. I had two fun and funny talks with the Jamaican maid who cleaned our hotel room. She laughed easily and often and I was caught up in her story. She looked like a girl yet was fifty-eight years old. Good genes or good attitude? She made my day.
4. Know your (cholesterol, blood sugar, blood pressure, weight) numbers and get them into the healthy range. Eat a well-balanced, portion-controlled diet; limit alcohol consumption and see a doctor when necessary.
5. Incorporate regular, do-able, reasonable activity into your life. Protect yourself against head injury and concussion. Wear a seatbelt when driving. Prevent tripping hazards, be vigilant with medications, install aids and improve balance and strength to prevent falls.

Memory loss, disorientation, errors in judgment and a changed personality are some early indicators of dementia and Alzheimer's disease. Difficulty communicating or doing abstract thinking, being moody, misplacing items and lacking initiative are others.

So our assignment is clear: after a good night's sleep take a daily walk with a friend while wearing a helmet, munching on celery and doing a Sudoku before volunteering later with a service club. That should stave off dementia for another day, 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 V

Christina M. Frey



The past four weeks we've explored the possessive case in great detail. We've learned the general rules: for singular and plural common nouns; for proper nouns; studied the difference among plural, possessive, and plural possessive; learned style-based exceptions to the general rules for certain types of nouns; and examined compound possessives and joint possession.

Now we're at the end of the road, and it's time to wrap up loose ends with a few miscellaneous rules, expressions, and notes.

#### Possessive of nouns plural in form, singular in meaning

Some nouns are plural in form but singular in meaning—like *politics*, *species*, and *Royal Gardens*. When a common or proper noun ends in *s* in both its singular and its plural form, **form the possessive by adding the apostrophe only** regardless of which

style guide you're using. You may recognize this as the possessive rule for regular plural nouns.

*Example A: I wrote a paper discussing the United States' ventures into government-sponsored healthcare.*

*Example B: Academy Awards celebrate the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences' picks for best films of the year.*

Sometimes, though, the correct possessive version looks awkward and should be rewritten to avoid the possessive entirely:

*Example C (correct, but somewhat awkward): Economics' basic principles must be mastered before one can competently teach them.*

*Example D (better): The basic principles of economics must be mastered before one can competently teach them.*

#### Expressions with *sake*

A few weeks ago we looked at words ending in an *s* sound and followed by a word beginning with *s* or a similar sound. This is often found in expressions using the word *sake* (e.g., *for appearance' sake*). For these expressions, check your style guide; AP style only adds an apostrophe, while *Chicago* adds an apostrophe if the word ends in the letter *s* (otherwise, if it ends merely with an *s* sound, add apostrophe + *s*).

*Example E (AP style): For goodness' sake, stop complaining!*

*Example F (Chicago style): For goodness' sake, stop complaining!*

*Example G (Chicago style): For appearance's sake, she presented her project in a new folder.*

*Example H (AP style): For appearance' sake, she presented her project in a new folder.*

### **Expressions with time**

Time-based expressions like “in three weeks’ time” seem like they should take the possessive case, but they’re not technically possessives at all. Rather, they’re rooted in an old form called the genitive case. Although the genitive case, in English at least, is no longer in use, the expressions remain—and remain confusing. Remember this rule: even though the possessive case isn’t being used, treat these expressions as though they’re in possessive case rather than genitive.

*Example I: Sarah has three years’ experience in project management.* Here, the word *of* is implied (“years of experience”); this points to the archaic genitive case, so *years* is treated as a possessive noun and forms its possessive like other regular plurals (adding an apostrophe).

*Example J: John’s accident resulted in an hour’s delay.* Here, the word *of* is implied, so we have an expression using the old genitive case; *hour* is treated as a possessive noun and forms its possessive like other common nouns (adding apostrophe + s).

### **Formatting notes**

We’re just about finished, but one last note: watch your apostrophes’ direction. Word processing software has the bad habit of changing your well-meaning apostrophe to a wrong-facing single quotation mark. Apostrophes are *always* shaped like the number 9. If you’ve got a 6 instead, be sure to switch it back.

This concludes the series on possessive case—for now (there are a few more rules to cover, but we’ll save those for another time). If you’re still uncomfortable, read through the other articles in this series and make yourself familiar with the rules and exceptions. Then try making up your own example sentences. Practice may not make perfect, but it makes confidence—and that’s one of the best qualities a writer can possess.

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

## In Conversation With Marc Vella, Part II

Wanda Waterman



"When the power of love overcomes the love of power, then there will be true peace."

~Sri Chin Moi Gosh

*Marc Vella is a French classical pianist and a composer who for the last two decades has traveled with a baby grand in a bus across more than forty countries, giving impromptu performances for locals and inviting local musicians to join him. His mission is to share love and to celebrate humanity as part of the International Decade for the Promotion of a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World, coordinated by UNESCO. (See the Voice review of the documentary film Piano in the Sands [here](#).) Recently he took the time to answer Wanda Waterman's questions*

*about education, inspiration, and musical sharing between cultures. (Read the first part of this interview [here](#).)*

### Quelle a été votre expérience éducative la plus bénéfique?

L'amour sans aucun doute. Mes enfants ensuite. De sacrés maitres. Bien au-dessus d'un maitre qui s'habille en blanc avec une grande barbe et qui dit qu'il sait tout.

### Qu'est-ce qui ou qui dans votre formation a eu la plus grande et la meilleure influence sur vous, en tant que musicien et en tant qu'être humain ?

Le silence.

### Quels ont été les débuts de votre mission pour apporter l'amour dans le monde en voyageant avec votre piano ?

Tout a toujours été magique. Même la difficulté, l'incertain... Mon enthousiasme était à chaque fois vierge. Chaque matin, je me dis : Là tout est possible. Quoi qu'il ait pu se passer la veille. J'ai su rester neuf.

### Est-ce que des choses drôles ou étranges se sont produites pendant l'un de vos voyages, des événements qui ne figuraient pas dans le film ?

Bien sûr. Ce qui se passait au sein de l'équipe était bien souvent comique. Ces rapports humains parfois difficiles mais tellement enseignants. Entre Jo (le mécano) qui venait du 93 et Arnaud (le réalisateur du film) qui venait du 78, tout un monde les séparait. Le premier était un homme du peuple, patron ouvrier, l'autre, de la bourgeoisie.

### Quel a été le moment le plus effrayant pour vous, au cours de la tournée Piano des Sables ?

Il n'y a jamais rien eu d'effrayant. J'ai toujours eu confiance du début à la fin. La dernière nuit fut terrible. Dormir par terre à l'aéroport de Saint-Louis, attaqué par des moustiques porteurs de paludisme. Tout en essayant de rester éveillé pour ne pas se faire voler tous nos bagages. Rien de terrible en soi. Juste une petite difficulté à gérer au mieux.

### Comment votre esthétique musicale personnelle a-t-elle été modifiée par votre contact avec tant de musiciens et de genres musicaux différents ?

C'est simple, je n'écris plus aujourd'hui. Comme eux, j'improvise. Ce lien avec l'instant présent est essentiel. Il permet à la grâce, (l'inspiration) de se manifester. Se laisser traverser est une expérience extatique considérable. Elle est fondamentale. Tout être humain devrait être amené à cela. Nos écoles devraient enseigner que cela à nos enfants : livrer la grâce.

**Quel est votre prochain projet ?**

1. La rédaction d'un livre
2. La sortie de 2 CD Mai 2014
3. La sortie d'un DVD « La Caravane amoureuse en Inde » Avril 2014
4. La prochaine Caravane amoureuse en Tunisie organisée par le Croissant Rouge Tunisien Mai juin 2014

**Avez-vous quelque chose à ajouter ?**

Au travail ! Il y a des hommes à transformer vers l'amour.







Dear  
Barb

Barbara Godin

### Dear Barb:

*My husband and I are in our mid-thirties, we began dating in university and dated four years before getting married nine years ago. Our life is mostly great and we both have careers we love. The problem is my husband now wants to start a family and I don't. I feel awful because we had discussed this many times through the years and agreed that we would have children once our careers were established. I am happy with the way things are.*

*I haven't told my husband how I feel, I just keep putting him off. But, I think he is starting to realize that I don't want children. I love my husband and don't want my marriage to end, but I genuinely do not see children as a part of my life. I don't know what to do. What do you suggest?*

*Thanks, Sarah.*

Hi Sarah:

You've got yourself into a predicament! You and your husband agreed to have children at a certain time and now this time has arrived and you've changed your mind. Your husband may feel this is a deal breaker. You need to discuss this with him to see if not having children would be an option for him. Have you figured out why you don't want children? Is it a fear of the pregnancy, or leaving your career for a certain amount of time, or another reason? Is it that you do not want children at this point, or do you want to never have children? Before you discuss this with your husband, try to find out the true reason why you don't want

children. You may have to see a counselor to help figure out the answer to these questions and perhaps a solution. Ultimately, this is a decision you have to work out together, and honest, open communication is a good place to begin. I hope this helps.

### Dear Barb:

*My sister suffers from mental illness and no matter what I do to try to help her she resists. She barely eats and is just skin and bones. She takes a lot of prescription drugs and says her problems are all a result of her nerves. Her doctor does nothing to help her, other than give her more drugs, he does not seem to see that she is mentally ill, as she is very good at masking her illness. I can't understand why she does not want to help herself. Our family has tried to do whatever we can, but she always ends up getting angry and tries to alienate us. Even her children do not want to see her as they can't deal with her unstable moods and fits of rage. I'm ready to give up too, but I'm having a hard time actually letting go. What should I do?*

*Kevin.*

Hey Kevin:

You sound like a caring brother! Without a doubt it is very difficult to deal with individuals who are suffering from mental illness. Part of their illness is that they don't see themselves as ill. Your view of the world is coming from a completely different place than your sister's. The rights of the mentally ill allow them to maintain their freedom unless they are suicidal or homicidal. Consequently, there is nothing you can do until your sister is ready to accept your help. As hard as it is, try to be there for her as much as she will allow, other than that your hands are tied.

Good luck, Kevin!

*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: Beauty Contest

As I see it, the biggest problem feminists face is that they just don't have the time to be— well— FEMININE!



That's why I'm starting up a feminist beauty pageant!

The ladies will wear clothes that save time in their hectic activist schedules, like t-shirts with built-in push-up bras, and high-heeled birkenstocks that give the old derriere a perky lift.



The talent contest could include bra burning, masher bashing, and slogan shouting!

People ask me, "Chazz, why do you even care?" To which I reply, "I'm Chazz Bravado, and I'm down with feminism!"



WRITTEN BY WANDA WATERMAN WITH  
INSPIRATION FROM BEN 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).

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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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