

# inkwell

an anthology of the student guide to  
writing at the evergreen state college





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an anthology of the  
student guide to writing at  
the evergreen state college

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# the writing center

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12 p.m. to 5 p.m.

sunday  
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housing "a" dorm, room 220

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Regarding gender-inclusive language: Despite challenges to the use of the masculine signifier, an understood alternative has yet to be established. The *Inkwell* Editorial Board has chosen to let each writer decide how to address this issue.



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*inkwell* anthology

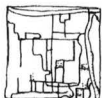


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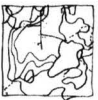
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anna hale wolfe-pauly  
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on the *inkwell* anthology christopher rotundo



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## on the *inkwell* anthology

christopher rotondo

Writing Center tutors have always kept journals to document and reflect on their experiences, pose questions of themselves and their practices, and seek answers. For the past five years, the cumulative knowledge of these journals has manifested in the essays and poems of *Inkwell*. Without *Inkwell*, the Writing Center's history would be fragmented at best, a discontinuous conversation over recollections and hazy anecdotes. If we weren't to write in our journals or craft this book every spring, the Center's history would slip away from us, like a tallship tipping over the edge of the world.

The writings that make up *Inkwell* are the nautical charts of past tutors' experiences. These charts are our inheritance as tutors, maps to guide us through an intergenerational dialogue. This map becomes a part of us the first

time we sit down at the Center's Formica tables. For this year's anthology, tutors consciously engaged their inheritance.

Before writing their forewords, tutors read, dropping their lines into the sea and sitting before a mirror to decipher their inherited ink. By reading, they learned the importance of longitude and latitude for charting the expanses of our collective experience. Their forewords demarcate passage over the sea we tread as we write.

In this sense, Volume VI is a self-consciously historical document. While we have been practical in our selection of past articles, true to our subtitle, "A Student Guide to Writing at Evergreen," *Inkwell's* compass is always spinning. In one gesture, we offer guidance to student writers and simultaneously embark on our own expedition. Our tutoring is alive with the

voices of student writers who have turned the map north to south, east to west. Without their candid collaboration, our words would be the murmurs of lost cartographers. It is student writers who challenge us, who force us from the confines of comfortable habits and into the experimental.

We're compelled to redraw the map.

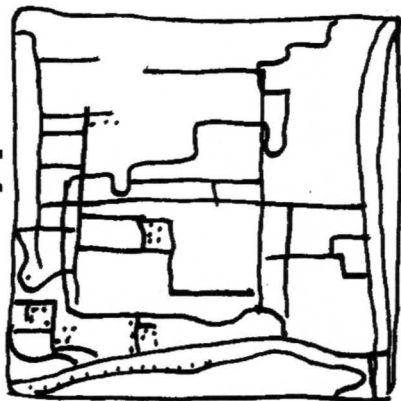






**how i write, how i tutor**

tutoring as a radical act:  
changing the world one by one *victoria larkin*  
foreword by sandra yannone



21.5125 **14**, 55.923255

## foreword to

### *tutoring as a radical act: changing the world one by one*

The inaugural issue of *Inkwell* appeared in September 2006 after a whirlwind summer of figuring out what the publication would be and how to put it together. Victoria Larkin's "Tutoring as a Radical Act: Changing the World One by One," was the natural choice to be the first article for its insight into the revolutionary possibilities of what can happen when tutor and writer meet. All the more remarkable: Victoria wrote this essay in her tutor training class. She had yet to hold a tutoring session in the Writing Center. Little did she know that "Tutoring as a Radical Act" would influence every subsequent class of incoming tutors as a cornerstone reading in *Cultivating Voice* and spark many writers to visit the Center.

}sandra yannone

## tutoring as a radical act: changing the world one by one

victoria larkin

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One Spring here at Evergreen, some friends who knew my penchants for writing and talking to people suggested I sign up for the tutor training class, *The Practice of Professional Tutoring*. I'd been writing for most of my life; I was known for being good at "English," and from time to time friends and schoolmates would ask me to glance over their work before handing it in. I always felt honored and humbled, and gave it my best. This made me think I would enjoy tutoring, so I signed up for the class.

As part of our homework we were to tutor and be tutored every week. I'd never had difficulties with essay writing, so it had never occurred to me to go to a writing tutor. I just didn't see how it could help. But that's because, until this class, I never knew what tutoring could be.

In a tutoring session, one person functions as "tutor" and focuses their attentions on the needs of the "writer." As "writer," I would sit down

across a table from someone I'd never met before and expose to them my mind and its thematic musings. At first I was uneasy. But whatever I'd expected to happen didn't: no one told me what to say or how to say it. Instead, I was questioned and encouraged to question myself. In order to answer, I had to reach deeper, and through this process I became more secure about what and why I was writing.

This was the first time in my life I'd ever talked with anybody about my writing: my material, my process, and my choices. I was exposed to choices I hadn't thought to make, new paths to explore. I began to see my writing as dynamic, alive, and interactive. I became an advocate of multiple revisions. These sessions were a revelation: two minds working together helped me to craft a piece of writing that often exceeded my original vision.

I understood what a powerful tool tutoring could be, for any writer. Tutoring wasn't just about grammar rules: tutoring was about having my mind

opened, and my work polished. I wanted to open the minds of others in the same way. I wanted to guide others to question their material and themselves. I wanted to direct my energy toward helping people uncover what they think and why, to help them reach inside themselves and find their own voices, and then use them. Tutoring seemed like a radical act to me.

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Writing is about more than just putting words onto paper to be handed in to a professor: writing is about saying what you know. When it comes to communicating through the written word, many factors influence a writer's choices: familiarity with the subject will determine the depth of a piece; sometimes audience needs to be considered; languages have their inherent stylistic freedoms and limitations, mentally as well as physically; cultures and eras can both shape a writer's thoughts and expressions.

Some cultures put more emphasis on the "We" voice than others. Writers, especially in essay form, are encouraged to speak from a more global,

less individualistic perspective. Having grown up in a country known, for better and worse, for its independent spirit, I am a believer in the "I" voice. To write in one's "I" voice, one must think in one's "I" voice. Thinking in one's "I" voice encourages one to be less swayed by "them." It can foster critical awareness, use of one's own intuition, and responsibility for what one writes. When writing in one's "I" voice, one speaks for one's self, which in all times and all places is a radical activity. Besides, "I" is what the "We" is made up of.

Of course, to write about anything using one voice or another, one must have something to say. The more one knows, the more one can say, with confidence, from their own mind. A tutoring session can help a writer find out if they know enough to call a draft "final." Discussing a paper, or its subject matter, can help a writer hear loopholes in their arguments, or where they might be stuck in their own heads. By engaging in focused conversation, tutors help writers examine their material, analyze it, and get it into a form

fitting their purpose. Tutors help writers speak from a place of knowing.

Writing tutors are interested in just about everything: we love to ask questions and listen to answers. We often have our own minds explored and expanded during the tutoring process. I learn about my own writing, and writing in general, by engaging with others who are working on writing. Being a tutor means that I get to sit and talk with all kinds of interesting people about all kinds of fascinating things—things that make me want to write essays about them! It's like having a taste of every subject I get to tutor someone in. I get exposed to more inspiring ideas than I have time to catch up with. Along with all this enriching stimulation, I get to work with intelligent, good-hearted people, who are cool, who create amazing works of art and philosophy, and who love what they do. I've never had such an amazing job.

The Writing Center is a highly democratic meeting place. People of all ages, genders, ethnicities, and countries come

in here: people who write well but would like an objective perspective; people who want help getting their ideas out and down on paper (brainstorming); people who want guidance analyzing and organizing; people who want grammar tips and essay basics; and people with desires I can't even think of right now.

Writers frequently come in with specific goals for their session, but the goals may change as the session progresses; the writer finds they have concerns they hadn't anticipated: *Have I said what I wanted to say? If not, why not? Was the assignment confusing? Do I need to do more research? Do I need to talk about it some more? Or do I just need to trust myself? There's something good in here that really wants to come out—I just need to focus....* The writer often walks away excited and ready to tackle a revision with a richer grasp of what they are trying to and what they can accomplish.

There are people who don't want to come to the Writing Center at all, and are "forced" to, but they are just another category of writer, perhaps ones not yet used to seeing themselves

as masters of self-expression in this medium. Sometimes people come in wanting nothing more than to have their papers fixed up and shipped out: they haven't thought of their papers as anything more than a way to get a grade, or credits. Maybe they have no idea of the value of their own mind. Maybe they don't even care anymore.

My job as a tutor is to try and reawaken the so often squashed spirit of inquiry and excitement one had as a child eager to express one's self in the world, and to give a writer tools to help them analyze and present their ideas on paper. My job is to encourage the spark to grow into a flame.

When what is asked for and given all around us is conformity, teasing out an original thought in original language is subversive. The Writing Center is therefore a place of radical activity. Our goal is to encourage critical thought, clarity, and uniqueness of expression: to get a writer thinking about what they want to say, and to help them say it, as clearly as possible, from their own perspective. We hope to pass on the ideals of collaboration, analysis, and self-expression to

all who enter, perhaps tentatively, and see them go out into the world confidently, with a keener sense of the importance of their individuality, and of their own voice.

I've had moments of profound transformation with many of the writers I've tutored. They have inspired me with their courage and their tenacity, their intelligence and broadness of mind, and their talents. If I've inspired just one of them, to question, to trust in their instincts, to decide for themselves, and to speak/write for themselves, well then, this seems to me, especially at this point in history, the most empowering and radical thing I can do.



neil young with birds, or how i write     *shae savoy*



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## neil young with birds, or how i write

*shae savoy*

January 25, 2007

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**W**onder-struck, sandwich in hand, I found myself rooted to the sidewalk on 5th Avenue and Olive. In the pink sky heralding nightfall, a circus troupe of smallish birds wove ribbons among the blocks of concrete and glass. As if of one mind, they gracefully looped into two separate swirling spheres, circling each other, before pulling back into a single column, a flowing ellipsis of feathers. They performed this routine in near silence, uninterrupted by my rapt attention or the flashing lights and whistling brakes of downtown traffic. It was one bird, one moment, one single existence. I watched for an hour, little crunched-up bits of peanut butter clinging to the roof of my mouth, until the darkness finally swallowed the birds.

This is part of how I write: I *notice*. My Scorpio moon and Virgo sun have endowed me with a deep-drilling curiosity that is unsatisfied with *the way things appear to be* (often passed off as *the ways things are*) and a sometimes merciless penchant for detail. But really what I mean to say is: I AM IN LOVE WITH LIVING. I write because I want to squeeze out every ounce of nectar and blood, and I want to be able to capture the ephemera of moments.

My best writing happens in my journals with black gel ink. Each journal has a title, signifying whatever I think that chapter of my life should be called, and I fill one up about every three months. Right now I'm living the "Faery Emergence" chapter. For a while I wrote in made-in-India embroidered journals with linen-like pages. There was my too expensive phase of leatherbound journals. Then the famous Moleskine journals, which I loved for the texture of the page, the pocket in the back, and the elastic band that kept it all together, since I will often stuff loose things into the pages

like postcards and photos and movie ticket stubs. Wherever I am, there is a journal with me. It's partially my way of abating the fear that something brilliant and monumental will occur, and having no way to capture it, the moment will fly away into the ether, forever lost to me. I am that dramatic about it.

It might be an outgrowth of gluttony, my need to taste and digest, taste and digest these littlest (biggest) tiptoeings of living without end. Writing is for me about freezing time and unwinding all the tendrils of whole, packaged moments so that each small plucking of the strings can be heard again and again. I want to

s l o w

the whole band down, like Neil Young (a Scorpio, incidentally) urging Crosby, Stills and Nash to deepen and ponder, to decrease the tempo so that my full-bodied emotions can swell up from the depths of abstraction, so that I can sculpt them into solid things to stroke and marvel at, as if they were birds.

So my process involves *feeling*. It's visceral. When I want to

write about something, I do this centering, coming fully into my body, breathing and picturing the moment, inviting the sensations and feelings to flood me. Then I start letting words drip from my fingers. I like to do stream-of-consciousness writing, which I may or may not revise. I like to fuck with grammar and syntax and make up new words. I like to use underlining and italics and caps even though my first college writing teacher scoffed at it and called it purple prose — as if there's anything shameful about purple!

It probably sounds like I'm just describing the little pen-scratches of my journal, but this is my process with *all* kinds of writing. With academic writing, I go backwards. I defy convention. Instead of identifying my thesis and then building a case around it, I start at the bottom of the pond. I let the water lilies bloom from the mud of my subconscious instead of forcing the pointed sword of predetermined outcome to dictate what unfolds. And this is what I mean: if I'm writing a critical essay about a book I've read, my first step is to sit down and let the impressions of the

book begin to creep up. From the murky depths of feeling, they start to preen and take wing, and I just capture those little word-birds on the page. No matter the grammar or where I think it's going, I watch the train and mark the passing of the cars, but I don't try to shove it sideways in its path. Writing is not about forced detours; it's about following and listening to the nonlinear voice that pushes its way out of me when I create the invitation. I like how one of my really smart teachers, instead of giving us assignments, presented us with invitations to write. Invitation, like:

**Join Us!** An invitation to the self. An invitation to speak and be heard.

So once I've captured my general impressions of the book, it usually looks like a big block of run-on text, and this is where the treasure hunt begins. Sometimes I might leave it and come back to it. With fresh eyes I start to find the power surges, the patterns, the circles. This is where the thesis makes itself known to me. Which way is the arrow pointing? Which ideas have some jet fuel behind them? What takes shape on its own?

Because anything I write well has to be driven by the Voice. The writing writes *me*. For me, writing is sometimes more about listening than speaking. Even in critical analysis, something has to propel it. My gut does a much better job propelling than my brain. My brain second-guesses itself, seeks to please, draws conclusions from thin air. My gut has roots to pull from—the deep nutrition of my own visceral response, my experience, my intuition. In this way, writing an academic paper becomes an adventure, rather than form dictating form, which feels so dang contrived anyway.

I like to let a piece of writing flower organically and then go in with the pruners. The formula I've been taught—Introduction, Thesis, Three Paragraphs of Evidence, and Conclusion—gets applied afterward. It's not in charge of generating the writing. My Voice is the hidden engine. And my Voice doesn't want to come out if I have a sword pointed at it. It wants gentle coaxing and encouragement. Soft rain. Sunshine. Rest. Patience. Love.

January 11, 2011

*These creamy pages are thirsty for my ink. My pen gliding, gliding like birds, like the pigeons I just made the acquaintance of. It feels good to write. Good morning, healing earth! Good morning, Love!*

*I am on the bus on the way to school, and when we pulled up to the Starbucks at 23rd and Jackson, and all the white middle school kids with their musical instrument cases piled off, little snowflakes were falling and I had the familiar sadness of knowing it wouldn't last, that the rain would come and wash away the snow before any snow-people could be formed. Looking out the window, I gazed down upon the top of a battered newspaper machine, upon which someone had left a brown loaf of wheat bran, had baked up this treat and upended it like a gourmet dish for the pigeons busily picking away at it. As I watched, thinking what a beautiful image I should capture this, I should write about it, one of the grayish mottled birds rose before me, ascending in slow motion, a flurry of flapping wings, the sound like the whispered shuffling of a deck*

*of cards. She seemed to float  
before me, wings outstretched,  
heart thrust out, glorying in the  
goodness of flight. Maybe she was  
dancing with gratitude.*

writing from the well *chalen kelly*  
foreword by irina achil'diyev



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## foreword to *writing from the well*

There are many ways of writing: silently and carefully, by stringing words together in logical threads, by transcribing an imagined conversation, or in a series of images. Chalen's central image is that of a well, a place of light and darkness, moon and stone and water—calm, reflective, deep. Writing reflects an underlying process of artistic inspiration and self-discovery for the seeker, generated from the well's tranquil inner space. For Chalen, the central presence of the well symbolizes the source of inner sustenance, both necessary and transformative. As aspiring writers and habitual readers, the first story we construct in that space is about ourselves, frequently told in the language of metaphor. Writing from the well connects the gaps between inner and outer space; concrete words become ineffable concepts through the processing of metaphor and image. Metaphor reveals one's message obliquely, allowing the reader to supply much of their own meaning, their own truth.

The process behind reading and writing is ultimately an act of interpretation that links verbal to nonverbal understanding. Using words always means a game of approximation, so reading is the flipside of writing from the well. Both draw their power from a process of imaginative contemplation. People may assume that writing is a creative act while reading is passive, but this is only if we're reading for information. For the seeker, reading symbolic prose is a transformative enterprise that requires engagement. Seeking becomes speaking becomes seeing ourselves steeped in the well of our words.

}irina achildiyev

## writing from the well

chalen kelly

*If each day falls  
inside each night,  
there exists a well  
where clarity is imprisoned.  
We need to sit on the rim  
of the well of darkness  
and fish for fallen light  
with patience.*  
– Pablo Neruda  
*The Sea and The Bells*  
translated by William O'Daley

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Standing above the well, balancing between night and dark water, with a real moon above and a reflected moon below, I too am real above, reflected below. Insignificant against the backdrop of stars, yet magnified in the water, I am both distorted and beautiful. My toes clutch concrete and loose stones, stones fall. Ripples disperse stars and fragment me, water crashes against itself. I am crashing against myself within a universe crashing against itself; this well reveals confusion and repetition. I come to this ledge to participate in these collisions. At this well I break the silence

to hear the collision. Sometimes collision sounds like invitation; this time collision sounds like an invitation to cease writing.

*Submit. In the face of existence, choose silent appreciation or mute despair. Making meaning from chaos is equal to carrying water in the immemorial sieve. Don't write; nothing will come of it. Forests don't appreciate novels. Bookstores are thinly veiled parking lots. Nobody listens, less reads, and it wouldn't matter if they did. Let go, your descriptions fumble at the garter belt of mystery. Your writing displays inadequacy. Don't write unless you are ready to acknowledge yourself a fool, unless you are willing to hope your deity of choice prefers comedy.*

Defying the urge to slip into the well, I choose levity. I choose to play the fool and write to induce laughter. At the well I name things, assign meaning. I come to the well, stand on a ledge, maintain balance. I listen and remain standing. **I write.**



Watching collisions, I observe relationships between night, stars, and self. I notice how the relationship I maintain with writing matters. Water calms, stars settle in place, my fragmented body begins to coalesce. I observe that circumstance and context matter, relearn how writing must be different things at different times. Though I prefer writing as an approach to mystery, I respect the beauty of writing when it is work, a plow horse breaking soil.

Writing is never what I envision it to be. In youth I learned not to draw with pencil because my love of erasers eroded my work. I wanted to capture images like water captures images. From this desire to capture my visions, I learned to paint. I came to love paint because in paint there is no going back, one moves forward in layers. When I write, the delete key beckons.

When I write I face the difference between desire and possibility. I peer at stars and my face distorted in dark water, I remember mirrors cannot contain the things they reflect. The page offers a similar

distortion: writing deceives, leaves things out, misdirects, has limited capacity. Audiences expect truth from writing, thus these limits challenge writers. The act of courting an audience requires the writer to choose which part of their voice to share. Writing approaches truth, but truth is elusive. In the writer's chase there are many moments where self is lost then found in transition between one truth and another.

In adolescence, I exchanged journals with a friend. We both wrote prolifically; we exchanged our work to help one another. I expected truth. What I found in his journal broke me. Afterwards I could not write for a year. Reading his journal I fell into our differences. I fell into the well. I thought I would drown there, swimming in his words. All the names of things were different. The stars were from another hemisphere; they composed unfamiliar constellations. Understanding seemed impossible. It was a loss of innocence; we were not alike yet neither of us was unique. He read my words, and they did not mean what I wanted them

to mean. He listened but could not hear me. In my adolescence I learned how writing fractures faith.

But when friends keep writing to one another, alchemy sets in. I climbed back up to my ledge. I focused on our differences; I learned how to make writing cross the empty space between us. By doing this work, I learned to deepen conversations, assist memory, savor details, notice subtlety, and offer praise. I learned to question. My faith expanded to make room for misunderstanding. I began to see how best to represent myself; I stopped thinking it was unnecessary. I learned to vary my writing because the different ways in which one writes create different ways to be human.

I now embrace the versatility writing offers, because I desire multiple ways of responding to questions posed by community, family, and politics. I continue my attempt to make connection and continue falling into the well, but with each successive fall I increase my familiarity with

the strength it takes to return. When I fall, I often wish to go numb, to remain in the well. But each time a terrible hope entices me. It compels me to crawl up the wall, remain alive, and stay vulnerable. I cannot stop; I am too deeply in love with possibility.

Writing, like giving birth, involves sacrifice. It is a process that does not guarantee happiness. The changes writing invokes are not simple. Writing involves seeing, acknowledging, and accepting responsibility for your life. It involves sharing yourself with others. Writing as a chosen journey requires feeling and thinking. When I choose to write, I choose to throw a stone in the well. I choose to risk the possibility that ripples will erode all the things I have grown accustomed to. I choose to induce collisions, to change myself and the world I am a part of. I stand at my ledge, gather my strength, and reach to pick up the next stone. I choose to shatter again.

Writing is hope and a sort of prayer. Writing is me; it

isn't me; it is the easiest and hardest thing I do; it is the most reliable and the most terrifying conversation I participate in. I investigate the nature of writing here to offer a mirror, to invite others to stand at the well, to see themselves, and to develop their own relationship with writing.

# **the writing process**

# if everyone has a story, so does every piece of writing

introduction to the writing grid by marissa luck



11.73  
**34**  
35, 42, 668 | 52



## if everyone has a story, so does every piece of writing

introduction to the writing grid  
*marissa luck*

35

Like any craft, writing requires practice. Often, the best writers are also the ones who put the most care and effort into their words. How a writer composes, shapes, and edits their words comprises their writing process, or the back story behind the final written product.

Before I came to the Writing Center, I had never heard those two words together: *writing* and *process*. Nor had I pondered the distinct yet fluid stages of the writing process: brainstorming, drafting, revising, editing, and proofreading. I would worry about the way sentences sounded before I had even written my ideas on a page. When I became a tutor, I realized I wasn't the only one who struggled with this; there were many, many writers who attempted to brainstorm, draft, and revise all in one sitting, often making the whole writing

experience tiring, unenjoyable, and less than fulfilling. As a tutor, I discovered that more often than not, people were able to write better when they devoted energy to each stage of the writing process. This is one reason why we have dedicated significant space in this anthology to exploring this process.

The Writing Grid is a tool for you to engage in your practice as a writer by becoming aware of your needs in each stage of the writing process. The five stages are laid out vertically on the left side of the grid. Each row aligns with three separate columns: product, strategies, and feedback. With each stage in the process you can ask yourself:

*What product do I wish to generate? What strategies can I use to accomplish this? And how can I seek meaningful feedback on my work?* (Yannone).

The answers to these questions are different for each stage of the writing process. For instance, when I'm brainstorming, my desired product is to develop an idea I want to write about. The strategies I use to do this are to think about the piece independently, talk to a friend or a fellow tutor about my ideas, and then make lists or freewrite to get my ideas going. The feedback I get in this stage is informal; I'm just looking for someone to help me expand my ideas or confirm my efforts. When I'm revising, though, I want to produce a significantly revised draft. To do this, I read my paper aloud to myself and rewrite sections to clarify my ideas. In this stage, I want critical feedback on my writing, and I'll often reorganize complete sections of a piece. After I receive feedback on a draft, I may need to return to brainstorming to figure out how to change or revise what I've written.

Sandy, the Director of the Writing Center, likes to think about the writing process as a hand with each finger

representing a stage in the writing process. She pointed out that "Some writers collapse all stages into one, creating a tight, closed fist." This closed fist does not promote thoughtful development (Yannone 33).

When your hand is unclenched, when you spread the fingers of the writing process, you are left with an open hand, one more willing and able to receive insights from the world. With an open hand, you craft your ideas into words more methodically, precisely, and imaginatively. With an open hand, you create.

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- Yannone, Sandra. "Writing as a Process." *Inkwell*, Vol. II. Ed. Shawnell Johnson, Andrew Olmsted. Olympia: The Evergreen State College Writing Center, 2007. 33-34. Print.

## the writing grid

37

stage	product	strategies	feedback
brainstorming			
drafting			
revising			
editing			
proofreading			

beingstorming *grant miller*  
foreword by michael radelelich



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## foreword to *beingstorming*

*White. A blank page or canvas.*

Where do you begin your writing, and *how* do you begin?

“The art of making art,” as Stephen Sondheim has Georges Seurat sing, “is putting it together, bit by bit.” In Paris, Seurat composed his paintings by dabbing his bits, pointillistic pats of oil paint, onto his canvas. Using your pen and words, why not fill a blank page with *your* bits—words, snippets, phrases, or sentences.

Grant shows how enjoyable and liberating it can be for a writer to employ the small steps of brainstorming. Using only a few select words at a time, soon you can begin to fill that blank page, bit by bit.

Sometimes, I freewrite my bits:  
*the sky rains rivulets of ideas, soon  
bunched in loops and lines that are  
joined or split, then read, yelled, or  
left silent.* Now my synapses are  
supple.

I’ve also clustered my bits into bunches: *drops of water spring into an ocean; seeds sprout into an oak forest; drips splat into a Pollock.* There—my fingers are limber.

Or I get more creative and haiku my bits:

*Clouds gather; rumble  
Flash strike boom crack thunder rain  
Plains soaked, soon lush.*

These ideas just can’t be stopped!

Seurat picked up his brush and painted a smudge, a line, a burst. Why not pick up your pen and write a word, a phrase, a poem? “Make a hat,” as Sondheim tells Seurat, “where there never was a hat.”

} michael radelich

Simulated images of the brain resemble a vast and rigid countryside, or some unexplored planet illuminated by flashes of lightning that allow the viewer brief glimpses of the landscape of thought. Synapses fire. It looks much like a brainstorm. But what about this: a dull pain behind the eyes. Obsessive scratching. Pacing. Seemingly empty words flow through swollen fingertips. The clucking of the tongue. The wall. The tightened chest. The reading and note-taking, thinking, the ineptitude of language to stand in for thought, the futile attempt to pull concepts from the sky like snowflakes that melt as soon as they touch the page. Brainstorming quickly becomes bodystorming becomes beingstorming in this attempt to arrange ideas into that sluggish dialectic that is the writing process.

But are there ways out of, or ways into, this blank page?

There are.

Brainstorming(orbeingstorming, whichever you like) is the first stage of the writing process and is often referred to as prewriting, that is, writing before writing. All stages of the writing process are similar in that one can find support during any stage by visiting the Writing Center. But this stage is special in that this is the stage where Spellcheck becomes irrelevant, the stage where one's internal editor goes on a short vacation to a sunnier place. Because brainstorming is just that: a storm. Ideas of raindrops fall indiscriminately, black clouds of freeflowing thoughts roar thunder and strike lightning where they may, without reason, and leave the blank page ravaged with tiny treasures of thoughts and ideas. And with any process or ritual, there are ways to conjure up this storm.



## freewriting

Freewriting is my personal favorite way to get ideas on a page this is what you do just set a timer maybe and start writing and don't stop for anything until the timer goes off do not edit do not worry about grammar or punctuation do not worry about anything but getting those ideas out of your head and onto the paper or screen or whatever if you get stuck just write the same word over and over and over and over again until something comes and when you do go back through and highlight everything that may be relevant to your topic it is a wonderful way to go about it but it isn't for everybody so let's look at some other ways we might go about it

clustering

Go through  
your syllabus  
your reading  
your notes  
your mind

and jot down  
everything that  
seems relevant

42

this may look like  
a strange free-verse

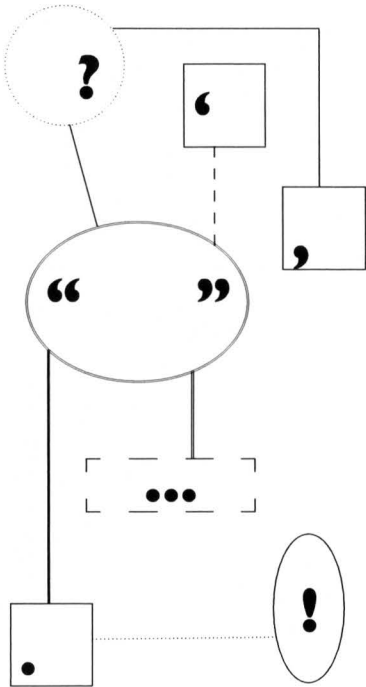
poem  
or perhaps,  
a to-do list

of ideas so one can  
gather  
them  
into  
murky puddles  
with which one will  
build  
a

sandcastle

concept maps

Take out a piece of paper and  
write down your main ideas  
and circle them. Look for links.  
Draw lines between ideas. Break  
out the watercolors and paint  
your ideas and how you might  
translate them into words. The  
more ideas you put in circles,  
the more your ideas will come  
together into something you  
can work with.





These are simply a few examples of how to engage with brainstorming (beingstorming), this first stage of the writing process. The process can be sluggish, and it is the brainstorm that bridges the gap between thoughts or ideas and a blank page or screen. The brainstorm is the ante, the beginning, the blueprint. The space where the ideas form and solidify, becomes words, which become sentences, which become paragraphs, which become your first draft.

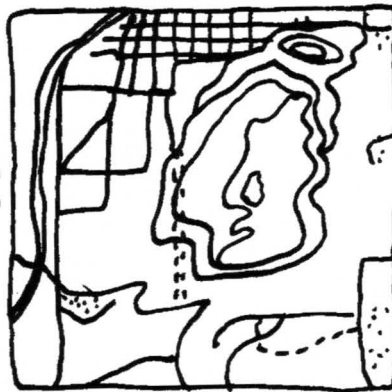
This is just the beginning.

Trust the process.

Begin...

drafting: how to ride a dinosaur  
and look good doing it    *ian ettinger*

foreword by jhaleh akhavan



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## foreword to

### *drafting: how to ride a dinosaur and look good doing it*

*As one moves forward, one often finds oneself moving cyclically toward the end goal.* - Ian Ettinger

**B**efore becoming a tutor, I'd never been asked about my writing process. I didn't know I had one, or many, or that I could choose different approaches for different pieces of writing. I had been surviving a long time on the 3-a.m.-energy-drink-and-blinking-cursor approach to writing papers. Over the past couple years, I've had the opportunity to pay close attention to my own writing and to that of so many different people. No matter what our process looks like, we're always trying to come closer to the core of what we're trying to say.

Writing creates a relationship with readers, and creating a piece of writing requires a relationship with myself. How do I choose to use the power of words? Will my writing honor these connections? Drafting, or gathering my ideas into a piece of writing, begins a process of making choices.

Sometimes, when I feel overwhelmed with making the "right" choice, or when I don't have time to think about my choices, the writing feels less like me. Through drafting, I get to know myself. Through drafting, I develop trust in my own writing process.

The ideas in Ian's article move us forward with our process, not only for a particular piece of writing, but into a growing relationship with ourselves as writers.

} jhaleh akhavan

# drafting: how to ride a dinosaur and look good doing it

ian ettinger

*...and like everything else this  
strange morning the words  
became symbols, wrote themselves  
all over the grey-green walls. If  
only she could put them together,  
she felt, write them out in some  
sentence, then she would have got  
at the truth of things.*

- Virginia Woolf,  
*To the Lighthouse*

46

**I**t is time to begin “drafting.” The brainstorm (being storm) has filled your page with spidery ciphers, and the white void has become a darkly inked surface; a complex landscape of verbiage begins to gesture toward meaning. The screen of the mind, teeming with wraiths which compete for your attention, must now be sorted through in order to make sense, to create meaning. From the scattered thoughts which litter the mind/page in the aftermath of the storm, it is time to begin making choices about which to carry along with you and which to leave behind. The second stage in the long, loopy curve of

writing now begins to pull you into its revolving motion: it is time to start writing your First Draft...

One important thing to remember is that the process of writing often requires us to exist in the realm of *potentialities*. When we write, many things are possible, including the potential for failure. Using language means wrestling with the limitations of linguistic construction, means attempting to wrestle language into a shape that can *point toward* meaning. This task, entailing (as it does) a certain degree of ambiguity, can feel uncomfortable and maybe even unsafe. As writers, tools like the Writing Grid provide us with the structure needed to keep us on track, but the bottom line is that what makes a paper provocative is often a wild card.

There is no right way to approach the drafting process, no simple method to begin writing, no readily apparent point of entry.



Some of us tend to wait until the last minute while others give ourselves plenty of time; some of us work linearly toward our goals, while others of us sneak up on our query from alternative routes. But a paper's being compelling doesn't always depend on how prepared you are or how systematic you are, any more than waiting until the last minute is bound to produce a low-quality piece. There are undoubtedly many good ways one can go about this tricky business, but concepts like the Writing Grid help to *improve* one's process, which is likely to help generate better work.

Procrastinators (like me) are among the most in need of a better-functioning process. For many students and writers, there is a certain mystique in waiting for the magic of a one-night writing marathon; many see the ability to pull off an undertaking like this as impressive, even heroic. The fact is, however, that this strategy often leads to *more* headaches than it's worth. Also, the paper doesn't usually turn out as well as it could have, since one is essentially trying to accomplish every stage of the

writing process simultaneously. I know very well that the pressure of waiting until the last minute seems like the only circumstances under which a lot of us are able to write, but this sort of mentality is what the Writing Grid is designed to counteract. By emphasizing the equal importance of each stage of the writing process, the Grid helps illuminate the reasons why collapsing all the stages into one night of writing (however epic) often leads to shoddier results.

The fear of beginning is perhaps the number one cause of procrastination, and the key to getting over this fear is simply not being afraid to *make a decision* and *run with it*. The act of making a decision, no matter how arbitrary, can often help get you into a writing groove, even if it's not ultimately the topic you decide to go with. There really is no "right" choice, since the point is just to set yourself in motion. Once you have started down one path or another, things will probably begin to snap into place in terms of whether or not you're moving in the right direction, and if you're

not, it will give you a better idea of where to try going next! Breaking the barrier of inertia is essential if you are going to build up the momentum needed to *keep writing*.

### Generating the Raw Material

Sometimes the only way to know you have a lot to say about something is to try writing about it. After writing a few sentences about each topic that relates to the overall theme of the paper, you might find that you're able to write *more* about a certain one. Paying attention to which topic you are most drawn to is often a good way to figure out what you want to write your paper on. Also, if you find that a few of your paragraphs complement one another thematically, then start pulling them together and looking for common threads. In any case, once you think you've found a focus, try to start generating as much material as you can, no matter how unpolished or incoherent it may be.

### The Guiding Question

For those of us writing thesis-driven pieces, developing a guiding question can be an important part of the drafting process. Essentially, it is like an inverted thesis statement: it contains all the same elements as a thesis, except that it poses a question rather than making a statement. You can refer to Aislyn Matias's article as well as the Writing Center's handouts on thesis development for more detailed advice and information on the thesis itself – the guiding question is simply a tool to help get you there. It keeps you on track by giving you something to refer to from time to time so you don't stray too far off the topic. It also helps you to start thinking selectively about what key elements and ideas to look for in your source material. In this sense, it is very much like a thesis because it provides a hub for your thoughts and investigations to revolve around. However, it can be discarded or revised at any point: it guides rather than constrains the direction of your paper because it is open-ended.



## Fitting the Pieces Together

Now that the paper is starting to take shape, it's important to begin organizing your thoughts. The *sequencing* of your arguments is often as important as the arguments themselves, especially if you're trying to build some sort of case by guiding the reader through a particular succession of ideas. As you near the revision stage, you might begin to find that certain arrangements make a lot more sense than others. Try to think of the paper as a fluid entity – it should *not* feel like pieces set next to one another; it should feel like a dynamic organism with components that fit together in a certain way which allows that organism to function.

## A Loopy Continuum

Writing does not usually happen in a tidy, linear sequence. As one moves from brainstorming to drafting and into revision, one finds that the line between these stages is far from definitive. Just as elements of brainstorming will continue throughout the early parts of the drafting process, so elements of drafting

will continue into the revision process. Imagine a roller coaster with lots of loop-de-loops or the concentric circles of a snail shell—as one moves forward, one often finds oneself moving cyclically toward the end goal. However, this somewhat convoluted process need not be undertaken alone. Dropping by the Writing Center, if only for the benefit of having a second set of eyes on your paper, can be very helpful at any stage. Attending the Center's writing workshops is also a great way to get information and ideas. Because almost all the tutors in the Writing Center are fellow students who are also trying to navigate the complexities of college writing, we are essentially right there with you.

**the orbital region: re-visioning** *dory nies*  
foreword by rebecca taplin



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foreword to  
*the orbital region: re-visioning*

51

The written word looks perfect. The uniformity of the digital image and the labored exactitude of the printed page depend on aesthetic seamlessness. Pages are designed to optimize the readability of text, not the visibility of a typeface. And the perfection of the letter and the word can lead us to feel that our writing must be perfect from the moment it becomes visible. Dory's article references Naomi Shihab Nye's notion that we deserve the process of revision to put forth our truest meaning—this is a declaration against the perfectionism of text. What matters here is not the aesthetic of language or text, what matters is the heart of the words.

seen, but it makes my thoughts and meaning visible. As I revise and re-see my writing, I let the mess of words and forms be messes, and I get to make my thoughts shine most. This is no time for perfection.

Revision is the most critical part of my writing process because in actively seeing again, I intentionally cast aside my inherent perfectionism and choose to value my ideas and my voice above all else. Revision enables not just my words to be

}rebecca taplin

## the orbital region: re-visioning *dory nies*

*If a teacher told me to revise, I thought that meant my writing was a broken-down car that needed to go to the repair shop. I felt insulted. I didn't realize the teacher was saying, "Make it shine. It's worth it." Now I see revision as a beautiful word of hope. It's a new vision of something. It means you don't have to be perfect the first time. What a relief!*

- Naomi Shihab Nye

There is a maxim that even the best writers struggle with the process of writing, but this struggle is never apparent! What we read and take in on a daily basis is often the final stage of writing. In other words, you never see the drafts and scratched-out notes and outlines a published (and revised) piece of writing goes through before you hold the final stage in your hands and drink it with your eyes. The myth is that writing *well* is a painless process. With this article I hope to dispel this myth.

It's ironic that I'm writing a piece possibly trying to convince you, the reader, about the pleasures of the revision process. It's ironic because I clutch and cling to the words I'm finally able to force through my fingers down through the pen onto paper, or through the keystrokes onto a monitor lit with light and memory. I cling to the words that finally end up on the page, and I resist the idea of taking any of them away, because I fear the more I pull the writing apart, the more it will unravel until I am left with only the ashes of my initial ideas.

The poet Naomi Shihab Nye speaks to her feeling of hope when she realized that to revise is to be more effectively heard. With words we make sense of our learning experience, particularly at Evergreen. I had a similar experience to the one Nye shares in the above quote. My first quarter at Evergreen I was writing short argumentative essays. I would consistently get the drafts back from my faculty with comments like, "You need to convince me." I resisted the



notion that I had to do anything else to prove what I felt were very obvious and succinct arguments. I felt proud of the writing I had done, and I was afraid that I would have to start from scratch if I wanted to rise to the challenge my faculty had set before me.

With practice and time I developed methods for this pulling apart, this unraveling of ideas, to actually get deeper into the ideas. One thing that propelled me was the realization that my faculty was actually saying, “It’s worth it for you to convince me.” I reveled in this challenge. Sure, it was exasperating, and frustrating; it meant I had to sit back down and sometimes start from scratch. It meant I had to get messy, which is really hard for me. It meant I had to let go of the words, ideas, and quotes I thought made the most sense and sometimes find all new evidence, or dump whole paragraphs. But it also meant that what I had to say mattered, and how I said it mattered even more.

Perhaps you have already read the other Writing Grid articles. I hope so, dear reader, because

reading about these other parts of the writing process may finally help you see that writing is not all about a finished product. The Writing Grid exists to illuminate all the stages of writing, because the truth is, you can start from anywhere and get somewhere. The stages of writing are subtle, and they flow into one another. In an attempt to give you a technical definition of revision, I will say that revision should mostly consist of conceptual, textual, and transitional changes. All those mechanical and grammatical changes? Yes, they are a part of revision, but they are tertiary. Revision wants to focus on ideas, not commas or font changes or just cutting and pasting your paragraphs to different places.

Most writers start with an introduction and end with a conclusion, and everything in between is pat and in place. Start with A, go to B, then C, then D, and then you’re done, and you hand in your paper, and when you get it back it says, “Too many commas” and “This isn’t how you use a semicolon.” Nye suggests that the revision process entails letting go of

your idea of perfection. This may mean ignoring those red pen comments and digging into the real process of revision: to see again.

This seeing again can sometimes feel overwhelming. It can feel like you're constantly sifting and tweaking your ideas and transitions. Often when you think you totally have to start over, you're really just starting. It's sometimes the whole dumping process that casts light on where you're really going. It is a courageous act to take a step back and gleefully cross out the lines or cut and paste; extract words and ideas; expand on words and ideas!

One way to step back from your own writing is to have another person review, read, or respond to your writing. Here's where the Writing Center comes in. The folks at the Writing Center are fellow students: people who have ideas of their own and have some good training in how to help you articulate your ideas. The word tutor doesn't begin to really define what goes on in the Writing Center. The word tutor is often mistaken

to mean needing to be fixed, or *repaired*. Working with a tutor on your writing is to have someone help you to see and think about your words and ideas from a new perspective. Working with a tutor on your writing is a chance for you to be more effectively heard.

The writing process itself is shadowy. It is fluid and liquid, and to my own dismay, there is no one right way of doing it. Writing is language and thought! Writing is dreaminess and desperate! Writing is you speaking to what you think and believe! And what a relief, as Nye says, that you don't have to get it all right the first time. Revision for me, means letting go of what I think is the perfect form for my words. Dear reader, you have no idea how this article has evolved. This is my eighth draft, but really it's officially my fourth, because all the drafts in between were secret. I was mired in the revision process, which left me lost, like a starving mad woman out in the deep waters with no raft to hold on to. To write this article I brainstormed, got tutored, drafted, got tutored; at one point I even compared



the Writing Center to a giant eyeball. But then I pushed through it. I let go of first one idea, then another. I let go of previous forms. I completely changed the whole damn thing, and finally, finally I have a conclusion and this is it.

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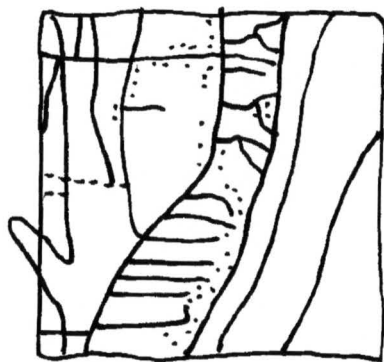
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mt. edit

*alejandra abreu*

foreword by elissa goss



37. **56** 5911, -122.497559

## foreword to

*mt. edit*

57

Editing was the step of the writing process that I always lumped together with proofreading without a second thought. Even if I gave myself enough time to proofread, I still somehow managed to focus more on fixing grammar errors than refining the essence of my piece. I never thought to give myself enough time to separate editing from proofreading, or to explore the difference between these two tools.

Alejandra's article encourages us to utilize editing as a way to reflect on our original purpose for writing a piece. *Is what I wrote actually sounding the way I want it to? Does the reader understand what I mean?* We come to realize how our choice of sentences and words convey our message, yet it can be frustrating and intimidating to realize that they don't have the desired effect, especially when we aren't sure how to change things. Alejandra shows us how editing gives us the space to intentionally explore the possibilities we just haven't discovered yet.

} elissa goss

Editing, like all the other stages of writing, is part of a larger process and as a result cannot be reached by taking short cuts. For me, the writing process is like hiking through a wilderness that has no clearly marked trails. Brainstorming, drafting, and revising are the stages that allow writers to forge a trail to their desired destination. Editing is the breathtaking view at the end of an enjoyable yet strenuous hike, for editing is the stage that enables writers to extract and illuminate the underlying essence of a piece.

As a tutor, I often speak with students who are eager to edit their piece, and it doesn't surprise me because when I think about the stage of writing that appeals to me the most, I always find myself gravitating toward the editing stage. Although I enjoy writing, it is not something that is easy for me. In fact, more often than not, I find myself procrastinating when it comes to writing because I know writing is not about

instant gratification. Writing is a gradual progression that helps to unravel the mystery of a particular idea. Whether it is a personal narrative, poetry, prose, or an academic essay, the decision to take on writing as a means of expression comes with the need for time and patience. However, I like to think of editing as the long awaited panoramic view that inspires writers to reflect on all that has been said and to hone in on all of the poetic peaks of a piece.

Although editing can be referred to as the high point of the writing process, it is by no means the end, for in order to be able to share the beauty of an amazing journey, writers must make it back down the trail of proofreading in a cautious and mindful way. However, because arriving at the mountaintop vista requires a healthy dose of patience and endurance, I like to encourage readers to revel in the wonder that is making it to the editing stage, to take the time to reflect on all of their hard work and efforts, to search for the





inherent beauty of their ideas, and to work on threading that beauty throughout the entirety of their piece.

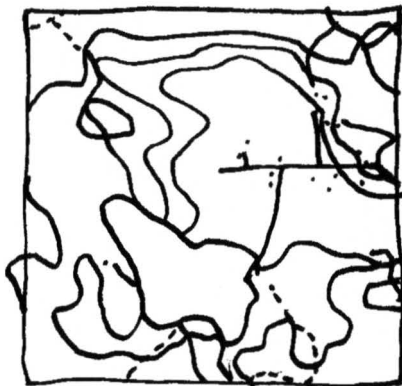
While gazing from atop the editing peak, writers are rewarded with an opportunity to revisit the trail that led them to their current destination. Editing is the stage that asks writers to look at each individual sentence in order to identify whether each sentence is helping to guide readers forward. Is each sentence contributing to the forward movement of the piece? Or is there a sentence that forces readers to circle around in a confusing manner? Are there sentences that ask the reader to carry more information than is necessary or helpful, especially in terms of the larger picture? Are there areas that can be further explored in terms of vocabulary? Would using a thesaurus help expand your understanding of language and provide your reader with an opportunity to read something fresh?

One of my favorite exercises to do with writers when they come into the Writing Center is to have their piece read aloud.

I like to remind them that language was an oral tradition before it was translated into the written form. Having a piece of writing read aloud can prove to be an incredibly transformative experience because it requires writers to breathe life into their words and by doing so places them in the position of both the writer and the reader. Reading a piece aloud allows writers to feel the weight of each word and to reflect on the auditory effect of each sentence. More often than not, if a sentence does not feel good on your tongue, it's probably not going to feel good to the reader.

Ultimately, I like to make the distinction between editing and proofreading by saying that editing is solidifying the poetic resonance of a piece, while proofreading is about polishing the grammatical and visual aspects. Editing is about creating a piece of writing that encourages both the reader and the writer to engage in the sensual and ideological journey of a piece. Editing is about clearing the underbrush from the path you created in order to reach the pinnacle of your ideas.

**becoming reader**    *meghan mcnealy*  
foreword by anna hale wolfe-pauly



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foreword to  
*becoming reader*

61

When we write, we often chew for hours, refraining from the swallow, the digestion, the expulsion. You take the bits in, roll them around on your tongue, and begin to identify the grapefruit, the coconut, the cardamom. It does feel good to chew, to meddle words in mouth and push them into cheeks for holding. When we read our own work, we ask ourselves to swallow and to encounter the traces of what was once in mouth. When we read our own work, we encounter what was once inside of us, and if it does not match the content of our desires, we turn away. We are reminded only of chewing. Reading is having slowly swallowed. You develop a palate, and you learn to like what works. You develop a taste for what nourishes you. You become reader.

}anna hale wolfe-pauly

The final stage of our writing process is the integral moment of becoming, of morphing or transforming *from* the writer and back *into* the reader. Reading is the Other of writing, perhaps the opposite, yet also that which contains writing, which requires and allows for writing to exist. The completion of the writing process is reading, becoming the reader, experiencing our own work and owning, really knowing the text: "...[T]he text that contents, fills, grants euphoria; the text that comes from culture and does not break with it, is linked to a comfortable practice of reading" (Barthes 14).

To understand this completion, this "finishedness" of the text, is a tricky thing. Have we not been reading through the text all along, fixing and moving and pouring out since the first moments of the brainstorming? When can we call the text *done enough to read it*? Putting the

pen down. Taking off the writer-face, and sitting down with a text, a new text, just finished, just for us to read! Editing is done now; text is assembled and is *ready* to be *read*. When we read our own work, we allow ourselves to understand what we meant, to see where we meant something else, perhaps, or to inspire ourselves with a new idea completely, a new voice, structure, meaning, or practice. We see our ideas as they have fit themselves together into an entirety, a wholeness. When we write for a particular audience, we are testing the work by reading it, interrogating the words at their connections before any other reader gets the chance to do so, knocking on the wall of this work we have constructed, trusting the solidity, comfortable, knowing.

Becoming the reader of our own work is the way we get to know the work, the real work, the culmination of every step of the process, every moment



from revision, switching and changing, re-writing, pausing and thinking; this piece of text that we have created is the story of that process. Only we can understand that, and we can only understand it when we read the text. The writing, the whole process and the text itself, is an extension of ourselves. Each word and phrase is determined by our voice; we must know this voice and be proud of it. Reading is taking ownership of a text; we project ourselves onto any text we read, and that text paints itself back onto us; we form relationships with a text when we read it. The effect of forming this relationship with a text that we have written is astoundingly important, phenomenally vital, and stupendously powerful. This is true no matter what type of writing we are referring to, always. In order to come full circle in our writing process, we must make time to converse with, analyze, investigate, critique, and question (read: *read*) the text we have created. All of the writing we do is our own, and reading our work gives us the freedom to keep going, to plunge deeper into our inquiry and expression. Reading our

work gives us the ability to understand our processes and practices at every step of each piece of writing, as well as the chain that each of those texts creates.

Once we have become reader of our work, it is likely to be beneficial to seek out a new reader, for the text to be read by new eyes, like a piece of music played on a different instrument. Tutors in the Writing Center are thrilled to read any piece of writing that happens upon them, but for them, *tutoring* does not mean just *proofreading*. Proofreading is a specific act, a special one, the final moments of the writing process, the readiness of the piece, and is most important when enacted by the writer. Tutors are interested in working with writers in a way that will support them in their whole process and in the particular stage they might be in. The proofreading stage could be very brief, perhaps minutes before the paper is due, or it could take a while, revisiting our lines and our words; it may even lead to discussion and conversation about the ideas and work as a

whole. Often, a tutor might read our work to us. Hearing our work read by another voice is a great way to get a sense of how our writing translates to another person, and how the writing *feels* when another person is sensing our voice, emphasis, and tone in the work.

The most important thing is that we read our writing, that we know it, hear it, sense it, sign it, reference it, remember it, and step away from it, look at it from a very different angle and become inspired by it.

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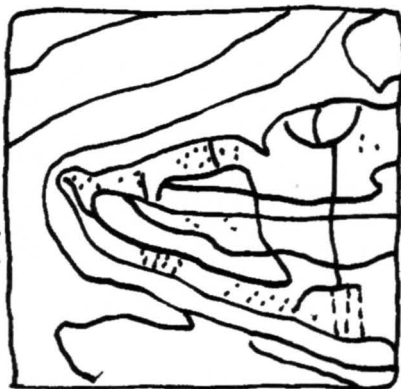
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*how do you write?*

on your marks: accentuating eloquence  
(set in type, not in stone) *victoria larkin*  
foreword by camille boulds & keelia ridgely

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**foreword to**  
*on your marks: accentuating eloquence*  
*(set in type, not in stone)*

Punctuation. It is between the lines of language, the clarity which dwells in the liminal place between what you say and what you want to say; it braids itself into your words and intentions. Because of its quiet power, though, many who don't understand punctuation are frustrated by it. Like a language, it is daunting to try to learn. Some think they are just bad at punctuation because they don't know it intuitively. They incorrectly assume that punctuation just is—that it has no definitive purpose, and has always been confusing. People think punctuation complicates language, when really it clarifies language.

people who love those little marks and symbols, but loving them is not a prerequisite for loving this article. Victoria demystifies punctuation, lifting the veil of elusiveness surrounding not only its uses, but also its origins.

This article is funny, warm, and inviting. The history presented therein is not only interesting for those who enjoy punctuation, but also useful for people who struggle with it. Chiefly, though, this article is accessible—to those who “get” punctuation, and equally so to those who don't. Yes, we are two } camille boult & keelia ridgely

## on your marks: accentuating eloquence (set in type, not in stone) *victoria larkin*

Strictly speaking, when it comes to punctuation you probably don't need anything but commas and periods.

With some dexterity you could probably even skip the commas.

Long ago one was lucky to have spaces between phrases.

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Latin inscriptions in what was known as scriptio continua did not even have spaces between words

Way back when, most anything written down was meant to be read aloud. Texts were occasionally marked with symbols signaling various pause lengths to an orator.

By the 4th Century CE, in response to a decline in literacy, professional scholars and educated readers began to punctuate their own copies of older Latin texts in order to clarify and maintain the integrity of meaning for future generations. Manuscripts “pointed” by these elite readers became known as *codices*

*distincti*. There were not very many of them.

Once the Bible was translated into Latin, things really got going. Matters of interpretation became paramount: Meaning hinged on where you paused. Unthinking scribes could mess up everything: Was God the Word, or was the Word with God? (See Augustine of Hippo, *On Christian Doctrine, Book III*.) Augustine, that vigilant church Father, insisted that punctuation keep meaning in line with Orthodox Church Doctrine; anything else was considered “heretical pointing.”

Irish scribes, working with Latin as a second language, introduced many innovations of punctuation, including spaces between words, and symbols (some based on ancient examples) to delineate breaks in grammatical structure. As book learning increased, so did jobs for scribes. The more scribes inscribed, the more skilled they became. They created new



symbols for more subtle effects. For a few centuries, different scribes in different regions did different things, and the general conversation about when and how to point flourished.

Then, a new invention happened: In the 15th Century, printing by type was created, and punctuation marks as we know them today took shape and firmly established their functions. Moveable type ensured consistent reproduction of older and newly created symbols. As printed texts traveled wider and farther than manuscripts, this consistency inspired more standardized use; beginning writers modeled their punctuation on what they read, and so passed on what they'd absorbed.

As with kings, scribes, philosophers, and fashions, punctuation changes with the times. By the 1800s, novelists were punctuation happy! Novels were overfull of every punctuation mark available! Like Victorian bric-a-brac, there wasn't a spot left unadorned: layers upon layers of commas;—( ) even dashes following semicolons!

Modernism then demanded a break from centuries-old forms. Like women's clothing, punctuation was minimized and streamlined. Some writers eschewed anything but the period. Wouldn't dream of commas. Commas only slow a reader down. Sentences punctuated with periods are firm. They are decisive. Thought is complete. Rows of sentences marked by periods march ahead. There shall be no such frippery as commas. We certainly won't entertain any coloned species. And let's not even mention the vagary of ellipses...oops...

Since at least the 4th Century, there have been many scholars, scribes, philosophers, grammarians, and authors who've written discourses about punctuation. One ongoing point of contention has been whether writing is meant to re-present the spoken word, and is therefore rhetorical; or whether it is meant to adhere to an internal set of syntactical rules, mostly based on Latin construction. Some have been emphatic that each writer has their own expression, and punctuation should be used to accentuate

individual eloquence. Others have been more concerned with punctuating according to semantic units, seeking a prescribed grammar, a consensus of correctness based on logic: rules.

Most often, writing is not exactly re-producing speech. Writing does not fly out of the mouth like the spent arrow; it can be considered and altered before it goes out into the world. Writing is crafted voice, and punctuation is part of that craft.

Each punctuation mark becomes akin to a look, a gesture, a breath—like a stage direction in tone:

*He leaned to the side and muttered to his table mate: "...—and that was no joke!"*

*She explained to her cousin: "...; the strawberries are ripe!"*

*He weighed their silence before continuing:  
"...: three heads in each jar."*

Writers use punctuation to give cadence to their text, according to their own taste and intent, not the rules. Trying to remember

the rules can detract from, and is often a turn off to the craft of writing: If someone is busy trying to remember all the rules before they can use a comma, what happens to creativity?

The first step is to know your own writing. The next is to know your punctuation.

A good way to get to know the rhythms of your writing—also a good way to proofread your own work—is to read your writing out loud, noting where you pause, and noting the kind of pause you want.

Not all pauses are equal.

You could say there's a sort of hierarchy of punctuation, representing different degrees of pauses, going from no pause at all (no mark), to a brief minimal pause (,), to a medium pause (;), to a major pause (:), to a full stop(.).

Commas are the most versatile of punctuation marks, and can probably cover most pausal needs.

Where a period signifies a full stop, implying completion of an idea or a sentence, a comma is



a brief pause inside of that idea or sentence.

**Commas perform many subtle and distinct tasks.**

**They emphasize (or subordinate):**

*I live a quiet life, without my family, in New Hampshire.*

**They separate and add:**

*Sharon, her two children, and the dogs all came with us.*

**They shift tone:**

*Just how, young man, do you intend to pay for that window?*

**And they help us know what is and isn't connected:**

*My parents, Arthur, and Todd were at the table that night.*

**A medium pause maintains a connection between separate ideas or sentences. For this a semicolon can be used:**

*I never meant to come here; the car stalled.*

**Semicolons can also set off comparisons:**

*What is there between public and private; sacred and profane; wet and dry?*

**and are useful for lists with commas inside:**

*Three items were in the drawer: a*

*silver pistol, with J.S. engraved on the handle; a packet of letters; and a small box, locked, with no key in sight.*

**Colons separate more definitively than semicolons, and they have an anticipatory quality. Most often used before lists (and examples), they can also come between sentences, suggesting that what follows directly elucidates what preceded:**

*Mother and Father were happy: Baby had a home.*

**Punctuation rules are sometimes grounded in tone.**

**Here are two complete sentences joined by a conjunction and the required comma:**

*Harry and his dog went for a walk, but they never arrived at the shore.*

**Without the conjunction, the rule states that you must use either a semicolon or a period:**

*Harry and his dog went for a walk; they never arrived at the shore.*

*Harry and his dog went for a walk. They never arrived at the shore.*

**Note how each choice changes the emphasis and connection of the second sentence.**

**Does one seem more ominous than another? Our choices set the moods.**

**Most punctuation is a matter of style, and taste. For instance, using dashes, parenthesis, or commas for separating asides:**

*Knowing my marks—like knowing my words—allows me to shape and highlight the world of my text.*

*Knowing my marks (like knowing my words) allows me to shape and highlight the world of my text.*

*Knowing my marks, like knowing my words, allows me to shape and highlight the world of my text.*

As authors of our own texts, it is up to us to know what we mean, how we want the mind of the reader to hear us, and how to use punctuation to convey our music to their eyes. If we were to write without any punctuation at all, surely our messages would get muddled.

Mindful use of punctuation allows us to ensure clarity, and create subtle effects, in all kinds of our writing.

There are lots of fun books, believe it or not, about punctuation. Some were written in England, and there are different rules in England (some of which I prefer). Some are full of rules, and some are full of amusing examples illustrating creative use. Some people prefer the simplicity of rules, but rebellious folks like you and me prefer to do as we please, “within reason” (reason being: *have one*).

I’ll leave you with a short list of the books I’ve gotten into, both for style and rules, and a reminder that you can always come to the the Writing Center to Play with Punctuation. ‘Til then!

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**evaluating ourselves**



the slacker's guide to writing evals     *dana oride*  
foreword by marissa luck



**76**  
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## foreword to

### *the slacker's guide to writing evals*

“It doesn’t matter if I write a self-eval,” a friend once confessed to me, “because no one really reads them anyway.” The words struck me with the force of a soccer ball kicked toward me when I was looking elsewhere. I caught my breath and scowled, unsure of how to respond. The words stayed with me for months before I understood why they were so blindsiding; the experience struck at something I believed in deeply: the significance of an institution actually caring about my voice.

You see, writing self-evaluations isn’t only about proving yourself to an external audience. Rather, the power in writing self-evaluations lies in the practice of claiming authority. This practice is largely about the presence of *your* voice in *your* transcript (a luxury few college students know). However, practicing authority moves beyond simply taking ownership over your experience; it’s about challenging yourself to *care*

about what you’re learning—to engage not only in the material but in the learning process itself.

Once my teacher asked our class to write about how we learned to do something well. While the range of activities differed from cooking to riding horses, we each experienced a common moment: in order to get better at doing something, we had to take time to think about *how* we were doing it. The key to growth was consciousness. When we churned along unconsciously or un-carefully, we stagnated. Dana reminds us that writing self-evaluations is an exercise in gaining consciousness of your learning and hence, of yourself.

} marissa luck

# the slacker's guide to writing evals

*dana oride*

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**R**eady, set, reflect?

I've always struggled with writing my evaluations, and while there are a wealth of resources available to help students with the process of reflection and revision, my issue is not about asking myself good questions, or about reflecting deeply, but about some sort of mental block around the enormity of the self-evaluation. I know that my self-evaluation is really important, that I might need to provide it to someone as some sort of evidence of my education, that it's my chance to capture and frame my education. I genuinely do believe that it's supposed to be empowering. I know and believe all of this, and yet for four years I wrote drafts of my evaluations and never really wrote an eval that I was satisfied with. I filed my drafts with the evaluations from my professors, or with my other work from the program, or somewhere else that I thought was clever; was thankful that I wasn't on top of my game enough to apply to grad school

or a professional job (and thus actually need my transcript); and trained my creative energy on my school work.

When senior year came, I started thinking that a transcript would be a nice thing to have, and I suddenly had seven evaluations to write. Even though I had drafts of most of them (which ranged in tone from perfunctory to tortured to super analytical), it was a painful, painful process to write seven evaluations at once. But I learned things. In reading through the various drafts I had written, I realized that by my junior year I had actually cobbled together a process that worked pretty well for me, but this process could have been so much better if I was conscious of what I was doing at the time. I also learned that many other students shared similar blocks around writing evaluations and that sharing my evaluation hang-ups could be useful to others.



## Procrastination and Perfectionism

I'll talk more about perfectionism later, but procrastination and perfectionism have a particularly unhelpful way of reinforcing each other. There's always something more immediately satisfying to be done than writing your self-evaluation, especially if you think that you're not going to do a good enough job on it anyway. It's really easy to not write your eval when it's so wise and rewarding to get excited about your next program. Recognize these tendencies. Call them out. Now move on.

## Time to Reflect

Yes, consciousness and empowerment can be about continual awareness and reflection, but it's not that easy. I need some distance, and the best thing I've done for myself is to give myself permission to take time. Here's the thing about Evergreen: you don't actually have to *submit* your final evaluation at the end of the quarter (unless otherwise specified by your professor). You need to submit your perfect, signed evaluations before

you want your transcript to go out to grad schools or potential employers, but until that time comes, you can have your almost-perfect evals (or your as-good-as-they-can-be evals) sitting at the ready on your my.evergreen.edu account. By God, make sure you have your best draft saved on that my.evergreen.edu account, especially if your filing system is anything like mine. Drafts on paper get lost. Flash drives get lost.

## Pressure to Have Something Really Really Good Because You Know It's Really Really Important

Don't. Don't feel the need to write something transcript-worthy, especially not during week ten, when you might be finishing an academic project and trying to make your academic content as good as possible. Your project needs to be as good as it can possibly be by the end of the quarter so that the work can be reflected in your professor's evaluation of you. Your own self-evaluation, however, only needs to be *conference-worthy*.

I finally hit upon the idea of a conference-worthy evaluation during the final quarter of my junior year. By conference-worthy, I mean that none of what follows matters: length, things being too listy or bullet-pointed, things being out of focus or misfocused, being too self-critical or critical of the program, talking too much about academic content or how much you hated everybody else in the class, or that one book you read. The first conference-worthy eval I wrote was four pages long and included a page about my father's recent death, my embrace of academics as emotional escapism (and subsequent surprise at the inadequacy of that escape), and the tension of traveling home for very personal reasons while studying that same home. In this far too personal page, I unraveled questions about where I belonged as a daughter, as a native scholar interested in the institution of education, and as a person. It was far too navel-gazing for anything that I would want to present in my transcript, but it was honestly where I was at and set the ground for a genuine, affirmative evaluation conference with my professor.

Yes, the whole thing was too long, too personal, had too many unanswered questions, and even had too much academic content. But it was obvious that I knew all of this when I handed it in, and my professor didn't waste time talking about any of these things. Instead, she affirmed strengths, pointed out themes that could be refined and used to frame the eval as a whole, and highlighted where my self-evaluation echoed and complicated things that she had written about in her evaluation of me.

I'm convinced that we had such a rich conversation because I wrote a *conference-worthy* eval instead of attempting to hand in a *transcript worthy* eval. And I eventually did write my transcript-worthy eval. The page of writing I talked about earlier was eventually reduced down to, "Family obligations necessitated that I made four trips home during the course of this program," followed by a tighter discussion of ethnographic trauma and native scholars.

The conference-worthy eval works for me as a procrastinator and a perfectionist, because it forces me to do something very specific and have it done for a specific time. I know that it's not going to be the version that goes in my transcript, and I can be hopeful that what I write will actually provide a foundation for a really good conversation that I can use as I move towards that transcript-worthy eval. Writing the conference-worthy eval is also necessary because of what I risk losing if I don't: That moment.

My favorite evals go beyond simply presenting my education and somehow capture something essential—a moment in my development as a person, a photograph of something that would be impossible to draw from memory. I became more skilled in editing these photographs (learning, for example, to pay attention to tensions, to honor my authority in my experience), but first I had to learn to see the conference-worthy eval and the transcript-worthy eval as two completely different animals. I learned all of this pretty late in my academic career, but I hope

that some of you are reading this a bit earlier and that you might be able to recognize your own process for writing evals.

So don't panic; let yourself take the moment, and let your writing go all over the place; you will revise it all later.

your education on paper:  
the summative self-evaluation *rebecca taplin*



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## your education on paper: the summative self-evaluation

*rebecca taplin*

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As I completed my time at Evergreen during the spring of 2010, I kept hearing whispers about the summative self-evaluation. Even in the Writing Center, not many tutors had written one, and no one knew all of the specifications. While I didn't fully understand what the summative self-eval was, I had a sense that I needed one to complete my transcript. I undertook a variety of interdisciplinary approaches to my education, years spent in the print studio, quarters worth of collaborative projects, bits and pieces of time in intensive philosophy and writing programs, that one quarter I studied performance art, and the one in Prague. When I looked at it all together, it made perfect sense to me that I now wanted to go to graduate school for mental health counseling. And I understood that this might not seem like the most obvious step to anyone else, most worryingly, to graduate school admissions.

When I began to write my summative, I found that even

though I had lived through all of my education, I wasn't yet familiar with my education on paper—as it appears in my transcript. Reading through one's own transcript isn't necessarily pleasant; sometimes evals contain comments or typos that are regrettable now. Yet taking the time to read the whole thing enables critical reflection. Through reflection, it is possible to add another page to the pile.

What I added to my transcript provides a more overarching insight into my education than my evaluations could. It frames my education from the end point of my undergrad career and shows how I developed into the learner I am now. All the smatterings of information in other evals serve as evidence of this learner. I know that when a reader begins the daunting task of reading my transcript the first piece of my voice they encounter reflects the learner that I am now. It is this voice that guides them through the rest of the pages.



This article is an attempt to compile some of the tools that guided me through writing my summative in hopes that it will illuminate the process. These tools are meant for the early stages of the writing process, generating ideas, and beginning to write; however they can be useful whenever you get stuck or need new perspective on your writing. Often the biggest challenge with summatives is figuring out how to start. It seems like a baffling task, so it is best to start with a clear understanding of requirements and recommendations:

**Your summative self-evaluation is due at the end of the quarter after you graduate.** If you graduate in spring, that means it is due at the end of summer quarter. Communicate with Registration & Records about this deadline if you have unusual circumstances and are trying to complete your summative on time.

**The summative will be the first evaluation in your transcript,** followed by all the others in order of the most recent courses to the first program.

The summative adds a new perspective to your transcript—it

**is not a chronological retelling of your education.**

If your summative is concise, your readers are more likely to read it in full, so a length of approximately **two single-spaced pages** is a good guideline. No smaller than 10-point type please.

**It takes time and space** to craft a summative self-eval, so give yourself plenty of both.

The following chart can help you map out how your transcript portrays your education and spark thinking about what else you want it to communicate. It works best if you fill the chart out while referencing your transcript. This way you can know how your education is portrayed already and see how you might clarify it for a reader. Fill the chart out from left to right, listing first all the credit bearing things you did, and then continue to the next column to draw out what you learned. You may find that as you progress to common threads and themes that you combine courses and you end up focusing less on certain courses and more on the tone of a quarter or year. And perhaps in the importance column, you'll write even less.



programs i've taken at evergreen	significant activities & learning	common threads & themes	how this is important now

The summative is a document that asks you to be intentional about why you are writing it. It is common in the early stages to feel like you are writing because it *seems* like a good idea. After getting acquainted with your transcript, you might have a more personalized sense of why *you* are writing *your* summative.

At this stage it may be helpful for you to frame that purpose for both yourself and your audience. The following prompt can start that framing. You may want to use this prompt (or a variation on it) to begin your summative, or you may just use it to brainstorm:

**The summative self-evaluation is an optional document the student creates for the Evergreen transcript. I am choosing to write a summative because...**

*go ahead, write some ideas...*

There are no set structures for summatives; they don't require a chronological approach or a mention of each class you took. It may be helpful to consider the approach that Evergreen takes to teaching and learning, particularly if you find yourself focusing more on what you did than on how you learned and why it is important. The five foci of teaching and learning at Evergreen will be listed in your transcript on a page that describes the institution. They are beneficial to consider, not so that you can merely pay lip service to these institutional values, but because they are the themes that your courses and programs were designed around. They are likely to be reflected in how you learned. They are:

Interdisciplinary learning

Learning across significant differences

Personal engagement with learning

Linking theory and practice

Collaborative learning

It is likely that you can point to evidence of each of these in

your transcript. If they resonate with how you conceptualized your education, take some time to freewrite about them. How have they impacted the way you learned at Evergreen? Where have you seen yourself excel at them? Are there any that you want to carry into your future work? As you think thematically about your education, you may want to refer back to the chart you filled out with your transcript. How do the themes you noted there compare with the themes of the five foci?

Writing a summative self-eval is no easy task. It takes dedication and time. It takes multiple drafts. It takes revision. And it takes getting help from others. It is, however, a task that your education at Evergreen has prepared you for. No matter what you studied during your time here, reflection on those studies is likely a central part of how you learned. The summative provides the opportunity for your most practiced reflective voice to guide a reader through years of reflection. Having a summative as part of your transcript completes the work that you have done, and it makes

it possible for your transcript to be read in a way that best represents your education.

**cultivating voice**

**“but i write the way i talk:” inclusion and  
exclusion in american academic writing**

*marissa luck*

foreword by marisa schneidman

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## foreword to

*"but i write the way i talk: "inclusion and exclusion in american academic writing*

I am on a tightrope made of wire. I am walking the line between the writer and the writing. My clothes are covered in hooks connected to ropes that lead back to figures in the distance. As I trace two ropes with my gaze to their source, I can just make out this elusive form called Voice. I can feel the power of Voice and continue to walk with its presence pulling me. Illuminating Voice's beautiful nuances from behind, I see a mirror-like figure, Context. Context humbles me by its complexity. I see myself in relation to the world around me reflected in Context.

Also, through the reflection of Context, I am able to locate the source of the ropes drawing me, with assertive force, in another direction. Two sharp and familiar figures, Academia and Standardization, are enmeshed, pulling me away. I feel their weight, their muscle, their leverage. I cannot hear parts of Voice anymore, so I start to test what it feels like to pull back without falling off.

Walking on this wiry path, I become aware of Standardization's potential to pull me until I cannot see Context's illumination of Voice. I am slowly realizing that Academia and Standardization control more ropes than I can see.

So here I stand precariously balancing on this wire. I am still walking the line between the writer and the writing, struggling to balance. I want to walk confidently, keeping Voice and Context in clear view. I must take the next step.

}marisa schneidman

## “but i write the way i talk:”

### inclusion and exclusion in american academic writing

*marissa luck*

**N**ot many people can say they were sent home on the first day of first grade. But this is what happened to my father, who was punished for speaking Hawaiian Pidgin to his peers in a classroom where only “Queen’s English” was tolerated:

I thought that, since I was with my peers that were my age, that I could speak Pidgin English (since that’s what I did with the kids in my neighborhood), and I was sent home and given a spanking by my mother because she said, “We’re paying for private school” (Luck).

His mother did not want their family to have “any traces of the dialect” in order for them to “navigate successfully in society.” My father explained that in that generation, succeeding in society meant “screening out the ethnic identity of my mother’s past” (Luck). While this drastic

measure may not happen today, the implications of my father’s story linger. A certain type of English is accepted in American academia that is culturally and socioeconomically specific. This standard of English privileges and excludes certain groups of people.

### Towards an Understanding of American Academic Rhetoric

Writing is a personal and social act that happens in the context of our cultures. Each culture has acceptable styles or rhetorics of writing. Multiple styles of writing may exist within a culture, but it is likely that one rhetoric is privileged over others as reflecting cultural values and norms.

American academic rhetoric is particular about writing. Cut to the point in the beginning with the thesis, then spend the rest of the paper convincing your reader. The responsibility for clarity and meaning rests



on the writer who must hold the reader's hand through the process or risk being called confusing or off-topic. This is known as a *writer-responsible* approach to writing versus a *reader-responsible* approach to writing that exists in some other cultures (Habib).

My early experience writing academic essays illustrates the nature of American academic rhetoric. In the sixth grade, I learned the art of "CHUNKing." CHUNKing was a new approach to teaching writing that was intended to train students to write academically. I remember sitting in Language Arts class staring at my teacher writing the formula in green marker on an overhead projector:

**Introductory Paragraph:**

Include a thesis as your last sentence in the Introductory Paragraph.

**CHUNK (Body Paragraph):**

Topic Sentence, Commentary, Fact, Commentary, Concluding Body Paragraph Sentence.

**CHUNK**

**CHUNK**

**Concluding Paragraph:**

Restate thesis

This method demonstrates core values of American academic rhetoric: individualism, focus, and rationality. Students are to indicate their individual opinion through a thesis and prove it without divergence. Individualism exists within accepted conventions.

I followed the rules. I learned to CHUNK, using fifty-cent words along the way. Eventually, I spent the latter part of high school learning to break away from this formula. Yet the confines of this approach had sunk into my writing. I saw my sense of confinement reflected in the experiences of another writer named Ella whom I worked with at the Writing Center. She told me, "When I'm doing academic writing, I feel like I'm writing to some external standard or bar that's being set. I don't know what it is."

Although this narrow external standard can limit all academic writers, Ella and I have a distinct advantage over some of our peers: we are both native English speakers from middle-class backgrounds who grew up immersed in standard English.

## The Role of Privilege in American Academic Rhetoric

I started to understand my advantage while working with writers who had different experiences with the English language. For instance, Jerry is a middle-aged African-American man, veteran, and father who is soft-spoken and determined. He wrote sentences like, “The professor go to his office,” or “She don’t do that,” or “I seen how a community can be divided.” I crossed through the words and wrote “goes,” “doesn’t,” and “saw,” moving on to what I thought were more important things.

Jerry is clearly an intelligent, native English speaker who grew up with a specific cultural and regional accent. He laughed nervously as he told me, “I write the way I speak,” like many other students have told me before. But what if the way he speaks is not accepted in American academia?

Working with students like Jerry, as well as with English Language Learners (ELL), I was struck by how hard it was

to explain things that seemed so natural to me. I realized there was something more to my writing than work or skill.

Growing up in a middle-class household, as a mixed-race person who could pass as white, my childhood was riddled with privilege. I used to spend my summer afternoons in the living room with the sun dancing through our cathedral-style windows as I escaped in the stories of *American Girls* and *Ella Enchanted*. My parents, who both had master’s degrees and worked in administrative positions, would discuss their social work, politics, and religion at the dinner table. I came to college knowing how to write a thesis, arrange a five-paragraph essay, and make an MLA bibliography.

My fluency in standard English acts as a base for me to strengthen my academic writing. On the other hand, writers like Jerry or ELL writers have a different base language or dialect. Unfortunately, their different experiences with the English language are treated as a deficiency

in academia. Students are expected to overcome this deficiency by changing the way they communicate to fit into academic standards.

In one Writing Center workshop, I heard a man reflect on his experience learning to adjust to college academic writing. He explained how it was challenging to write in academia because he did not grow up exposed to affluent university culture. For him, academic writing felt like “a different language” than the way he spoke at home or with his peers.

Not only are students with non-standard language experiences grappling with college coursework, they are faced with learning a new way to speak, write, and express themselves within American academic rhetoric.

### **Learning to Adapt to American Academic Rhetoric**

While working with an ELL writer, Rachelle, I realized some of the difficulties students learning English may face while writing in a new cultural context. Rachelle is an advanced English

speaker but feels less confident with her writing. She was writing an essay comparing two texts.

“I don’t get it,” she shook her head, staring down at an intricately annotated article. “I spent so long looking up words I forgot what it’s about. How am I supposed to write about it?” She continued, “I have too many quotations. I need to add opinion. How do I add opinion?”

“Well, what do you think about this?” I asked.

“Well...this is...uh...this is not good...and...” She looked at me, waiting for my approval.

I realized her anxiety may have come from a variety of sources: her difficulty understanding the theoretically complex text, her worries about writing a college-level English essay, and her recognition of needing to add opinion but not knowing how to go about it.

Fan Shen, an author and college English professor originally from China, had trouble learning to express his individuality in American

academic writing. He was accustomed to writing in the Chinese rhetoric that required that the use of the word “I” be “somewhat hidden or buried in writings and speeches” (Shen 460). Shen learned to recognize that incorporating individual opinion was a key concept in American academic writing when he acknowledged that:

Rule number one in English composition is: Be yourself. (More than one composition instructor has told me, “Just write what you think.”) The values behind this rule, it seems to me, are based on the principle of protecting and promoting individuality (and private property) in this country. The instruction was probably crystal clear to students raised on these values, but, as a guideline of composition, it was not very clear or useful to me when I first heard it (Shen 460).

My question to Rachelle (“What do you think about this?”) strikingly resembled the advice Shen’s teacher gave him (“Just write what you think”).

Yet this may not be a simple question for students accustomed to writing in different cultural rhetorics. In order to learn how to write in American academia, Shen needed to learn “the values of Anglo-American society,” and learning to write in American academia involves a degree of cultural adaptation (460).

Anna Habib, a writing tutor fluent in multiple languages including English, pointed to the challenges ELL students face in the process of cultural transition:

My clients were finding themselves trapped in a discourse that was misunderstood in their new cultural context. I could see their frustration and understood that they were focusing all of their energy on grammar and syntax.... What they don’t know, and rightfully so because I don’t think tutors mention this enough, is that organization and argument is different in English than it is in Arabic or Korean or French or Mandarin (Habib 10).

These students were learning to balance cultivating individuality within the accepted conventions as well as learning to adapt to the writer-responsible expectations of American academic writing. Since American academic rhetoric is narrow, it does not open space for the integration of other cultural rhetorics or methods of writing. Instead of allowing students to determine how to balance different cultural rhetorics, academia requires students to unquestionably adopt American academic rhetoric in order for their writing to be considered seriously.

Although each student's experience with academic English is unique, everyone from these stories (except Ella and me) is facing a similar challenge: they are learning a new way to express themselves within American academic rhetoric. Because they are pressured to alter their voices to fit the standard of academic English, they may experience exclusion and marginalization.

## Conclusions: Marginalization and Voice

This year, I was reminded of the unconscious marginalization that takes place in the classroom as a result of language differences. "I'm usually quiet in seminar because the conversation is very fast," an old classmate of mine from Korea who is an ELL student studying social sciences told me. When he did speak in seminar, I noticed my classmates' eyes glazing over and my own mind drifting into space. Unconsciously, we stopped attentively listening when we heard him. Expertly trained by society, we had learned whose voices were to be taken seriously and whose were not.

American academic rhetoric operates within a linguistic hierarchy that values standard academic English while devaluing variations of English or other cultural rhetorics. The presumably neutral standard is actually culturally and socioeconomically specific. While not discussed fully in this article, I have noticed intersections of class, culture,

and race within this linguistic hierarchy. Students who are expected to alter their voice are frequently not students who grew up in American middle- or upper-class (often, but not always, white) cultures. In effect, the linguistic hierarchy in academia reinforces the power of dominant middle- and upper-class (mostly white) groups. By excluding or devaluing nonstandard rhetorics or English variations, American academia marginalizes students who don't fit into the narrow standard. In doing so, academia denies these students the validity of their voices.

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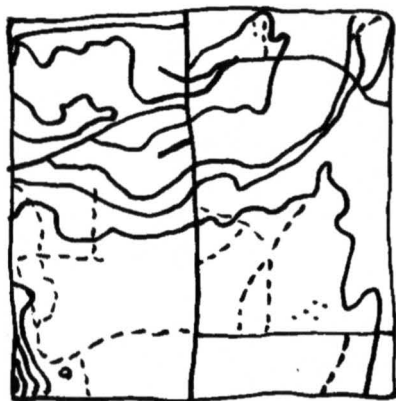
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women's work: the fence around the fire  
afterword by trevor van dyke  
*anya albers*



39.59741, -79.100197



## women's work: the fence around the fire

*anya albers*

### On Release

101 My writing is a political act of healing. I rely on it as a tool for negotiating this world and my experiences as a target of oppression. I write to claim ownership of these experiences, to bring them into the reader's consciousness as truths, and to heal myself from them. For me, this process of creative truth-telling is ritually interrupted with the violence of systematic silencing that's inflicted when I release my words from the cages of their generative womb into a critical space.

Here my writing becomes too brash and too soft, too emotional and too violent. Too personal, too close, too distant, or too removed. These are not observations based on a foundation of respect and trust for me as an author that would allow me to maintain ownership of my writing throughout the revision process, rather they are judgments that speak to the double-bind expectation of female writers

to be emotionally hyperactive without crossing the illusive threshold where our writing loses academic credibility. We're questioned when we do not cry, and when we do, it's assumed we can't see straight through our tears.

Despite the pain of these myth-based realities in academic and peer writing circles, I still choose to release my writing. For my words can breathe only when they are being read. If I hoard them in the safety of privacy, they will never be heard. I will end up carrying their dead weight around inside me. If I choose to make my writing public, each reader can help carry around my truth when my words come to life inside them. Thus the load is lighter as it is distributed, and the truth is more real and complex as it exists outside of myself.

### On the Violence that Follows

The violence that I write myself out of does not end when I've

written something down. Nor does it end when I find the courage to offer it to the public sphere. Now, I have to fight to maintain my authorship against the deep groves of powering over the truths of women writers. As writers coming from the underside of power structures, we must not only defend the content of our writing as truth, but figure out who is there to help us grow as writers and who is there in an effort to silence us.

There are cracks in all writing. And opening them creates the heat of potential. Some cracks let light through to illuminate the piece, while others allow the whole piece to cave in on itself. The problem with the structure of the classic academic revision process is that it splits open these fissures without a dialogue on ownership, authorship, and power that works to control the splitting process. Without this dialogue and/or agreement, we fall into the path of least resistance, where male-identified folks continue to define good writing and attempt to rescue and re-write women's writing to

fit the dominant male standard. The cracks are filled with the reader's voice, agenda, and assertions of power and defense. The writer disappears. The crack becomes a rip that tears the writing and the writer in two. And the mending process is long and grueling. And it's almost always the victim who's left to put the pieces back together.

### On Recovering

Like everywhere else in the world, the Writing Center is a place where a discrepancy lies between intention and impact, theory and practice. Tutors are taught a methodology that insists on the writer directing a session and maintaining her authorship. Yet, as I was being tutored on this very article, a tutor told me exactly what he would do if this were his piece. His use of language was one that assumed authorship over my work and set fire to the multi-generational wounds of silence within me.

Tutors at the Writing Center have access to information on anti-oppressive tutoring and are

## afterword

by trevor van dyke

*I think Anya's "Women's Work: The Fence Around the Fire" is the best article Inkwell's ever had. If you have time and want to see these ideas in conversation, refer to her article often — my words cannot approximate the author's, and I cannot describe her experience or her ideas better than she does.*

### reader

It is four and a half years ago, and I am standing in the front of the Writing Center, a prospective freshman visiting Evergreen with my dad. I stop and linger at a small red book, *Inkwell: The Student Guide To Writing*. The friendly desk person informs a shy me that it's free, to go ahead and take a copy. I devour it that evening, in between flashes of *True Stories* (excellent film) and intermittent text exchanges with a girl I've been crushed out on. I am seventeen, dying to get to Evergreen as fast as possible, and I am interested in these articles, in these writers — *I could know these people soon — I could do these things. Hey! One of them even likes Portishead, sweet!*

And then I am less excited, and more...floored. Thumbing through, I come across a piece — I only catch the subtitle at first: "The Fence Around The Fire." Women's work? I begin to dig into this work for the first time, and for the first time, I listen to a pain I am both familiar with and yet is entirely alien to me.

It is a pain of silence that rings from her voice, echoed in a rumble and a cacophony by her body. "My writing is a political act of healing," she states from the outset, and I am finding language on the page for notions, thoughts, that I've always encountered wordlessly. My body, too, is a place for dead words, as they flock into and under my skin. And yet, my pain is differed, exposed in its hiding, and I know this, twitch at this.

Because the site of attack, the site of silence isn't my writing, isn't my getting-better poetry I had already been working on for years. The site of silence in language is my body itself. Like my writing, my body is seen as a man's. This is inescapable, in the air, on the tongue, in the hairs that sprout from me—I, like every other transgender person I've met, am the battered outlier of a definition that refuses to embrace them.

But I don't know this. I don't have the words for this. I am four-and-a-half-years-ago me, and I simply sit there reading about an unfilled ache that I'm not willing to place as not-mine. Anya conveys a driving sense that words are meaningful, that they challenge the real, and resonate from personal experience. Her message is that we must come to understand each other as struggling speakers, as people using the medium that articulates and causes their pain as a means to heal from it, to undo it. Regardless of whether I live in the gender dichotomy of woman/man Anya uses (I don't), I understand her discussion of language's denial of certain voices and the need for this to be removed. Anya

argues, stirringly, that this is possible, that writing can heal "generational wounds," and become the politically powerful act it promises.

But I keep coming to, instead of Anya's conclusion, an itching sense that this is not quite so. That I am not in a position to decide when I am silenced. I am not positioned to scratch the back of the silencer, to educate them on why erasing my and others' existence as voices is dangerous. I cannot do this. Maybe, I think to myself sometimes then, now, and always, maybe I'm on a different emotional register than Anya, maybe my good days are her bad, my bad are unspoken to her. Yet we still somehow seem to share the worst days—the ones where words go dead again, and I have to feel the full weight of them inside my gut. It's an empty socket stuck in my chest; the incessant, rapid beating of it all gone. No spark, so to speak. This is four-and-a-half years ago; this is two years ago as I become a tutor at the Writing Center I admired so much; this is also now.

## writer

Still, I choose a position against silence. I believe I share a sense of priority about this with Anya—I believe that both she and I as writers want ownership of our writing, as an extension of our selves. What I want as well, and where we seem to begin to split, is an anti-silence. As a writer I can make my own opportunities to speak—my voice will click, whirl back into place, clatter into full—but I cannot make my own opportunities to be heard. The dead words inside rattle and shake and screech and tear away as they are chopped open, to be flayed anew as I drive them from their quaking home, the body (my body, I keep being told). I want the raw stink of hate that I have been told and made to bottle within to leave me. Writing as fumigation, so to speak. I want my fingers to be the right size, my voice to not be a quivering mess of pitches that contradict what I try to project—that I am not woman, but neither am I man. I desire a state of violent flux, a ruptured system that leaves behind the solidness of a common ground in language for a more sensitive

hum. I am speaking because there is this needed crackle in my body that comes from the sparks, the friction, the nonstop grinding and pulsing of a world and words that cannot, will not cease to rub. me. out.

Because language is the medium where my pain is most distinct, most sharp, it is both where I must communicate my hurt and where my hurt is spoken to me. We are leftover twitches of this shaping that shot us into birth, shot us into the violence of the real—this cannot be a space for healing, yet there are still burnt ashes in the labored wounds. What, then, am I generating as a writer (someone who uses language regularly), if not more context for violence on myself?

*anti-silence. i engage in my violence because i am a boiler plate who sizzles pops stings but with a brick on top. even with my pale skin i'm never meant to go off, but sit to wait to sting and corrode with my pale voice instead. my proposal is simple: rip out the brick. the vocal cords, the nervous tic of those who cannot stop speaking can be quite quiet, it seems, after all. i enact the violence that creates me as a writer;*

*as a body, as a person, rather than erase the same. i engage in action to maintain the space of participation. i make choices that keep me alive as a writer.*

## tutor

But I am not only a writer, no more than I am only oppressed. My body is a queer body, is a trans body, but—I am privileged. There is already a place in the conversation for me. I am white; I am middle class; I have read and written well since the age of five. And now, after returning to the Writing Center as a precocious eighteen-year-old wanting the job, I am a tutor at twenty, one who carries these privileges and erasures with them always.

I have to ask, given the circumstances of violence and silence that Albers and I convey (differently), what can we do? What are we to do as tutors? That is, what choices do I make, where am I responsible for affecting other people's voices?

I think the answer lies somewhere within how and what I can be responsible for

affecting in myself. If I am not the arbiter of my own inability to speak, whom do I serve that purpose for? We all have a finger ready to click on the mute button, to control conversation for convention and comfort. We are purveyors of ourselves, but also all mediators in the collective sense of voices, and some violently jockey to remove all but their own.

I know the sense of "sensibility" to this, the authority that my voice can be given when I remain invisible. The "white straight male" becomes the default category, the unspoken wallpaper to my essay that I cannot achieve. My fear in writing this is that if I don't emphasize my own identity and experiences I will be subsumed. That you as a reader hold the ability to erase my experiences is both terrifying, and telling. It reveals how I can work better as a tutor to confront, empathetically, these fears.

We have to confront the place where refusal in language happens and address the dynamics and fears of mediating a writer's experience. We, tutors at the Writing Center, seek

to create a writing space that prioritizes and centers authors' voices and gives room for them to work through the fears around them. I think, in this context of violence and silence, the most important work that we can do is to stay clear; we should stand aside.

As a tutor, I hold the quixotic goal of making myself unnecessary, undoing the work of mediating a writer, of withholding and silencing them. It's not that tutors need stand by and passively do nothing—rather we have the work of actively countering that which we, and so many others, carelessly strew in the path of an earnest writer—language, literacy, grammar, the body, personhood—we have the impossible task of removing ourselves and the power given to us as literate participants in the conversation.

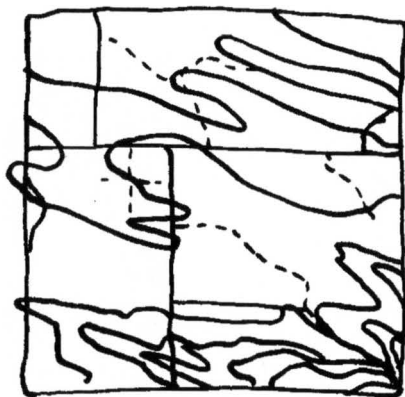
Perhaps an embracing of our death drives as tutors is in order. Rather than erase the mark of another for the countless time, we must begin to erase ourselves, begin to conceptualize what the death of managerial tutoring (where the tutor is a necessary intervention between the writer

and writing), and the process of healing, can look like.

I am still a foolish seventeen-year-old kid. I didn't exit that part of myself by writing this anymore than I did not bury down other parts of myself for years. I can't write this to undo past mistakes and errors, from me or against me. I will still hurt those around me, and for their benefit I need to learn when to remove myself and my ability to cause pain. If we have to reach for a collaborative process towards undoing hurt, in writing, in education, in life, it requires stepping down and negating the roles that we have used to oppress each other.

And I am eleven and I sing and I enjoy it, the reverberating sounds from chest going outward. *I've chosen to do this*, I think to myself, *I've chosen to be part of a choir*. And the sounds of us join towards our stirring sixth-grade rendition of "Sleigh Bells." The emphasis is, understandably, on participation. And I am happy, that I hear myself best among many, and that our sound is of a collective beauty, our voices still our own.

**in case of fire**    *sandra yannone*  
foreword by shanda zimmerman



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## foreword to *in case of fire*

Writing can be a life-saving experience. A pen can create a safe place where there isn't one. A voice that can't be heard can be written. For some, writing is not a mere repose, but a nutrient needed to survive.

== For others, writing can mean disaster.

So many writers carry their story like a burden. It has taken a lifetime to keep that story buried, and they have measured every step to ensure it does not escape. Some may be waiting for the right moment, or the right amount of skill, to reveal their story to the world. But for others it is a creature best kept in a cage. Telling the story would mean awakening the dormant beasts that guard its doors.

We do not acquire our stories unscathed; releasing them may very well open old wounds. A blank page could be a portal to endless possibilities. Or that page could invite a monster, every blip of the cursor waiting to wreak havoc.

Writing can be frightening because we don't always know what will come of it. When I tell my story, what words will come out? What memories, what feelings?

When I pick up the pen, what will happen?

} shanda zimmerman

For four days and four nights one September I lived outdoors at a camp in a valley outside of Sedona, AZ. I kept looking up into the mountains for any signs of life. We'd tucked twelve people, each alone, inside the boundary of a seven-foot-square of land chosen specifically for the challenges it might pose to its inhabitant. All twelve had prepared diligently for a vision quest, each filling 144 squares of red cloth with a pinch of tobacco then looping those squares into a long thread of prayers, an offering to the spirits. A wispy rope staked into four corners of the earth were the only walls protecting the one inside from whatever obstacles the Sedona land and sky might offer.

My role was supporter, having little knowledge about what that might entail. All I knew was that I had traveled to Sedona to eat for those who would be inside their rope houses without food and water for four days. Once

at camp, I learned an equally sacred task: those of us at the camp had to tend to the fire. It could never go out.

For four days and four nights I sat at that fire at base camp watching it fiercely and letting it be my inspiration to write.

On the first day, our guide Asher encouraged us to make offerings to the fire: tobacco, sage, juniper, handfuls of flavored earth we could feed the fire and send to our beloveds up on the mountain. I sat by the fire for hours writing in my rice-paper book to keep company with the fire, to make sure it did not go out.

On the second morning, I woke to the howl of wolves. Opening my tent flap to the first sky of day, the sky and I became one. I walked to the fire, sat down in the dirt, and wrote whatever blazed from inside me. I filled pages with my own words.

When I looked up from my book from the other side of the fire, Asher said, "Why don't you offer a poem?" I stood up and gave the fire a poem by Li-Young Lee (41):

### One Heart

Look at the birds. Even flying  
is born

out of nothing. The first sky  
is inside you, open

at either end of day.  
The work of wings

was always freedom, fastening  
one heart to every falling thing.

For the rest of the day, I kept looking up at the sky for any sign of birds. That afternoon rain broke free from the clouds. We filled our lungs with campfire songs remembered from childhood as we furiously unloaded wood from the back of the pickup. We had to keep the fire raging, raging in the face of rain.

On the third day, I danced my words around the fire. The red clay permeated every step I took as the blue sky hung above me.

On the fourth day, I whispered into the fire's ear all day, singing faint lullabies throughout the night.

On the final morning, I knelt in the clay waiting for the sound of the truck's grind in the dirt letting me know of the group's safe return. I had fed the fire with words for days while others used wood. Now it was my turn to listen.

We gathered inside the sweat lodge to witness our beloveds' rebirth. The rocks heated from the fire breathed life back into their near deaths. Outside the lodge, the sun blazed over us. We crawled out like babies, then sat around the fire. Those changed from the mountain poured their medicine tea over the coals. The fire sputtered its last words before it was gone. We, all of us, were all that was left.

In that instant, my memory of the fire became the fire inside me. How could I keep it from going out? For months now, the fire has continued to burn in the form of "One Heart." Unlike all other poems I know, Li-Young

Lee's poem knows me. It has me memorized, and so I offer it to people whenever my mouth and heart want to open to the world.

But what if fire is not what burns creatively inside of you? What if fire doesn't motivate you, but terrifies you?

On July 6, 1944, a boy sat on the bleachers inside the canvas big top of the Barnum and Bailey Circus waiting for the first act to begin. Above him on the high wire, the Great Wallendas warmed up the crowd with their spectacular motions in flight. The boy turned his head for an instant to look at the yellow tent towering behind him. Out of the corner of his eye, he saw something crawling up the seam of the tent.

"I think I see a fire," he said to his aunt, a grade school teacher who had been given tickets by the family of one of her students.

"Oh, don't worry," she said. "Somebody will put it out."

Nobody put it out.

In eight minutes the great tent from the Greatest Show on Earth burned to the ground in

Hartford, Connecticut. While a world war raged an ocean away, the fire that summer day took the lives of 169 more people, mostly children.

The boy, now my father, was not one of them. From that July day forward, he always looked for the escape, the exit, in case of fire. He came to need wide-open spaces, would leave all the doors and windows he could find open. He became a volunteer firefighter in our hometown, dashing out of the house at all hours of the night when the town's alarm would sound, signaling a potential disaster, hoping he could rescue someone from the fire.

From a young age, I knew what the red tank hanging on the kitchen wall was for and how to pull the pin and use it, even though I couldn't lift it. There's a photograph of me on my first Halloween dressed up in a red sweatshirt with a plastic pumpkin bucket in one hand and a tiny, plastic hatchet in the other. On top of my head: a red Junior Fire Marshal hat.



For years my father would not tell anyone these stories. He couldn't see how a story burning inside him was different from the fire he escaped.

Then one day in 1999, I saw a request for submissions to a popular New England magazine my parents had read for years. The magazine was looking for readers' stories, a sort of "Where were you when?" approach to storytelling. I knew this was the chance for my father to tell his story, to help him extinguish the fire he could not put out that day in July, 1944. Working on his article brought out his passion for writing. His article, "The Day the Circus Came to Town," was featured fifty-five years later in *Yankee's* July 2000 issue as one of the top one-hundred stories of the century.

Writing is an act as strange as the impulse to keep a fire ablaze. The stories that inspire us, ignite and terrify us, come from our beating hearts, come out of nowhere to circle inside our vast interior skies. Those birds in the Sedona sky flying over the fire? I wrote them down so you could see them. So, too,

I give voice to the fire; the fire gives voice to me. If tended to, both can blaze for what seems like forever without destroying a single living thing.

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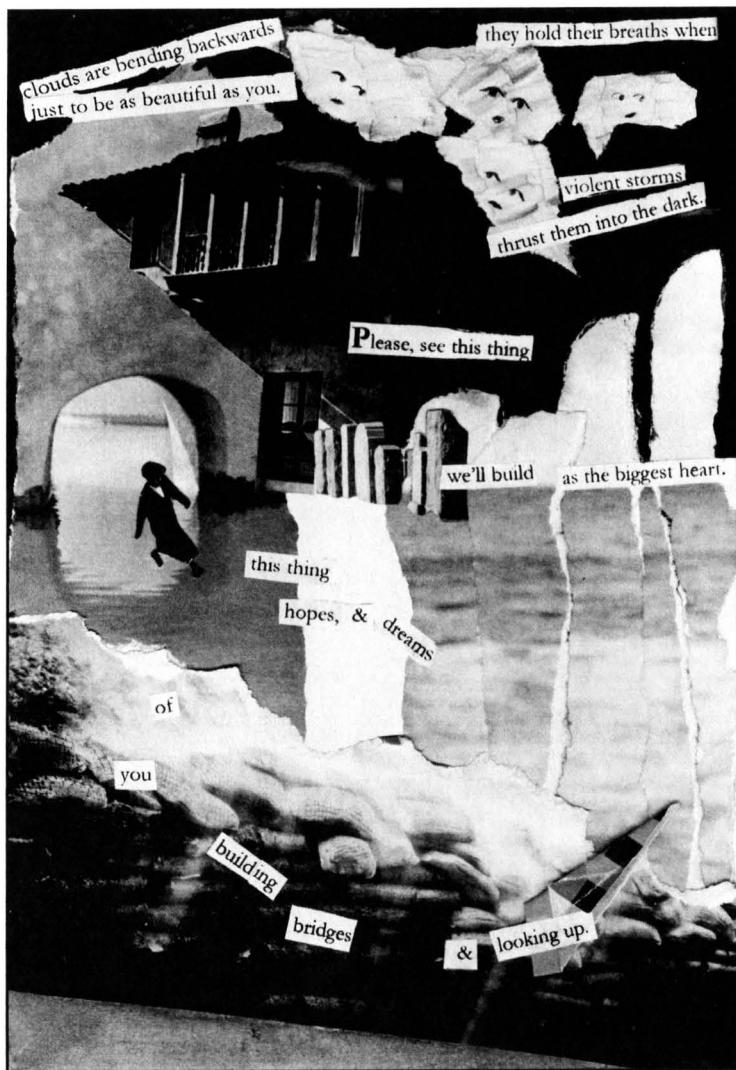
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**o, dear things**    *otis pig*  
foreword by samantha sermeno



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foreword to  
*o, dear things*



}samantha sermeno

Please, see this thing  
drifting outside your window.

i know

that your head hasn't grown so heavy

to keep you from looking up.

you stay indoors when it looks like rain,  
but staying indoors is what brings clouds to cry.

clouds are bending backwards  
just to be as beautiful as you.

so look at the things you cannot reach  
& imagine building bridges

& build bridges.

•

please, see this thing

that bobs alone in the middle of the ocean:  
all the hopes of a stranded sailor

cast back.  
the hopes, they dream

of land & human hearts.





they hold their breaths when violent storms  
thrust them into the dark.

& remind each other who they are  
through holding hands & sign language.

the ocean spans seventy percent of the earth;  
& all the hope in the world will fit

inside a single bottle.

•

please, see this thing

leaking from the fallen soldiers  
you carry in your arms.

they meant to kill, but they didn't mean to die;

the holes in murderous hearts  
now manifest.

with a world so small, & so much goddamn life,

we'll all have to share the same grave.

soon, our beliefs will seep  
through the rosewood of our coffins —

splinter by splinter

—as birth.

•

sprouting from some sacred soil  
to grow into the greatest good;

maybe we'll get saved after all.

& if the good won't grow on its own,  
we'll build it as the biggest heart.

it's what we've learned to do as a people  
when growing takes too long.

**I 20** you can build love out of love,  
to stand upon, or step inside

but to travel from one body to another  
first it has to leave you.

**et cetera**

# biographical notes

christopher rotondo

-18.766947, 46.8 **10** 107

editor of the *inkwell anthology*

from *inkwell volume vi*, 2011



Christopher V. Rotondo is a 2009 graduate with an emphasis in political economy. He worked as a tutor in the Writing Center from 2007-2009 and as a tutor, workgroup coordinator, and *Inkwell* editor during the 2010-2011 school year. He is one of the founding editors of the *Counter Point Journal*, an independent community newspaper in Olympia. Currently, Christopher is an aspiring novelist and poet, amateur journalist, and engaged intellectual whose future is uncertain.

victoria larkin

21.5125 **14**, 55.923255

*tutoring as a radical act: changing the world one by one & on your marks: accentuating eloquence*

from *inkwell volumes i & iii*, 2006 & 2008



Tutoring and editing are still the most satisfying things Victoria Larkin does, along with writing and performing. She continues to work from a philosophy based in cultivating voice, by encouraging critical thought and personal creativity. It is Victoria's belief that each emancipated mind and voice brings us closer to freedom from ignorance and tyranny around our world.

shae savoy

-54.666667, -68. **20** 0000

neil young with birds, or how i write

from *inkwell volume vi*, 2011



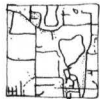
Shae Savoy is a poet, a priestess, and a writing center tutor at Evergreen's Tacoma campus. She also teaches writing at Seattle's Bent Writing Institute, the only queer writing school in the world, and will be entering an MFA program (likely Goddard College) in the winter of 2012, to get down and dirty with poetry. She blogs at [shaesavoy.wordpress.com](http://shaesavoy.wordpress.com).

chalen kelly

writing from the well

11. **26** 0235, 42.668152

from inkwell volumes i & ii,  
2006 & 2007



Remaining deeply in love with possibility, Chalen Kelly graduated from tutoring in the Writing Center to teaching in Silverdale, WA. Publishing in *Inkwell* created an opportunity for authentic connection with the Writing Center community and with the larger pool of writers at Evergreen. Chalen remains grateful to the vibrant community there.

marissa luck

11.73 **34** 35, 42.668152

from inkwell volumes v & vi,  
2010 & 2011

*"but i write the way i talk:" inclusion  
and exclusion in american academic  
english & if everyone has a story so  
does every piece of writing*



Marissa Luck is grateful for the wisdom and stories writers and tutors shared with her during her three years of tutoring. She is especially grateful to her fellow members of Tutoring Across Significant Differences for their many hours spent addressing anti-oppression in the Writing Center and at Evergreen. After graduating in June 2011, she is happily exploring the world and doing social justice work in the Northwest.

grant miller

-23.548 **38** 943, -46.638818

beingstorming

from inkwell volume ii, 2007



Grant Miller lives and works in Portland, OR.

ian ettinger

*drafting: how to ride a dinosaur and  
look good doing it*



Ian Ettinger is currently working on a Master's degree in Liberal Studies at the City University of New York Graduate Center. He studies Victorian and modernist literature with a focus on British and Irish novels of the interwar period (1918-1939) and has been working toward proficiency in Spanish for the last three years. He is also beginning to learn French and is planning a two-year immersion in France upon finishing his MA.

-6.2115 **44**, 106.845172

*from inkwell volume ii, 2007*

dory nies

*the orbital region: re-envisioning revision*



Dory Nies is still mesmerized by the delicate art of communication. She likes to send postcards to people who live within walking distance. She lives in Olympia and is reluctantly becoming a birder. Dory is currently in a Master in Social Work program, where she studies shadow matter and monsters.

42.220815, 18.740 **50**<sub>3</sub>

*from inkwell volume ii, 2007*

alejandra abreu

*mt. edit*



Alejandra Abreu was a tutor in the Writing Center from 2006-2008.

37. **56** 5911, -122.497559

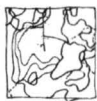
*from inkwell volume ii, 2007*

meghan mcnealy

becoming reader

35.689488, 1**60**.691706

from inkwell volume ii, 2007



*Je naîtrai: To be born, first person, future tense. I become myself with each reading of the clues I have composed for myself: for to write is to converse with the future.* Meghan McNealy writes constraint-based performance texts, non-fiction poetry, and folk songs; she is a paper and book artist, farmer, and illustrator currently working and performing in Paris.

dana oride

*a slacker's guide to writing evals*

**76**.229679, 21.012229

from inkwell volume iv, 2009



Dana Oride worked at the Writing Center from 2006-2010. She lives in Tacoma, WA with her husband and son. Dana is a skeptic, hip-hop enthusiast, birder, and mother. This article grew from the rich environment lovingly maintained by the Writing Center, our connection to our pedagogy (especially Peter Elbow), and an editor who was, at heart, a tutor.

rebecca taplin

*your education on paper:  
the summative self-evaluation*

-33.924868, 18.4**82**.055

from inkwell volume vi, 2011



Rebecca Taplin began working as a tutor in the Writing Center in 2007. Because she can't stay an undergraduate forever, she is moving on to pursue a Masters in Mental Health Counseling in the fall at Lewis & Clark in Portland, OR. She enjoys playing with words and how they look.

anya albers

women's work: the fence around the fire

39.59741, -79.100197

from inkwell volume ii, 2007



Anya Albers currently lives in Nashville while pursuing a Master's degree at Vanderbilt as a Nurse Practitioner. She is learning to merge women's mental health activism with her love affair with the written word. Anya stated that, "‘Women's Work’ never felt whole. The most vital thing it taught me was to make peace with letting go of the imperfect. My use of traditional pronouns felt awkward and inauthentic, as did the implication of gender as a binary experience. I am grateful beyond words that this discussion is expanding."

trevor van dyke

afterword to women's work: the fence  
around the fire

39.59741, -79.100197

from inkwell volume vi, 2011



Trevor Van Dyke is a student at Evergreen and a tutor at the Writing Center. Trevor wishes there was more time in life to be baking, likes to read, and hopes to smash capitalism and to cast doubt in your mind about Trevor's gender and name. Trevor also wants you to know that thinking about things is usually a good call and that there are a lot of resources at Evergreen you can be using that you aren't.



sandra yannone

in case of fire



Sandra Yannone has directed the Writing Center at Evergreen for the past ten years and is a founding editor of *Inkwell* with Shaun Johnson. Her poetry and book reviews have been published in *Slightly West*, *Ploughshares*, *Prairie Schooner*, *Calyx*, and *The Gay and Lesbian Review*. She also is the sole proprietor of Kitchlandia, an antique business specializing in kitsch from the 50s and 60s. She thanks all the tutors with whom she's worked over the years for continuing to inspire her to cultivate her voice.

39. **110** 385, -76.612189

from *inkwell* volume v, 2010

otis pig

o, dear things



Otis Pig is away at the moment.

17.066944, -96.72 **116** 8

from *inkwell* volume iv, 2009

## campus resources

The Writing Center recognizes that the following areas of the College provide services that can be complimentary to our own.

### **KEY (Keep Enhancing Yourself) Student Support Services**

KEY is a federally-funded support services office for students who are first generation, low income, and/or have documented disabilities.

Location: Library 2108

Phone: 360.867.6464

[www.evergreen.edu/key](http://www.evergreen.edu/key)

### **First Peoples' Advising Services**

First Peoples' Advising Services is a multicultural resource center for personal and academic advising. It is also home to the Unity Lounge, a safe place to study, hang out, and learn about resources.

Location: Library 2126

Phone: 360.867.6284

[www.evergreen.edu/firstpeoples/atevergreen](http://www.evergreen.edu/firstpeoples/atevergreen)

### **Academic Advising**

Academic Advising helps students understand the structure of Evergreen and realize the variety of educational options available.

Location: Library 2153

Phone: 360.867.6312

[www.evergreen.edu/advising](http://www.evergreen.edu/advising)

**Access Services for Students with Disabilities**

Access Services provides resources for students with documented disabilities that can impact their educational experience. For a complete list of what is available, refer to the website.

Location: Library 2153

Phone: 360.867.6348

[www.evergreen.edu/access](http://www.evergreen.edu/access)

**Assistive Technology Lab (AT Lab)**

The AT Lab houses support staff and computers that have software to aid students. Some of the computer programs available are ZoomText, Dragon Naturally Speaking, and JAWS Screen Reading with Tandem.

Location: Library 2318

Phone: 360.867.6016

[library.evergreen.edu/accessibility](http://library.evergreen.edu/accessibility)

**Computer Center**

The Computer Center contains both PCs and Mac computers with full Adobe and Microsoft Office suites.

Location: Library 2nd Floor

Phone: 360.867.6227

[www.evergreen.edu/computing/computerlabs](http://www.evergreen.edu/computing/computerlabs)

**The Daniel J. Evans Library**

The Evergreen Library has three floors of books, periodicals, films, music, laptops, a plethora of private study rooms, and helpful reference librarians for all of your study needs.

Location: Main Entrance, Library 2nd Floor

Phone: 360.867.6250

[library.evergreen.edu](http://library.evergreen.edu)

**Primetime**

Primetime is an evening drop-in tutoring and advising center in A Dorm of campus housing.

Location: 2nd floor of A Dorm

Phone: 360.867.6420

[www.evergreen.edu/writingcenter](http://www.evergreen.edu/writingcenter)

**CARE Network**

The CARE in CARE Network stands for Conflict Assistant, Resources, and Empowerment. The CARE Network's mission is to creatively and constructively address conflict on campus. They provide drop-in hours and appointments for students, staff, and faculty.

Location: Sem II E2129

Phone: 360.867.5291

[www.evergreen.edu/studentaffairs/care](http://www.evergreen.edu/studentaffairs/care)

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## colophon

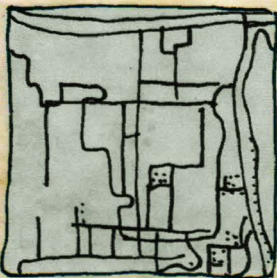
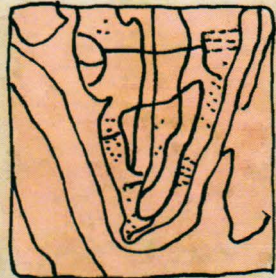
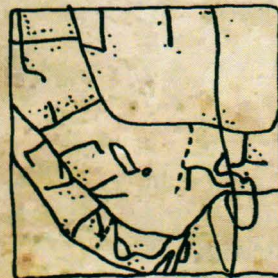
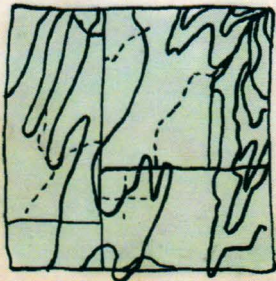
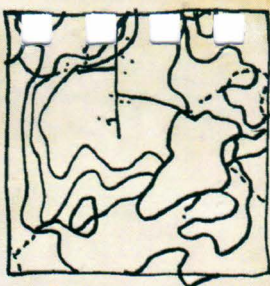
This, the sixth edition of *Inkwell*, was designed during the Spring and Summer of 2011 at a latitude of 47.073235 and a longitude of -122.977996.

The text is set in Didot, a typeface named for the famous French printing family of the same name, and Gill Sans, the sans serif typeface designed by Eric Gill to strike a balance between catchiness and readability.

The map drawings are glimpses of the land in and around Olympia, WA.



}inkwell



} inkwell