

# THE VOICE

## MAGAZINE

Vol 22 Issue 31 2014-08-08

### The Study Dude

Are e-Texts Inappropriate?

### From the Ground Up

Courses Worth Taking

### In Conversation

Susan Malmstrom

*Plus:*

*From Where I Sit  
The Writer's Toolbox  
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



## Christmas in August

Last week I decided to play an early Santa Claus and hand out some goodies from *The Voice Magazine* through a contest in our reminder list. A lucky five subscribers were to receive some soon-to-be vintage *Voice* merchandise to help me clear out our shelves in preparation for a new *Voice* logo, and, of course, as a thank-you for being sharp-eyed readers of *The Voice Magazine*'s reminder/subscription list. However, I was unable to do this.

"Why?" You might ask, "Why could you not give out five goodie bags of *Voice* stuff such as USB hubs, memory sticks, book bags, and book-lights, etc?" And the answer is because only three people thought it worth the time to send a simple e-mail.

What I take from this is that *Voice* readers are, as a whole, both too generous and too well-off to bother with such things, choosing instead to leave them for others. Also, that they are very considerate people who were concerned that too many entries might make the drawing for prizes difficult for me. And hopefully that they're susceptible to flattery.

And while I certainly appreciate that consideration, as the drawing was definitely super-easy and all three entrants will be receiving a lovely pack of goodies, come on, people! Free stuff here! We're supposed to be starving university students, right? If nothing else, the book bag makes a great re-usable shopping bag, and who can't use an extra half-gig of USB memory stick for carrying your assignments around on?

So, I've decided I'm going to give people another chance at it. All you need to do, if you haven't already, is sign up to our [subscriber/reminder list](#), carefully read the bright and colorful e-mail you get from *The Voice Magazine* on Friday evenings, and find out how you too can enter for a grab-bag of goodies (unless you've already won one.) Your odds of winning depend on the number of entries received, of course, but consider that last time those odds turned out to be 100%.

Once you're done the contest, you might as well check out some of the great stuff we have in *The Voice Magazine* this week. Our Featured Article is Barb Lehtiniemi's look at some solid foundational courses that every student should consider taking, plus one that I, personally, recommend and think that the university itself should make a mandatory part of every degree program.

We also have The Study Dude who brings up some interesting research about whether AU's move to e-texts is really something that the university should be doing, and S.D. Livingston, immediately below, taking a look at privacy concerns, and whether we're worried too much, or perhaps too little, about our privacy as it stands.

In addition, we have our usual collection of informative, entertaining, and helpful articles, including a new Chazz Bravado comic, and an In Conversation that's a bit of a feast for the eyes.

As always, enjoy the read!

Handwritten signature of Karl Low.

## Primal Numbers

### Prying Eyes

S.D. Livingston



Have you ever had the odd sensation of someone watching you, even when there's nobody there? The good news is that it's probably not a ghost. The bad news is, you're probably under surveillance by one of the growing number of cameras that track our every move—even in our own homes. Are they a way to keep us safe, or just an invasion of privacy?

Sixty years ago, cameras in department stores were still something of a novelty. Large signs announced that shoppers were being filmed, and some stores even invited customers in to

experience the thrill of seeing themselves on a TV screen (as a way of selling more televisions, of course).

Fast forward to 2014 and it seems there's no escape from the prying eyes of a camera. They're on our laptops, our phones, and our dashboards. We capture adventures with cameras strapped to our helmets, and we no longer notice the dozens of small black domes mounted everywhere in malls and offices.

We even pay for the privilege of having security cameras installed in our homes, and the public spaces in most major cities are monitored with a network of CCTV cameras. London, England, has long been a leader in CCTV coverage. As this *Telegraph* [article](#) reports, one estimate placed the total number of closed-circuit cameras at almost 6 million in 2013.

In Toronto, police began using CCTV cameras in 2007, and they're just one small part of the global surveillance industry. According to this *Fortune* [article](#), the video surveillance market will have more than tripled over seven years, "from \$11.5 billion in 2008 to \$37.5 billion in 2015."

But how did we get here? How, in just a few short decades, has it become normal to live our lives under almost constant surveillance—including home monitoring systems that allow us to view our families as they come and go through the front door remotely?

Some of it is convenience. After all, it's far more cost effective to guard against shoplifting by having one or two employees watch a row of screens than it is to have staff patrol every aisle in a large store. And dashcams can be an invaluable witness in the event of an accident, saving hours of wrangling with your insurance company.

Fear plays a large role too. Fear of the imaginary bogeyman, or the very real terrorists that bomb marathon runners and busy subways. Home monitoring ads use fear to sell parents on installing cameras that alert them the moment their children get home. National security agencies remind us that videos help identify terrorists, while police cite the value of deterring criminals.

There's truth in all these scenarios. As the same *Fortune* article notes, "law enforcement used closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras" to identify the perpetrators of the Boston Marathon bombing. Common sense says that thieves and vandals are less likely to commit crimes when they know their faces could soon be trending on Facebook or YouTube. And knowing that their children have gotten safely home no doubt eases the worries of countless parents.

Opponents, though, make a good point when they raise privacy concerns. We should, as members of a democratic society, expect a certain amount of privacy. We should feel free to move about unhindered, without our every move being tracked.

Yet how much privacy is really being invaded by cameras? Walking down the street, sitting in a restaurant, waiting at your doctor's office—every day, anywhere from a dozen to a few million people see you everywhere you go. It's not as though cameras are stripping away some sort of invisibility cloak. Most of our public ramblings are obvious for anyone to see.

The difference, of course, is that neighbours and passersby don't film all those movements and store the footage in databases. Few people pay much attention to the person at the next table beyond a fleeting glance, and it's rare to recall anything about who stood behind us in line at the grocery store.

*Walking down the street,  
sitting in a restaurant,  
waiting at your doctor's  
office—every day,  
anywhere from a dozen to  
a few million people see  
you everywhere you go.*

But the fact remains that the discussion around privacy and security cameras is like the adage of closing the barn door after the horse is gone. Having our movements filmed pales in comparison to the privacy we've already freely given up.

Birthdates, bank accounts, medical records—all these and more are cross-referenced and stored in databases that span the globe. Our credit and loyalty cards leave a minute-by-minute paper trail for governments or corporations to follow. We hand over email addresses and write blog posts about our jobs and families.

And if we're really that worried about photos and videos revealing our whereabouts, we wouldn't post millions of them on social media sites every day with metadata that pinpoints our location. For an amusing yet unsettling look at just how public that data is, check out *I Know Where Your Cat Lives*, a [site](#) run by a Florida State University professor.

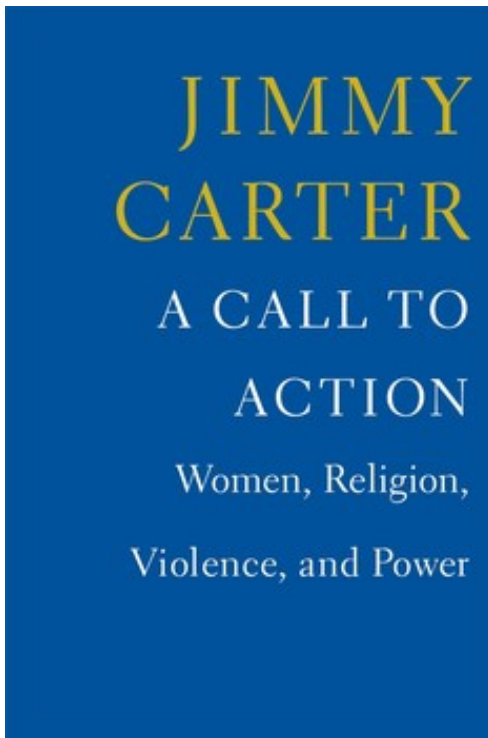
Prying eyes? Yes, we're surrounded by them and they're not going away anytime soon. But when it comes to life in a surveillance society, we've already opened the window to our souls.

*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.*

## The Mindful Bard

### A Call to Action

Wanda Waterman



**Book:** *A Call to Action*

**Author:** Jimmy Carter

**There's Still a Sweet Wind of Benevolent Wisdom  
Blowing in America, and It's Actually Changing Things**

"I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves."

- Matthew 10:16 NIV

"Violence against women is the most prevalent and the most hidden injustice in our world today."

- Jim Wallis, as quoted in *A Call to Action*

One dilemma of North American voters is that elections are often little more than strategic popularity contests. Contests in which the prevailing beliefs of resistant portions of the electorate are upheld just

long enough to win votes; promises and alliances are often tossed away like dishrags once a position of power has been achieved.

Usually the ruse is in the interests of some hidden corporate or warmongering agenda. In fact, that's what we're used to seeing, and so we assume that an ends-justify-the-means approach is a tool of the devil. But what if strategic policies were to be used to achieve positive change?

In Jimmy Carter's case Machiavellian tactics sure look like an effective means of gaining enough power to change the world for the better. Hardly a typical politician, in his early career Carter looked more like a saboteur among thieves, scouting the territory and pulling any strings he could to reduce the power of those who didn't exactly have his country's—or the world's—best interests in mind.

He pretended, as one example in many, to be a segregationist just long enough to get the governor's seat in Georgia, then quickly returned to supporting integration. (Yes, it made his racist supporters feel betrayed, but the only reasonable response to that would be, "Yeah, cry me a river.") It was the only way for a humanitarian to have a shot at the presidency in a country in which formidable forces actively opposed any measures leading to equality and social justice.

He doesn't mention any of this in the book—I only mention it here because when you're reading about the successes achieved by he and his wife Rosalynn and the many supporters of The Carter Center (a not-for-profit NGO for advancing human rights) it's good to remember that in the service of justice, equality, ecology, and health Jimmy Carter is ready and willing to exercise a much cunning deliberation.

Carter lost a second term because of a perceived failure to be tough enough on America's enemies, something guaranteed to lose him popularity in a country with an ultra-powerful fear-mongering propaganda machine.

But in the end you'd have to say he won—at least if his goal had been to gain enough power and influence to be able to respond effectively to the world's suffering.

He didn't respond to the world's suffering just by going out there and filling needs. He and his wife and cohorts spent a great deal of time studying the problems before trying out solutions. Their research into why things are as they are is in itself extremely valuable.

One remarkable discovery he cites is the link between gender inequality and violence. Again and again Carter gives us examples of how the empowerment of women leads to social justice. He clearly states that most problems in the world today could be eliminated or at least alleviated if women were given equal rights. For example, increasing education opportunities for women decreases infant mortality and at the same time reduces population growth because educated women use birth control and raise fewer, healthier babies—babies more likely to survive; thus mothers don't feel the need to keep having more in hopes of having one survive to aid them in their old age.

Gender inequality also increases the level of violence in the world, and violence in turn hurts women and subjugates them further because violence always seems to affect women disproportionately. And accepting that it's normal to deny education and opportunities to women, or keeping women in situations that sabotage their health and the health of their children, creates cycles of poverty that damage families, communities, and nations.

When Carter lists the most common crimes against women in the world today, it makes you wonder why you haven't taken action already—or at least spoken out more. Slavery, genital cutting, infanticide, child marriage, rape, honor killings, and economic and social deprivation are grievous injustices that simply must stop. The book's "call to action" is an invitation to each of us to become fully committed to human rights and to be ready to act and to support those who are already creating change.

At the end of the book Carter lists 23 steps we can take to reduce the suffering in the world, including giving victims a voice, and encouraging dialogue among men and women on these issues at all levels of society. He also recommends that we reduce violence in general, take a harder stance on sexual offenders and those who cover up for them, and make sure that women and girls have access to information that shows them they're not alone and that there are sisters and brothers out in the world battling on their behalf. They need to know that they have the right to determine the course of their lives; it's only the women who can turn this around, but they can't do it without the right resources and political context.

If you have any doubts about Carter's wisdom, take a look at his arguments about abortion. The hypocrisy of Republican pro-lifers, who deny single mothers the resources they need to raise healthy babies, and the callousness of those few but vocal pro-choicers, who seem to think prenatal life is no life at all, are quickly put to rest by his cogent solutions to this thorny issue.

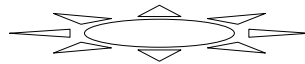
The stories of The Carter Center's humanitarian and civil rights work are inspiring, but at times, devastating, although the clear, simple writing style and compassionate tone make the pill a little easier to swallow.

What's especially beautiful about this book is Carter's sincerity regarding his religious beliefs. In this age when so many leaders misinterpret sacred texts to justify violence and injustice, it's not only refreshing, it's positively *uplifting* to encounter a Christian who studies the Bible with the aim of understanding and implementing this central message: "God is love, and those who live in love live in God, and God lives in them." (1 John, 4:16)

*A Call to Action* manifests five 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 inspires an awareness of the sanctity of creation.
- It displays an engagement with and compassionate response to suffering.
- It gives me tools of kindness, enabling me to respond with compassion and efficacy to the suffering around me.
- It renews my enthusiasm for positive social action.

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.



## From the Ground Up: Building a Solid Foundation for Your Studies

Barbara Lehtiniemi



Are you new to AU? You might be waiting for your first course to begin or perhaps you've taken a few and are ready to immerse yourself in a program. With many courses ahead of you and years of study, it's sometimes overwhelming to decide where to begin.

If you've never taken university courses before, or you've been away from formal education for many years, you may benefit from a few foundation courses. Foundation courses allow you earn undergraduate credits while building a solid base on which to build the rest of your studies.

Here are a few courses I took early on—and I'm glad I did.

**Critical Thinking (Humanities, PHIL 252.)** A good place to start. Especially helpful if you're been away from formal education for a while, *Critical Thinking* is a solid introduction to university studies. This course covers reasoning, analyzing arguments, and spotting logical fallacies. In addition to honing your thinking ability, you'll learn how to structure an effective essay, a skill you'll make much use of. This was my first AU course; I learned how to read academic texts effectively and how to organize my thoughts for writing. No prerequisites. There are two assignments of 15% and 20% each; a critical essay worth 25% and final exam of 40%.

**Introductory Composition (Humanities, ENGL 255.)** You won't believe how much English grammar you've lost since high school! A required course in some programs, *Introductory Composition* is an essential review of English grammar and structure. You'll also learn the essential elements of the paragraph as well as how to compose several types of essays. The text contains examples of essays and a section on the citation styles (eg.

MLA, APA) you will come to know so well over your university career. For me, *Introductory Composition* was a much-needed review of English syntax. And although I still dislike writing essays, I can compose reasonably good ones thanks to the practice here. No prerequisites, unless your basic English skills are rusty. Marks are spread among a number of writing assignments, including three essays, and a final exam of only 20%.

***Western Thought & Culture I: Before the Scientific Revolution (Humanities, HUMN 201; also HIST 201.)*** If your prior education missed classical studies altogether, you can begin to catch up with this course. Traipse through western civilization from its beginning stirrings circa 3000 BCE right through to the late 16th century. *Western Thought & Culture I* examines history, art, literature, and philosophical thought through the ages. The course syllabus describes this course as "a good starting place for new students" with "little or no previous university experience." For myself, I would have been discouraged if I'd taken this as my first course. It was the most intensive of my early courses—we're talking 46 centuries here—and requires more finely-honed study practices than a new student might possess. Definitely worthwhile, however, especially if you intend to take further courses in philosophy or history. No prerequisites. Two essays of 25% and 35% each, and a final exam of 40%.

Each course you take benefits the courses that follow. Build from the ground up. Selecting a few good foundation courses early on will serve as a strong support as you continue your studies.

If you're registered in an AU undergraduate program, be sure to check your program requirements first. Then browse the AU undergraduate course [listing](#) to finding your educational building blocks.

If you're an experienced student, what AU courses did you take early on that you'd recommend to new students? Contact *The Voice* at [voice@voicemagazine.org](mailto:voice@voicemagazine.org).

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

*(Editor's note: I would be remiss if I didn't mention **Information Systems (INFS 200)** as a great course to take if you're starting your university career, or even if you're part way through it. The course teaches you how to use our information systems to easily find the information you need while eliminating false matches to your searches. Even if you think you know how to research, this course will very likely give you some extra tools that make it easier.)*

## DID YOU KNOW?

## Your 15 Minutes Awaits!



Every AU student has a story, and we want to hear yours! *The Voice Magazine* will be publishing profiles of AU students from across Canada and around the globe. Being at a distance doesn't mean we can't help other students be inspired, and maybe your story is the one that will give somebody else the motivation they need.

If you can spare 15 minutes for a telephone or e-mail interview, contact *The Voice* at [voice@voicemagazine.org](mailto:voice@voicemagazine.org). Also, we'll make sure to get you some nifty *Voice* swag just for participating!

## In Conversation With Susan Malmstrom, Part II

Wanda Waterman



### Everyone Should Have One's Own Museum

*Susan Malmstrom is an artist specializing in digitally produced photography. She grew up in California, receiving a Master of Fine Arts in Visual Arts from the University of California at Irvine, and has lived in Canada since 2004. Her life's work manifests a sense of wonder, an insatiable curiosity, a love of memorabilia, an obsession with strangeness, and a delightfully twisted sense of humour. (Check out her amazing portfolios [here](#).)*

*Her current project, The Repository of Wonders, is a traveling exhibition built around the remnants of a 19th museum collection "inherited" from a fictitious Dr. Mycenae T. Consonant, daughter of an Egyptologist and an archaeologist, who earned degrees in archaeology and art history before embarking on the lifelong adventure of building her own museum collection, traveling the world to collect artifacts before eventually going down with the Lusitania. Susan Malmstrom, now the museum's curator, recently took the time to answer Wanda*

*Waterman's questions about what brought her to such an unusual undertaking. (Read Part I of this interview [here](#).)*

"It is a riddle, wrapped in a mystery, inside an enigma; but perhaps there is a key."

- Winston Churchill

"You're wrong. She is a phony. But on the other hand you're right. She isn't a phony because she's a real phony. She believes all this crap she believes. You can't talk her out of it."

- Truman Capote, from *Breakfast at Tiffany's*

### The Threat of the Unreal

I think the strangest thing about this project—and it seems to happen every time it's installed—is the reaction of some people. Most people not only "get" The Repository, but they really get into it and spend a lot of time reading all of the material. They especially enjoy the intended humour behind it.

Others seem to want things overly explained to them; or worse, they become angry at the thought that an artist is trying to deceive them. This doesn't happen a lot, but just enough to make it interesting. It's still a little unnerving when an adult person walking into an arts installation wants so badly for things to be obvious and "real" that the displays are somehow threatening to them.

### Discovering Mycenae

Someone had sent me a link to one of those silly websites where you type in your name and it comes back with your porn name, or whatever. I typed "Susan Malmstrom" into this one, and it came back "Mycenae Consonant"; I don't remember what it was supposed to represent, but I loved the sound of it. So when I decided that my museum had originally been run by an amazing globe-trotting Edwardian-era artifact collector, I used that name, which makes sense, based on her interest in antiquities.

### Getting in Character: Steeping in Steampunk

To write about her and the objects of the museum I have to be reading the right literature, so I immerse myself in books like *Arthur Conan Doyle: A Life in Letters* by Daniel Stashower, Jon Lellenberg and Charles Foley, or *The Art of Rough Travel: From the Peculiar to the Practical, Advice From A 19th Century Explorer* by Sir Francis Galton. It's such a fascinating era that I have no problem going there.

### A Love of Objects and Exploration

Mycenae's great love of objects and their stories were in her DNA (before they even knew what DNA was). Her mother, who didn't survive her birth, was an ardent amateur archaeologist, and her father was an Egyptologist and the curator of The New Museum of the Pacific. After his death, she inherited many objects from his personal collection and started her own, which became The New Museum of the Pacific: A Repository of Wonders.

Women were actually doing a lot of exploring during that period. People like journalist Nellie Bly (Elizabeth Jane Cochrane), or archaeologist Katherine Routledge, or writer Alexandra David-Néel—I could go on and on, because there are plenty of examples of women who followed their dreams and made history during this era. And I don't think the world is any less sexist now! In fact, there are parts of the planet that are even more dangerous to travel through.



*Coyote in Basement with Beer Case (ca. 1910), from the series "Natural Sciences Annex," 2014 by Susan Malmstrom.*



*Susan Malmstrom: Self-Portrait*



*Jangles the Armadillo, trained to play ragtime tunes. Donated to The Repository by singer and actress Lillian Russel*



*Brine flies and Flat Tufa: A portrait of Mycenae T. Consonant*

When I read about these women explorers, I can't imagine the kind of danger they put themselves in time after time, and the myriad creature comforts they would have had to forego. So while I completely admire these women, I come up woefully short in the seeking-adventure realm. I do all my exploring through books and short jaunts, and I have an amazing inner life! Maybe someday. It's certainly something to aspire to.

**If you could tell us about the most amazing object with the most amazing story in the Repository, what would it be?**

That's like choosing which of your children is your favorite. I will say that one of the crowd-pleasers is the pair of military dress gloves that once (purportedly) belonged to Edgar Allan Poe during his ill-fated stint at West Point Military Academy. (If anyone wants the full story, they can email me at [info@repositoryofwonders.org](mailto:info@repositoryofwonders.org).)

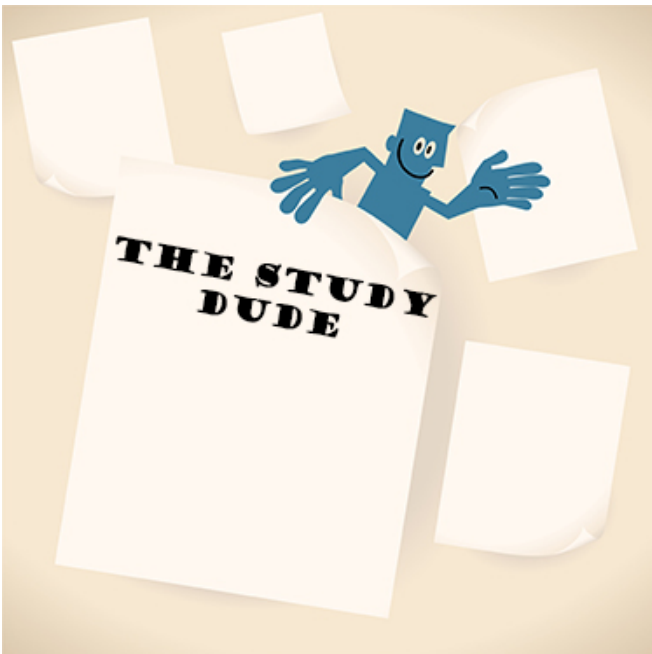
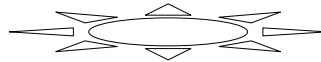
**What's your next project?**

I'm adding another series to The Repository, which is The Hall of Once-Famous Personages, a series of portraits. We're also currently working on an extensive catalogue for The Repository, including a section on the lives of the original staff, through their letters, diaries, and press clippings.

**A Parting Word?**

Everyone should, at some time, have one's own museum. It's the most wonderful way to live your life.

*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.*



**Study Tips from a Semi-Anonymous Friend**

*There is nothing more that The Study Dude wants than for you to fly through graduate studies, get nominated for a Nobel Prize, and commit to memory the first 40,001 digits of pi.*

*Well, in these articles, as The Study Dude, I'll try to give you the study tips you need to help make your learning easier. I'll also give you straight and honest opinions and personal anecdotes—even the embarrassing ones that you wouldn't ever dare read about from any other study tip guru.*

Today's study tips are based on a reading of Stefanie Weisman's *Secrets of Top Students: Tips, Tools, and Techniques for Acing High School and College* (2013).

## eBooks Versus Print: Why eBooks Reduce Learning

When The Study Dude heard that Athabasca University was proposing to replace hard copy books with eBooks (and not merely supplying both as options), my eyes watered and the tissue box emptied. I know what works for me, and eBooks seem in too premature a state to be an effective replacement for print. However, I thanked my lucky stars when the Student's Union advocated for better alternatives (such as providing both print books and eBooks). Yet, the Study Dude and the SU are not alone in the view that eBooks are relatively poor substitutes for learning: much research supports this view.

Stefanie Weisman (2013) provides ample research to support the view that eBooks are unsatisfactory learning tools relative to print books. Here are some of the highlights:

- A study by Jakob Nielsen, indicated that reading speeds were greatly diminished on iPads and Kindles (relative to print books), with 6.2% and 10.7% reductions in reading speed, respectively. This roughly translates to you needing an extra full hour of wasted study time for every nine hours of study when you use these devices. That's an additional 10 hours needed of wasted study time for every 90 hours you invest. Over an entire semester, the total hours you waste reading on these devices become draconian.
- Jakob Nielsen also found that reading off of iPhones reduces reading comprehension by close to 50% (relative to a full screen monitor). That means, you would have to study 20 hours to comprehend readings that would otherwise take you 10 hours to master.
- A 2009 experiment at Reed College revealed that a program that issued Amazon Kindle DX to students had less positive feedback relative to print books. Issues reported with the Kindle DX included (but were not limited to) the lack of ability to display more than one page at a time, highlighting difficulties, and annotation problems.
- A study done by University of Washington Researchers demonstrated that Kindle interfered with what is called "cognitive mapping" (i.e., students had an inability to recall the location of where they read the text, which served to impair recall of the text itself).
- A University of Notre Dame focus group found a number of issues with the iPad, including the shortcomings of annotated highlighting, shoddy ability to type or handwrite notes on the product, limited multitasking capabilities without multiple documents opened side-by-side, and, the Study Dude's favorite, the issues with trying to flip to and find pages not in sequential order.

*"The best readers physically interact with their books—writing in the margins, circling key passages, dog-earing pages, slapping on Post-it notes, picking up other books for comparison, and so on"*  
- Stefanie Weisman

(as cited in Weisman, 2013)

- Weisman (2013), however, says it succinctly, when she states "the best readers physically interact with their books—writing in the margins, circling key passages, dog-earing pages, slapping on Post-it notes, picking up other books for comparison, and so on" (p. 129).

The Study Dude believes while these devices can make reading efficient in locations or situations where the hard copy of the book is not available, relying solely on these devices for reading purposes (at the expense of a print textbook) not only reduces learning but also wastes considerable time.

## Researching the Paper

When The Study Dude researched papers, it was usually done on the first day of paper topic assignment. I visited the library on the very first day and collected lots of materials on the topic, especially articles. In the articles, I would highlight anything that stood out as interesting and put a keyword that captured the essence of the highlighted piece in the margin. I would then gather them together and either place them on cue cards or go the easier route and type them up and then sort them by theme.

Not entirely unlike The Study Dude, here are Stefanie Weisman's suggestions for researching the paper:

- Spend 5% of your paper research and writing time looking for a topic.
- Try to choose the least obvious choice of topics if given a choice in the first place.
- Look for any potential topics that inspired you during the course, or look for surprises in your notes such as contradictions, ambiguities, or controversial points to write about.
- Spend 30% of your paper research and writing time compiling researched points of interest or relevance and coming up with a thesis.
- Rarely use Websites in your citations, except if they are research institute or university affiliated. Don't cite Wikipedia, but use it to find real research that you can cite.
- Learn google search criteria tips (outlined in Weisman's book on page 148) such as entering "filetype:pdf" when you want just a PDF.
- Research JSTOR, ProQuest, EBSCO, and even the free Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ)
- Skim the materials you have, noting the more interesting points you find, and reading the footnotes for potential topics.
- Write down (or type up) any key points such as facts, names, dates, and anything else that may strike you as interesting or relevant.
- Write down your views on ideas in the research material, while being especially vigilant for finding holes in the authors' arguments or contradictory or controversial points.
- Review notes, while being aware of any emerging themes. When you get that much material together, themes will inevitably start to emerge, which can become the foundation of your thesis.
- Devise a (typically) one sentence long thesis that takes a stand. Make it extra juicy by adding the counterargument in a subjective clause at the beginning of the thesis statement.

(Weisman, 2013)

Once your research log finalizes and the thesis emerges, you can begin making an electronic outline by cutting and pasting points in your research log under the various headings (i.e., themes) that formed your thesis. With that in place, the paper practically writes itself!

## Revisiting Note Taking: A Better Method

When The Study Dude previously read Coles Notes on note taking in a prior edition of The Study Dude, a promise was made to find a better system. You see, Coles Notes (2009) advocated for many wise lecture note-taking strategies, but with the glaring exception of advising students to paraphrase all or most of the instructor's lessons. I knew there must be an easier method for you, and, yes, The Study Dude found one.

Stefanie Weisman devised a system that was not unlike that used by myself in my undergraduate years. Thankfully, it doesn't require the student to work double time paraphrasing the entire lecture. Here are some of the salient points for taking lecture notes:

- Write nonstop in large print (more like scrawl) and don't worry about being neat.
- Write down every point, whether major or minor, as it is all prime fodder for testing.
- Always write down the main idea and sub ideas as these are often tested through essay questions
- Always write down names, dates, places, and general facts as these often appear in multiple choice questions.
- Tighten up your notes through doing the following: omit superfluous words such as "the" and "a", omit adjectives and adverbs, substitute in shorter synonyms such as "so" for "therefore", and use mathematical symbols such as the equal sign to show relationship and plus or minus signs in place of "and" or "less", respectively.
- Connect related parts with arrows pointing from one to the other.
- Copy word-for-word everything written on the board by the instructor.
- Underline vocabulary terms, circle big ideas, and star anything that may be tested.
- Write in the margins, noting key points, things to return to, or potential essay topics or exam questions.

(Weisman, 2013)

But, most of all, don't spend precious time "paraphrasing" everything the instructor says (sorry, Coles Notes!). Instead, tighten it with math symbols, numbering, and shorthand.

### **Bonus: Free (Yes, Free!) Flashcard Software**

Stefanie Weisman (2013) recommended a free flashcard software program for making your own flashcards for viewing on your computer. The software is called Anki and is available at <http://ankisrs.net/>.

The Study Dude is smitten by the possibility of creating electronic flashcards—especially for making a personalized vocabulary deck. I was so intrigued by the prospect that I downloaded the program and tried it out. It's a very simple intuitive program that has a rather bland and small, yet practical, interface. It has a field for what you wish to enter on the front of the card, and a field for what you enter on the back.

The Study Dude took it even further. For vocabulary purposes, I decided that whenever I arrive at a baffling word in a textbook, I would write it on a list on the final page of the textbook and later transfer it to the flashcard program. Additionally, I would look up the word on dictionary.com and copy and paste the definition into the back of the electronic flashcard. Ah! Instant IQ booster.

Later in The Study Dude Series, we will explore advice from Dr. John Medina, the director of the Brain Center for Applied Learning Research, who claims (in his book *Brain Rules: 12 Principles for Surviving and Thriving at Work, Home, and School*) to be able to rid of the idea of homework altogether through the brain's memory rules. Yes, no homework!

So, there's nothing to fear. The Study Dude is determined to make right for you all the wrongs I made in grad school—one A+ at a time.

### *References*

Coles Notes. (2012). *Study skills: Study guide*. Mississauga, Ontario: John Wiley & Sons Canada, Ltd.

Weisman, Stefanie. (2013). *The secrets of top students: Tips, tools, and techniques for acing high school and college*. Naperville, Illinois: Sourcebooks.

## Writer's Toolbox

### Get Your Game On

Christina M. Frey



Summer is a time for fun and games, and whether you're out playing tag with the kids or hiding indoors with Monopoly, chances are you really want to make sure you're following correct usage.

Or is that only me?

Kidding aside, I'm frequently asked how to style names of games—italics or roman, quote marks or capitalization? If you're planning a party, writing the office newsletter, or including the name of a game in your novel, this quick guide should cover your basic questions.

#### Capitalize Branded Games

Branded games like Monopoly and Scrabble are **capitalized and written in roman type**—plain, unitalicized type—with **no quotation marks** (quotation marks in this article are for emphasis only).

Though these names are registered trademarks, you aren't required to include the little ® symbol. But be sure to check the exact spelling and punctuation/capitalization with the manufacturer of the game. For example, Hasbro indicates that "Sorry!" includes an exclamation mark—but "Who Wants To Be A Millionaire" does not come with a question mark, according to the game's manufacturer, Pressman Toys. And "UNO" is in all-caps, per Mattel.

#### Don't Capitalize Non-Branded Games—Usually

In general, **don't capitalize games that aren't specific product names**. For example, it's "chess," "tag," "old maid," and "roulette." However, if the games contain a word that you'd capitalize normally, then do so—like in "Russian roulette" and "Chinese checkers."

What about games that use a brand name but aren't really affiliated? For example, Frisbee is an actual brand, but chances are you bought an off-brand version, not the real thing (I've never even seen a real one). If you're planning an ultimate Frisbee tournament and you're not using real Frisbees, you can choose to capitalize or not; just be consistent. That being said, since Frisbee is a registered name, using the word to describe an off-brand toy probably isn't authorized by the company; however, it's unlikely there'll be any issues if you're just putting together an office newsletter.

#### The Special Case of Electronics

The jury's out on whether to italicize the names of electronic games, particularly video games. While some prefer roman type for simplicity's sake, others argue that a complicated video game deserves the same level of recognition (and therefore italicization) as a film.

Some people even differentiate among video games, depending on the complexity; so "Pac-Man" (note the hyphen, per the manufacturer) might not be italicized, but *Grand Theft Auto* would be. That can get really

complicated, so I recommend you choose one or the other. And either way, be sure to keep the spelling and punctuation in line with how it's done by the manufacturer.

Above all, though, always keep your styling decisions consistent. Now enough technical stuff—go have some fun!

*Christina M. Frey is a book editor, literary coach, and lover of great writing. For more tips and techniques for your toolbox, follow her on Twitter (@turntopage2) or visit her [blog](#).*

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS DESK

### At Home and Abroad



#### At Home: More Time in School Less Applicable to Work

CTV News is [reporting](#) on an online poll conducted by Workopolis which showed that Canadians are spending more time in school, but are less likely to find work that relates to the degree they attained, with 73% reporting that their jobs are unrelated to their educational background, and 56% saying they were over-educated for the work they were currently doing.

Nursing students are the most likely to find a job in their chosen field after graduating, and engineering students tend to have the highest starting salary amongst all post-secondary graduates, but the vice-president of human resources at Workopolis, Tara Talbot, says that because the world is changing so fast, educational institutions can't keep up with programs that directly match to the skills needed. However, the "soft" skills these students learn, communication, problem-solving, and teamwork remain

competitive advantages and usable in any field.

#### Around the Globe: College Fairs go virtual, supported by US State Department.

[CollegeWeekLive](#) is an online platform giving students access to video conferences and resources for prospective students from many colleges and universities across the United States. Over the next three months, it will be hosting four large college fairs, including their flagship event, the International Student Day global fair, which drew in 22,000 participants who were able to look at information from over 100 participating universities.

The US Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs is partnering with them this year in the hopes of helping them draw more international students to study in the United States. *The PIE News* is [reporting](#) that Meghann Curtis, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Academic Programmes at the Department of State told them "We are hopeful that thousands of students from around the world will take part in the fairs."

Meanwhile, Alberta still chooses to penalize Athabasca University for having out of province students by refusing to include them in any of its funding formulae.



## Pain in the Butt

Here we are 'celebrating' another long Heritage Day weekend in Alberta. The temperature for the past week or so has been far too much for many of us. We prairie kids don't do that well when the humidity pushes the 'feels like' temperature toward the forties. For those of us stuck home working, there is no holiday.

You can spare me the talk about how winter is eight months long, how soon enough we'll be bitching about the minus thirty temps, how summer just lasts a blink of an eye. Heard it all, understand it, don't care. This may be less disruptive to my life if we had the luxury of air conditioning or a schedule that allowed for extended time spent on shady patios throwing back cold beverages. But it doesn't.

I'm plugging through the busiest time of my year. As a marriage commissioner most of my bridal couples choose outdoor weddings. I feel the pain of the poor groom and his guys sweating it out in black three-piece wool tuxes. Or the bride and her gals in their long dresses. Synthetic fibres don't breathe so we "glow." I pray for a patch of shade and a gentle breeze. Not enough to make anyone's hair look crazy but enough to cool and refresh.

When I'm not out performing wedding ceremonies, I'm chained to my desk doing festival work. My home office has an east-facing window so in the morning, when my productivity is highest and I'm hard at it, the room begins to heat up. The twelve-inch oscillating fan has more of a placebo effect than anything. The whirl of the blades and the rhythmic back and forth, back and forth tricks my feverish brain into believing the room is getting cooler. It's not.

But because I'm a grownup with responsibilities and a helluva to-do list I suffer through it. On some of the worst days, with the door locked I wear a cotton nightgown sans bra all day long. Loose-fitting, breathable cotton fabric—ahhhh.

Other days I'm grateful to be in the car running errands all over hell's half acre. Except when the Honda's air conditioning seems to be acting up. Three times now it's failed me in Edmonton and most of the way home. A mechanic says there's nothing wrong. So why, in God's name, am I having to drive with the windows down? The wind and road noise can make you deaf. I can't hear my audio book.

Luckily we have a large, silent ceiling fan in the bedroom that does a reasonable job of cooling down our west-facing bedroom. The basement is much cooler but the bed is worse so we make the trade-off. Since I've been seeing a naturopath my insomnia is virtually non-existent so sleep provides blessed relief.

So, why dear reader am I telling you all this? You can't help me. Sometimes a girl just needs to vent, to have someone silently listen as I blow off steam. Because always being reasonable is a pain in the butt, from where I sit.

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



Dear  
Barb

Barbara Godin

## Remarriage Reservations

**Dear Barb:**

*My parents were married for 30 years before my mother passed away a few years ago. My dad recently remarried a woman he had been seeing for about a year. My dad is a young man and I didn't expect him to be alone for the rest of his life.*

*The problem is I don't like his new wife. Prior to the marriage I hardly saw her, but since the marriage she is always calling me and inviting me and my husband over for dinners and visits. She seems to really want to include me in their lives. But, the more I get to know dad's wife, the less I like her. She is not at all like my mom; I really don't know what dad sees in her. She treats him awful, always belittling and making fun of him. I am having a hard time keeping quiet about her behavior.*

*My dad is a very passive man and seems to take everything in stride, but I'm an only child and I love my dad very much and feel protective of him. I'm uneasy standing by and watching my father being treated like this. I don't want to make things worse for dad, but I feel there must be something I can do. Do you have any suggestions on how I can deal with this situation!*

**Thanks Linda.**

Hi Linda:

It can be difficult when we see our parents with new partners, as we often compare the new partner to our lost parent and, at the end of the day, they will never measure up. Ultimately this is your father's life and his decision. Before you do anything, make sure you are not overreacting and being overprotective of your father. Perhaps this is just playful banter. Have you talked to your dad about the relationship? Is he happy? If he is okay with the way his wife treats him there is nothing you can do about it. However if his wife's behaviour makes you uncomfortable you don't need to be witness to it. You may want to suggest to your dad's wife that her behaviour toward your father makes you uncomfortable and request she not do this in your presence. Of course, she may choose to ignore your request and just not invite you over as often, which might cause some stress between you and your father. Consequently, your visits to your father may take place at your home rather than his. This is no doubt a tough situation.

Good Luck Linda!

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: MOBILE CHAZZ PAD



You know, the Chazz Man fancies himself a bit of a "love nomad," if you catch my drift.

Sure, there's planet Chazz, where I invite my "very special guests," but I also have a "Mobile Chazz Pad" that utterly transforms the ambience of any Super 8 motel room!



Yup— a whole extra suitcase packed with a mirror ball, incense, satin sheets, a bearskin rug, handcuffs, a blaster, and a Barry White cassette. All designed to melt the butter of any discerning chicky-poo!



Now if I could just get a discerning chicky-poo to come check it out . . .

WRITTEN BY WANDA WATERMAN,  
WITH INPUT FROM BEN AND  
STEPHANIE WATERMAN

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