



Addressing such topics as hypnosis, Jungian psychology, cognitive science and Gestalt therapy, SSU psychology professor emeritus **David Van Nuys**, above, hosts "Shrink Rap Radio," a weekly podcast aimed at "the amateur psychologist in everyone." Through the course of the Shrink Rap podcasts, "Dr. Dave" has had the opportunity to interview people from across the United States as well as Australia. But an extraordinary opportunity for understanding and learning presented itself when Dr. Dave was approached via e-mail by one of his listening fans in the city of Baghdad.

In late January 2006, Dr. Dave fielded a phone call to Shrink Rap Radio from Mohammed, a 32-year-old Iraqi who wished to speak about the reality of war in his country. Mohammed, who admitted to secretly liking Americans, described his current living situation in the war-torn city to Dr. Dave, shared his psychological coping strategies and his dreams for the future. He explained that life in Baghdad is "as normal as can be, given the circumstances," but expressed concern about Baghdad's shaky power grid and the "random danger" of explosions and car bombs.

Mohammed went on to describe how he deals with everyday life in the Iraqi capital, stating that he tries not to think about the dangers he faces and stays away from watching news broadcasts because of the tragedies they report.

"It makes me very sad, so I try to keep my mind off it by concentrating on my work or doing things

that I like; I spend a lot of time on the Internet and playing video games," he said.

Despite the almost constant stream of negative news, Mohammed likes to accentuate the positive and expressed happiness when he said that day was a national holiday for Iraq: the first anniversary of Iraq's first democratic elections. Looking to the future, Mohammed stated he would like to find a job outside Iraq and "get away from this mess, because life is really difficult here." He hopes the new government eliminates the dangers that so many deal with on a day-to-day basis.

"I feel humbled by my contact with Mohammed," Van Nuys said. "I find myself somewhat at a loss for words. It is hard to fully reconcile the different realities of me in the relative comfort and safety of my California home, and Mohammed in the midst of daily car bombings in Baghdad. And yet, we're able to sit together and share our humanity. It's a miracle, a mystery and a tragedy all rolled into one."

A man of many hobbies, Van Nuys recently became interested in podcasting, which he views as the "next big thing" in the fields of media and technology. Shrink Rap Radio allows Van Nuys to fuse two of his greatest passions: broadcasting and psychology; and come in contact with citizens of the world as he does it.

Listen to Shrink Rap Radio on the Web:

<http://www.shrinkrapradio.com/shows.htm>

—Kathryn Atwood

Scholars join faculty

Erin Bower

Librarian, University Library
M.L.S., Simmons College

Richard M. Campbell Jr.

Assistant Professor, Business/Marketing
Ph.D., University of Oregon

Teresa Ciabattari

Assistant Professor, Sociology
Ph.D., University of Washington

Michael F. Cohen

Assistant Professor, Biology
Ph.D., University of California, Davis

Tania de Miguel Magro

Assistant Professor, Modern Languages and Literatures/Spanish
Ph.D., State University of New York at Stony Brook

James J. Dean

Assistant Professor, Sociology
Ph.D., State University of New York at Albany

Charles Elster

Assistant Professor, Literacy Studies and Elementary Education
Ph.D., University of California, Berkeley

Kirsten Ely

Assistant Professor, Business/Accounting
Ph.D., University of Chicago

Kelly M. Estrada

Assistant Professor, Curriculum Studies and Secondary Education
Ph.D., University of California, Los Angeles

Benjamin Frymer

Assistant Professor, Hutchins School of Liberal Studies
Ph.D., University of California, Los Angeles

Michaela Maria Grobbel

Assistant Professor, Modern Languages and Literatures/German
Ph.D., University of California, Los Angeles

Ashwin Gumaste

Assistant Professor, Engineering Science
Ph.D., University of Texas, Dallas

Peter Hoffman-Kipp

Assistant Professor, Literacy Studies and Elementary Education
Ph.D., University of California, Los Angeles

Ada S. Jaarsma

Assistant Professor, Philosophy
Ph.D., Purdue University

Catherine Kroll

Assistant Professor, English
Ph.D., University of California, Berkeley

Ronald Lopez

Assistant Professor, Chicano and Latino Studies
Ph.D., University of California, Berkeley

Jennifer Mahdavi

Assistant Professor, Educational Leadership and Special Education
Ph.D., University of California, Riverside

Jerrell Richer

Assistant Professor, Economics
Ph.D., University of California, Santa Barbara

Andrew Roth

Assistant Professor, Sociology
Ph.D., University of California, Los Angeles

Michael R. Santos

Assistant Professor, Business/Finance
Ph.D., Boston College

Greg Sarris

Endowed Chair of Native American Studies
Ph.D., Stanford University

Michael Visser

Assistant Professor, Economics
Ph.D., University of Oregon

Mary Ellen Wilkosz

Assistant Professor, Nursing
M.S.N., Sonoma State University

Chingling Wo

Assistant Professor, English
Ph.D., State University of New York at Stony Brook

Jingxian Wu

Assistant Professor, Engineering Science
Ph.D., University of Missouri, Columbia

Emeritus faculty

Philip Beard

Modern Languages and Literatures/
German

F. Leslie Brooks

Chemistry

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Geology

Douglas Martin

Chemistry

Susan Miller

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