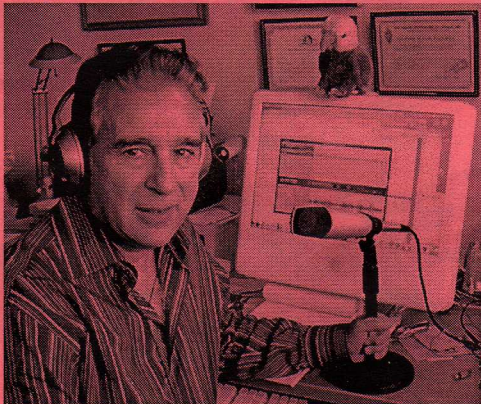


# F.Y.I.

## GOOD MORNING, BAGHDAD: PROFESSOR'S WEEKLY PODCAST CONNECTS WITH IRAQI LISTENER



*David Van Nuys at his podcast station. His Shrink Rap Radio program is made possible because of current podcasting technology.*

Addressing such topics as hypnosis, Jungian psychology, cognitive science and gestalt therapy, SSU psychology professor emeritus David Van Nuys 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 and professionals from across the United States and as far away as Australia.

But an extraordinary opportunity for understanding and learning pre-

sented itself when Dr. Dave was approached via e-mail by one of his listeners 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 said that life in Baghdad is "as normal as can be, given the circumstances" but expressed concern over 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 reports 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."

Despite the almost constant stream of negative news, Mohammed likes to accentuate the positive and expressed happiness when he says that the day he was calling in was a national holiday for Iraq-the first anniversary of Iraq's first democratic elections. Looking towards the future, Mohammed said 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 says. "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."

**To listen to Shrink Rap Radio, follow the link provided at website: <http://www.shrinkrapradio.com>.**

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