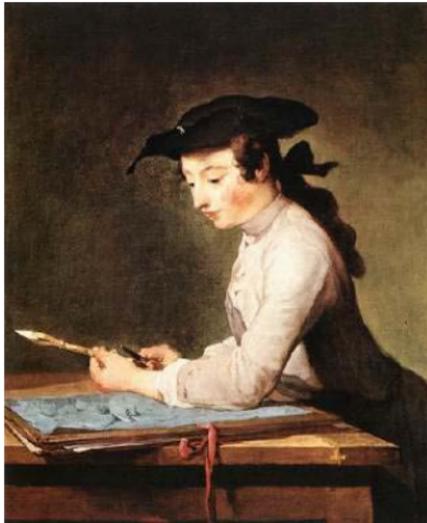


# Writing Journal

Fall 2007



Wayne Holt

A Portfolio for  
English 6010: Creative Writing  
&  
EDCI 6290: Language Arts

[WLHOLT@BELLSOUTH.NET](mailto:WLHOLT@BELLSOUTH.NET)

Portrait  
Layout  
158 pages  
4 pages per sheet  
TOP .25 BOTTOM .25  
LEFT .5 RIGHT .25  
Custom Paper Size: 4.25" x 5.5"

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Friday, August 24<sup>th</sup>

## I AM A STRANGE LOOP — NOT A THERMOMETER

Leo/Virgo cusp.  
Hot 105°.  
Erfanio says it's hotter in Iraq.  
Mr. Adi called Tuesday.  
140° in the Emirates.  
Mom's birthday is today.  
She is 101—in memory.

Do we ever die?  
Were we ever born?  
Do we exist at all?  
Douglas Hofstadter says  
"I am a strange loop."  
(*"I" is a strange loop is also correct here.*)  
When our bodies die,  
We simply borrow someone else's brain.  
The mind-snatchers.  
Who am I this time?  
Is this what we call "education"?  
Am I the Borg? Is the Borg me?  
A hive of zombies  
Clawing at the window  
Breaking down the door...

Hot today.  
So why do I have this cold?  
Creative writing course registered 12.  
Pre-incarnation?

Saturday, August 25<sup>th</sup>

## KANT & THE END OF LINEARITY

Hope to finish Powerpoint presentation on "Classical Time" before classes start. Finished new religion slide. Now for new philosophy slide. Began collecting pix for Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*. How to illustrate & summarize it in 25 words or less? Is a Powerpoint slide lecture literature? Are cartoons literature? Made a synthesis of Descartes & Hume: a *CartHume*.

Will reading & writing be obsolete by 2100? Will calendar reform allow 2100 to become? Time is no longer a straight line as it was for Kant & Newton. Writing is linear also. Will the death of linearity kill stories? Watched Jim Carey obsess in "Number 23". What is the diff between persistence & obsession? Should have watched it on the 23<sup>rd</sup>, but  $(2+3) \times (2+3) = 25$  is ok too.



Sunday, August 26<sup>th</sup>

## THE SANDBOX

Edited my 55 word "Sandbox" story in case it is assigned. Reminds me of a painting back in '79 somewhere in Arkansas. Should write the sequel—call it "The Bath". Write a bunch of them. Call the collection *Alternate Mythologies*. Amazon.com has no title with that name. Strange?

### *The Sandbox*

*For her birthday, she got a sandbox where each grain glowed its own special color. "Wow! Cool!" She plunged her shovel into a tightly packed lump of light, tossed it in all directions, and yelled "Bang!" Maybe, next birthday, they will give her a garden and some dolls to put in it.*

So where's the conflict? The textbook says all stories must contain conflict. But does the conflict need to be internal? Can the conflict be with another story external to this one? After Derrida, we should all know that we bring stories into the stories we read. So the conflict is between alternate mythologies.

Pascal invented probability and argued for the belief in God based on probability: nothing to lose if wrong belief; everything to gain if true. But in a universe of infinite possibilities, the probability of any one of those uncountably many possibilities being true is zero!  $P(1/\infty) = 0$ . (But try to convince Dr. Dean of this arg. No chance. We believe what we need.)



Monday, August 27<sup>th</sup>

## THE END OF ENLIGHTENMENT

Altho have not finished New Republic slide, started last slide of Classical Time called “The End of Enlightenment—The End of Classical Cosmology”. Made an animated gif of King Louis’ head falling and morphing into the sun. Tomorrow— animated gifs of the planets. This slide is the most complex of the 29. Thought project could be finished in two weeks. Wrong. Still need animation of George I & George XLIII for New Republic slide.

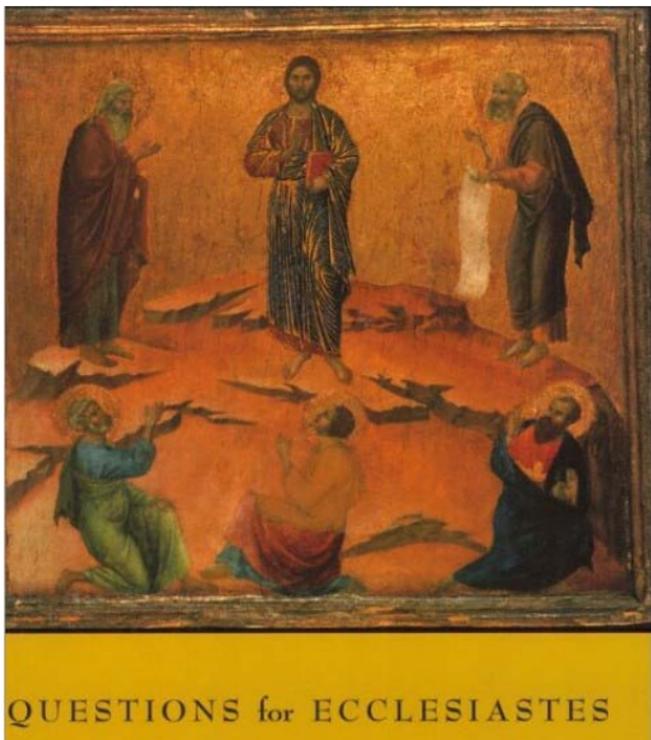


Tuesday, August 28<sup>th</sup>

## MARK JARMAN—FIRST LOOK

Attended first creative writing class. Short class. Looked up Mark Jarman at Amazon.com. Read 2 poems. Did not like. Too poetiky. But not used to reading poetry. Too many adjectives can be a turn off. Why? Sounds phony, unless in a song, or a rap. I prefer Joni Mitchell's poetry sung, or Krishnamurti's "Notebooks" which make no attempt to be poetry. However, curious: why does a university professor in the 21<sup>st</sup> century still obsess over medieval metaphors of infinite feelings. Can I read this guy with my understanding and find us consistent?

Requested all Mark Jarman's books from public library. All were available. Perhaps the public prefers poetics about truck driving prisoners in love?



## FIRST CLASS—FIRST LIES

Attended first class of language arts. We did an exercise in lying. In my pocket calendar I found:

- 1) 2 photos of grandson Andrew, turning 4 in November
- 2) \$20 Walmart shopping card from ex in Kentucky who lives with 200 cats
- 3) 7 unsolved geometry theorems in a list
- 4) Answers to the EDCI doctoral exams
- 5) The entire online Wikipedia on my PC in my right pocket

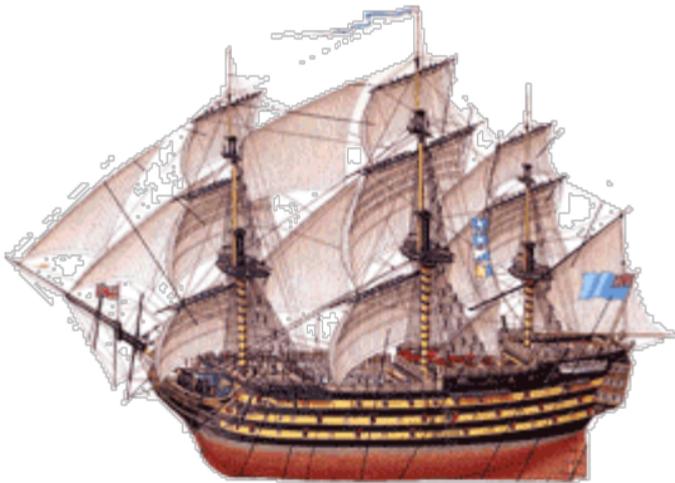
- 1) Andrew is not my grandson. His granny snuck his photos in there.
- 2) 150 of my ex's cats have died. She is down to her last 50 now, and I have spent the \$20.
- 3) One of the 7 problems has been solved. 6 to go.
- 4) Questions, not answers, but to the EdS exams, not the doctoral comp exams.
- 5) True enough—the English version without the pictures.

*Thurs, Aug 30<sup>th</sup>*

## IMAGEREADY ANIMATIONS

With ImageReady software, made a Pluto & Chiron animation, plus a small Cuttysark sailing across Neptune. Edited MP3 sound files of “Rule Britannia” and “La Marseilles” for ship slide. Added Bach’s “Well-Tempered Clavier” excerpts and sheet music to New Music slide. Edited Mozart’s 39<sup>th</sup> for New Republic & Enlightenment slides. Used Wave Pad software.

Later watched Woody Allen’s “Scoop”. Forgot I had seen it before. Death ship carries souls across the Lethe while Woody does card tricks—the lighter side of death: Cartoons of infinity. Must stop Powerpointing and begin scribbling.



First draft of a sonnet begun last Thanksgiving 2006:

①

share  
heal  
inspire

LATCH KEY

SHE SHARES WITH US IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES CARE  
AT BIRTH AND DEATH THE LATCH KEY IN A PERSON'S DREAMS  
FOR THOSE OF US WHO'VE FOUND RETIREMENT BUT NOT NEAR

wake  
exit  
rouse  
rejuvenate  
cheer  
warm  
buoy  
boost  
spark  
light  
fire

Young/old  
DATING  
by 118

RENEWAL HER WISDOM BY BEING THERE  
ACROSS STILL OBSTACLES  
BY HER EXAMPLE ~~CONTRAST~~ WITHOUT FEAR

LOOKS ACROSS STILL PA RESTLESS WATERS WITHOUT FEAR  
THE TURBULENCE OF EARTHLY STREAMS

going on  
hulic age  
my age  
retirement  
doctorate

CONCEPT OF  
THE BODY-MIND

THAT BRINGS US TO THE CIRCLE ROUND  
TO WALK THE PATH COMMUNAL FEELS THE WAYS  
OF A QUIET RITUAL ON SACRED CEREMONIAL GROUND  
TO HEAL OUR TOWN THAT HEALS

share  
care  
hair  
there  
bare  
dare

HER STIMULUS  
DAUGHTER INSPIRE TO SLOW

A TOUCH OF SPRING FOR AUTUMN DAYS

sonnet  
bonnet  
on it  
dad gone it

THAT ADJUSTS US UP TO FACE THE KNOWLEDGE OF TAG  
TO LAUGHING TO SING  
THE SOUND OF FLUTES SCATTEREDLY... FLOWING

mastering the ways  
plays

THESE CARRY ALL TO EVER PRESENT NOW  
INSPIRE HER PRESENCE IN THE

taught to dance the tao  
bow  
how  
living in the now

heal  
appeal  
zeal  
deal  
feel  
meal  
kneel  
peel  
seal  
real  
steel  
veal

inspire  
retire  
fire  
desire  
truly  
Julie

III. The English (or Shakespearean) sonnet:  
The English sonnet has the simplest and most flexible pattern of all sonnets,  
consisting of 3 quatrains of alternating rhyme and a couplet:

a b a b  
c d c d  
e f e f  
g g

As in the Spenserian, each quatrain develops a specific idea, but one closely related to the ideas in the other quatrains.

The basic meter of all sonnets in English is iambic pentameter (basic information on iambic pentameter), although there have been a few tetrameter and even hexameter sonnets, as well.

## WEBPAGE FOR JULIE'S SONNET

*Made a web page for Shakespeare sonnet written last Xmas for Julie's Athena nomination. Also posted first 13 drafts at <http://www.t-bag.org> under T Is for TOMIS. TOMIS = Tennessee Offenders Management Information System. Julie teaches yoga and tai-chi at the Riverbend Maximum Security Institution.*

### Sonnet

She wakes the Phoenix in our prison dreams  
And wraps us in her all-embracing care  
To lift us up and over buried streams  
That lock us in our dungeon of despair.

She sheds our chains as Serpent skins unwound  
In labyrinths; and there uncoils our maze  
To open hearts to wholeness—lost—rebound:  
The bite of spring to heal our winter days.

The Centaur spurs the body-mind to know  
The laughing songs that light the dance of Dao,  
Releasing breaths outstretched, beyond they flow  
To ever-present and unbounded Now

Where many seek to go, desiring truly,  
But few are graced to find; those few found Julie.

—TOMIS 00137916  
12-28-06

Sat, September 1<sup>st</sup>

## DRIVING ON EMPTY

Finally read assignment: Jamaica Kincaid's "Poor Visitor". Excelente. Honest. No phoniness. It is not apparent that she is trying to write. The worst thing to say about a movie star is you caught him acting. However, on stage, hamming it up may be preferable. Since Jackson Pollock, painters must be caught painting, or their paintings won't fit into post-modern aesthetics.

Perhaps I should give Mark Jarman the benefit of the doubt also. Shouldn't poets poeticize? (i.e. reveal language) Read some of the poems in "To the Green Man". Liked them better. Their theme seems to be: How does a rational adult fuse (without confusing) his childhood beliefs with his matured experiences of infinity and the inevitable accompanying emptiness? Answer: don't see the glass as empty, but as full of potential. Empty's just another word for everything to win. Mark Jarman's books starting to come in from public library.

Freud:

SOUL = ID = what keeps pulling us back?

Childhood habits, home, possessions, obsessions

SELF=EGO=mature mind = what to become?

Goals, projects, mission, meaning

SUPEREGO=transpersonal union of soul & self, higher calling



## A THEORY OF PLOT STRUCTURES

### Will He Wonk Her? And The Chakra Theory

Here is an idea. Since reading page 8 in our textbook about necessity of conflict in a story, I have pondered this: Ken Wilber in his *Integral Psychology* (p.199) tables all the theories of human development: at each stage of development the successive stages fight each other—like conservatives fight liberals—like car brakes v. accelerators.

Most stories are of this nature—sex v. power, for example, is the theme of many stories from Jane Austen's to "Desperate Housewives". The psychology of the seven chakras (or is it 8) is the oldest system of psychobabble. Sex is the second chakra; power, the third.

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7. Neptune	Transpersonal union with the mystical all
6. Uranus	Psychic, intuition, vision
5. Saturn	Rational ego, objectivity, maturity
4. Jupiter	Heart, empathy, community
3. Mars	Power, will, ego
2. Venus	Sex, feelings
1. Mercury	Matter, food, adaptability

## MATHEMATICAL ANALYSIS OF NARRATIVE FORMS

If stories are categorized by their basic conflict type, then there are 6 basic stories (counting only successive adjacent chakras).

- 1)  $\$q\#$  **B**oy wants girl, but needs something, like a car (Lucas' "American Graffiti", NBC's "Chuck")
- 2)  $\%q\$$  **G**irl wants power and security, but needs a guy (Austen "Sense & Sensibility", most romantic comedies, and feminist writing that wants guy power)
- 3)  $\wedge q\%$  **G**uy wants to be a hero, but must forego violence & vengeance for sake of others (Gospels of Jesus, Hamlet, "Letters from Iwo Jima, Gary Cooper in "High Noon".)
- 4)  $\&q^\wedge$  **H**ero wishes to give self to others, but must maintain cold harsh exterior for benefit of others. (Sherlock Holmes, John Wayne in "Sands of Iwo Jima")
- 5)  $*q\&$  **P**rotagonist wants to remain rationally objective, but reality is otherwise (Carlos Castaneda: "Yaqui Way of Knowledge", George Lucas: "Star Wars", Harry Potter)
- 6)  $(q^*$  **P**rotagonist enjoys a wonderful life, but must leave it for a divine union (Jesus, Siddhartha, Moses, Mohamed, Yoda, Superman)

MORE CHAKRAS

)(\*&^%\$#@!

Better add a couple more chakras for stories about

- 1) basic survival and
- 2) about return from divine encounters.

@!q#

Astrologically, the sun and moon represent basic existence. Finding materials to stay alive is the theme of many stories such as Jack London's "To Build a Fire", "Never Cry Wolf", and "March of the Penguins".

Moon

Soul, emotions, base

Sun

Being, self, center

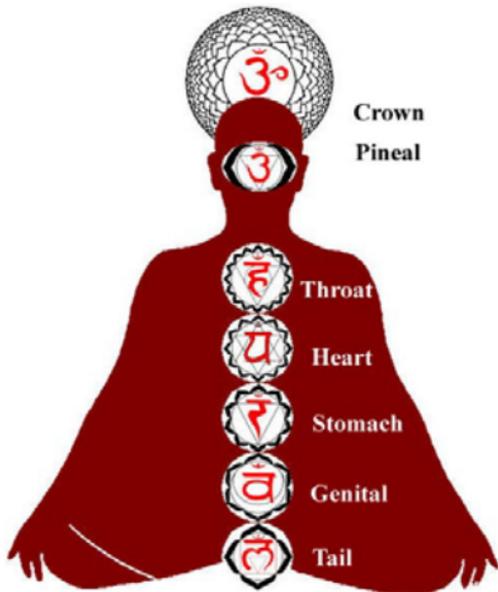
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Since all religions originate with someone who returns from an encounter with divinity, we need another story type for the conflict between Heaven and the return to Earth: The Garden of Eden, Milton's "Paradise Lost", "Thus Spake Zarathustra", "Lost Horizons" of Shangri-La, "2001: Space Odyssey".

Astrologically, Pluto, the ex-planet, has represented the returning saint. Now that Pluto is just a dog again, does it mean there will be no more saints?

## SKIPPING CHAKRAS

Are there story conflicts between chakras that are not adjacent? If so, how many story conflicts are now possible? Same question as how many ways can  $n$  number of people shake hands. If  $n = 9$  chakra levels, then  $8+7+6+5+4+3+2+1 = 9 \times 8 / 2 = 36$  basic conflicts. The number of ways to roll two dice. Exercise: think of an example of each one. (If there are no non-adjacent chakra conflicting stories, then there are only 8 basic plots!)



1 ) ( 2001: Space Odyssey · Zarathustra · Jesus · etc.  
2 \* Close Encounters ·  
3 &  
4 ^  
5 %  
6 \$  
7 #  
8 @  
9 ( \* King Arthur · Holy Grail · Green Knight  
10 & Merlin · Faust  
11 ^ Round Table  
12 % X-Files  
13 \$  
14 #  
15 @  
16 \* & Harry Potter · Magic Realism · Steppenwolf  
17 ^ Wizard of Oz · Fairy Tales  
18 % Horror Movies · Stephen King · Poe  
19 \$ The Raven · Serial Killers · "Perfume"  
20 #  
21 @  
22 & ^ Scrooge  
23 % Sherlock Homes · CSI  
24 \$ Feminist Science? · My Fair Lady · Pygmalion  
25 #  
26 @  
27 ^ % Westerns · Action Flix · Gangsters & Godfathers  
28 \$ Feminist Politik · Heloise & Abelard · Thorn Birds?  
29 #  
30 @  
31 % \$ Feminist Writing · Desperate Housewives  
32 # Competitive Sports · Technology Battles  
33 @  
34 \$ # Adol Male Comedies · American Pie & Graffiti  
35 @  
36 # @ White Fang · March of Penguins · Disney Nature Films

## QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

### Randomly Matched

Why does rain fall?

*Because my dog is old and incontinent.*

Why are there more numbers than we can count?

*Because I'm hungry and I want to eat dinner soon.*

Why do penguins live in Antarctica?

*Because she promised she would take them there.*

Why are people living longer in France than in America?

*Because drinking alone is suspicious.*

Why do people eat squid?

*Because they talk too much.*

Why do we run when there is no where to go?

*Because the chicken dance is stupid.*

Why are oranges orange?

*Because I said so.*

Why do some people catch colds in August?

*Because the drought dried up the ground.*

Why is there only one moon?

*Because the snakes are not that important.*

Why do we ask so many whys?

*Because children are cute and can get away with doing that.*

Questions by Wayne

Answers by Elaine

*Wed, Sep 5th*

BLUE MEMORIES  
And How I Learned Them

Clunking on a bad-tempered piano in East High's attic band room.

Playing sax in the middle of a crowd of dancers  
at the Stardust Honky Tonk on Clarksville Highway.

Hitchhiking cross country swapping rides for tunes on an old silver  
flute.

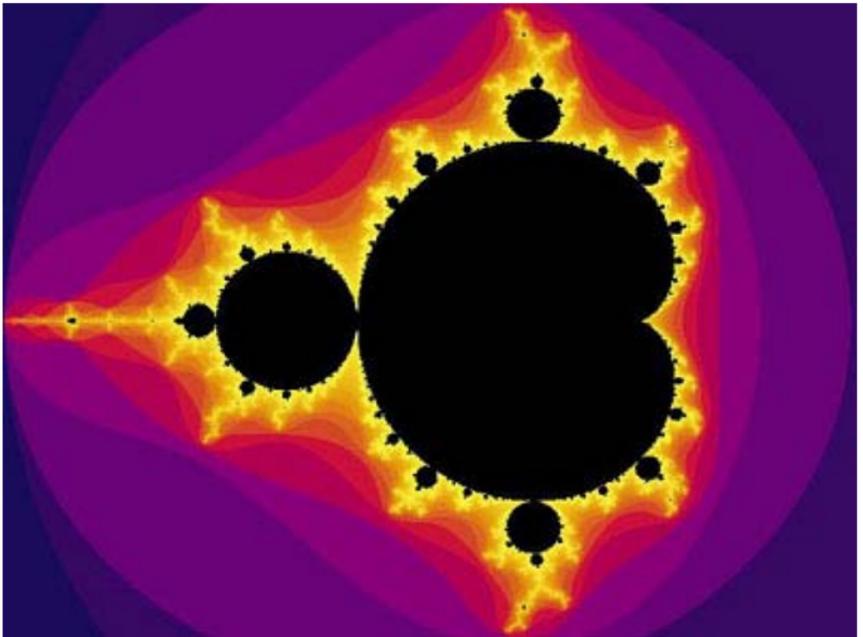


Wed, Sep 5<sup>th</sup>

## INTUITION & THE MANDELBROT SET

Intuition is like the boundary of the Mandelbrot set where we peer into the mysterious blackness or fly away from it at varying velocities. (Substitute the words 'dying' or 'living' for 'intuition' and we have an existential metaphor.)

How does this math metaphor relate to Jarman's categories of religious poetry? Does it fit the orthodox or the naturalist type? Are there other categories of religious poetry?



## BILLS GIVE

Bought Bill Clinton reading his book *Giving* from Audible.com. If we are obsessed with death, it's a sign we are thinking too much about ourselves. This is the real reason to give: to escape from self. To escape from self is to escape from death.

Candy is dandy,  
But liquor is quicker.  
—Ogden Nash

Add to above:  
Giving is living,  
But whying is dying.

Is this why Bill Gates is giving away his billions?



## GHOSTWRITERS IN THE SKIES

Erfanio was the Kurd next door. He heard that I taught somewhere, and asked for help with his grammar. He wanted to put a personal ad on his website that would appeal to all American women, and in particular, his English teacher. He wanted to impress her with all he had learned in her American lit class. He had a "thing for her," he said, "if you know what I mean." This is what he gave me to edit:

Flown over Ararat Mountain where Noah's Ark landed after deluge some time between Revolutionary and Civil War, while up in sky, looked at Jerusalem, Jericho, Babylon land, Golan Heights & Mt. Sinai where Moses received the 10 commandment. Sky journey continue until landing in western Hampshire over Pertain land. Also glance at Sheeren Mountain and the Great Rock Valley with jolly great engraved memories in my mind that bring comfort in me and give me piece of mind, which spiritually bound me for eternity; Home Sweet Home Barzan was not out of my picture, I promised one day I be back in future, as a new creature for your literature, my pathfinder for the future in eternity with my wisdom and maturity.

I'm from Beate's era, but this does not means I'm a baby boomer, if you know what I mean, I'm looking for a wife, any woman interested, email me, must be 110# or < , age does not matter, must be drug free, 50/50 relationship, I get a fever, as I encounter Dolly Patron, meaning THEM, again if you know what I mean.

The Great Rock Valley has refreshed my memories big time as I was studying the early American literature 1865-1914 particular, the great authors such as Walt Whitman, Emily Dickinson, mark Twain, booker t. Washington, w.e.b. du bois, and Langston Hughes have brought a great deal of memories flushing in my mind, it was heart breaking when I was studying the out of the cradle endless rocking poem by Walt Whitman, particularly the verse of:

*Two feathered guests from Alabama, two together ----- every day the he-bird to and fro near at hand----- and every day the she-bird crouched On her nest, silent, with bright eyes-----and every day I, a curious boy, never to close, never disturbing them, cautiously peering, absorbing, translating.. till of a sudden , may be killed unknown to her mate, one forenoon the she bird crouched not on the nest, nor returned that after noon, nor the next. Not ever appear again ...*

it is a heart breaking poem, I envisioned the poem as in my childhood era, particular when my mom use to sing, "I wish I was in the Great Rock Valley, listening to the flying feathered back and forth over the sky the Great Rock Valley", some how, I gotta thinking, that the two birds represent my life, another words I had my eye on some one back then, but I never had a chance to meet her, so we disappeared. Disappeared, never had a chance to meet, just as the she-bird never returned. That was back in early 70's, it has been 3 decades, still I have not locate my mate, just as the 2 feathered form Alabama they never made it, I also failed to make it, this made me suffer in two-ness, two thoughts single, and lonely, which made me a mark twin figure just as huckleberry Finn up on Mississippi River which in turn, reminds me of Langston Hughes as he quoted his pottery saying 'I bathed in the Euphrates when dawns were young. I heard the singing of the Mississippi when Abe Lincoln went down to New Orleans, and I have seen its muddy bosom turn all golden in the sunset. Thus, I'm linked to American literature, as I study it; I envision it as it is my life.



Great Rock Valley & Torud-Chah Shirin mountain range on the Iraq-Iran border

I told Erfanio that his writing was heart-felt, but in need of some clarification. So he gave me more stuff to decode:

I am very patient and I can patiently endure more to acquire your name. Once Walt Whitman sat off shore on an island imagining the sea shore waves over the horizon. He suddenly observed two birds flying around together. Every day the he-bird flew to and fro near her, and every day the she-bird crouched on her nest, silent with bright eyes, while Walt Whitman watchfully peering, absorbing, and translating, singing all the time, minding no time, while the two kept together, blowing up country winds over the hills of Tennessee, I wait and wait, till you blow my mate to me, another words (you & I get together), thus, I feel my two-ness,-- an American, a Kurd, two souls, two thoughts, but striving for you and only you, your smile has captivated my imagination, I use to admire Mona Lisa's smile that radiates mystery, but after I discover your alluring Vanna White smile, her grin fade away in my thoughts, you beam deserves a great deal of praise, furthermore, your smile is a testimony of generous nature, and a universal language of kindness, accordingly, I would not mind to walk a million miles just for one of your smiles, but my lonesomeness make me feel in an escapable reservation, just as Edna Pontellier's feeling during her awakening, my only awaking will be accomplished just as Huck brought Jim to freedom, so make me mark Twain figure, free me from my lonesomeness, and make me Walt Whitman them, as in two feathered guest from Alabama, and or as Billy Ray Serous says, don't break my heart, my achy breaky heart, noticed i have mentioned nothing regarding Dolly Patron! your waspish waste worth more than folks living on dollywood, in fact, you valued more than gold, and more precious than diamond, you are the only my path finder, for your information, i never have judged the book by the cover, where as you have both the cover and the content, and chemistry in my side indicates that the link is already established between us.

After a few hours of jig sawing, I glued Erfanio's puzzle together and sent him this:

The flight from Baghdad passes over Shirin Mountain, northeast of the Great Rock Valley in Kurdistan, approximately 36°59' N., 44°03' E. Flying over it brought back fond memories of my early childhood development there and nearby in my hometown of Barzan, a place to which one always imagines returning when one can appreciate its antiquity with more maturity. Once in the air, the plane charts a circuitous path over most of the Middle East: Ararat Mountain (5137 meters), purportedly, the landing place of Noah's Ark , Golan Heights, Jerusalem, Jericho, and Mt. Sinai (2285 meters) where Moses, as described in Exodus (20:1-17), received the Ten Commandments. From there, the flight continues without interruption till it lands in the Western Hemisphere, in close approximation to where the Puritans first landed in the year 1620 and began, almost immediately, generating what would eventually become a distinct cultural voice.

In reading American literature, one can easily find corresponding parallels to one's own situation regardless of one's social origins. Writings of great authors such as Whitman, Dickinson, Clemens, du Bois, and Hughes, for example, may pertain to many socio-economic environments. Whitman's description of the two birds from Alabama, in his "Cradle Endlessly Rocking," is exemplary. At one point in the narrative, the female member of the pair disappears, and does not return. The male is depicted as if in a condition of grief. Whitman, adapting an Old Testament style, leads the reader into a state of empathy by anthropomorphizing the solitary bird.

W.E.B. du Bois, in *The Souls of Black Folks* (1903), wrote an extensive analysis of this type of alienation. Du Bois called it two-ness. Immigrants often possess dual personalities that exhibit two different memories from two different cultures. Langston Hughes expressed this dualism succinctly when he wrote, "I bathed in the Euphrates when dawns were young. I heard the singing of the Mississippi when Abe Lincoln went down to New Orleans, and I have seen its muddy bosom turn all golden in the sunset." For an immigrant, this is a poignant statement. Most Kurds support thoroughly and gratefully the hierarchy of American values, and will probably continue to do so, while simultaneously remaining loyal to their Kurdish identities.

Erfanio never got the girl, despite all my artful skills. However, he did get a \$200,000 contract with the U.S. Army as a translator of highly sensitive, classified documents. From a base camp somewhere inside Iraq, he posted this message on his website:

After 25 years in Nashville, I said good-bye to the Capital of Country Music, but not good-bye to the happy memories engraved in my mind forever. Beneath me lay Music Row, Nashville Tech, Tennessee State University, the good old honky tonks of Tennessee, and all the companies I worked for. Goodbye, Richland Hill, Centennial Park, Bicentennial Mall, and Nashville women. I will never forget you. Goodbye Dolly, goodbye Smokeys, goodbye land of the pilgrim's pride, from every mountain side, let freedom ring! My home sweet home in Nashville is now far from sight, yet near in heart. I still hear Walt Whitman, Emily Dickinson, Mark Twain, W.E.B. du Bois, and Langston Hughes singing to me from across the sea. Someday, I will return much wiser like the pilgrim fathers of long ago.

In America, I learned a new literature that spoke to me of my childhood. Walt Whitman took me back to my home in Barzan: I heard flying feathers in the sky. Overhead, two birds danced and swirled, landed and built a nest. Then suddenly, unexpectedly, one bird disappeared, never to return. I was that bird. I wandered off aimlessly through this wide world, searching, but never finding that part of me calling from far away.

I say hello again to Shirin Mountain and the Great Rock Valley of my childhood. Beneath me lies Mount Sinai where Moses received the 10 Commandments, Jerusalem, Jericho, Golan Heights, Babylon land, Mesopotamia. I reach down to touch Ararat Mountain where Noah's Ark landed...

And now I am back; and now I suffer my "two-ness." Two memories and two lands mark me in twain, one foot in the Mississippi, like Huckleberry Finn, and one in the Euphrates mud where history began. Though born on the river where I bathe, I was reborn in the songs that Abe Lincoln heard; these songs give me my meaning; their stories are now mine, too. The Gulf Stream that flows eastward, flows through me also, and carries with it a thousand Mississippis. How could I ever forget Graceland, Opryland, or Dollywood? I smile. I smile the universal language of kindness and generosity. I smile the Vanna smile—more precious than a million Mona Lisa's.

Erfanio "EZ" Barzani & Company



11 Guys from Kirkuk

Erfanio

*Yesterday, typed up little redheaded girl story:*

## REDHEADS, POTHEADS, AND BLONDES

Cathy was THE little redheaded girl.  
Thought we were going to get together after she broke up with Clyde.  
But nooooooooooooooooooooo...  
The day I went to visit her she was playing with Christopher.  
My heart broke—for almost a whole day.

Peggy lives up the street, I thought.  
I'll go see Peggy.  
She's almost a redhead.

Knock! Knock!  
"Who's there?"  
"Wayne."  
"Wayne who?"  
"Wayne down the street."  
The door opened...  
"CHRISTOPHER!?!?"  
"You want to see Peggy?"  
"No, I'll come back later".

Well—there's always Julie, I thought.  
She lives down the block.  
She's nice and all,  
even though she's just a blonde.

Epilog:  
The last I saw Cathy, she was heading west with Clyde in a smoke-filled Chevy.  
Peggy I saw this summer at an art show.  
"You look familiar," she said.  
"Born in New York City on November 1st?" I said.  
"Wow!" she said, "You have a good memory, whoever you are."  
(Mamas, don't let your daughters grow up to be potheads.)

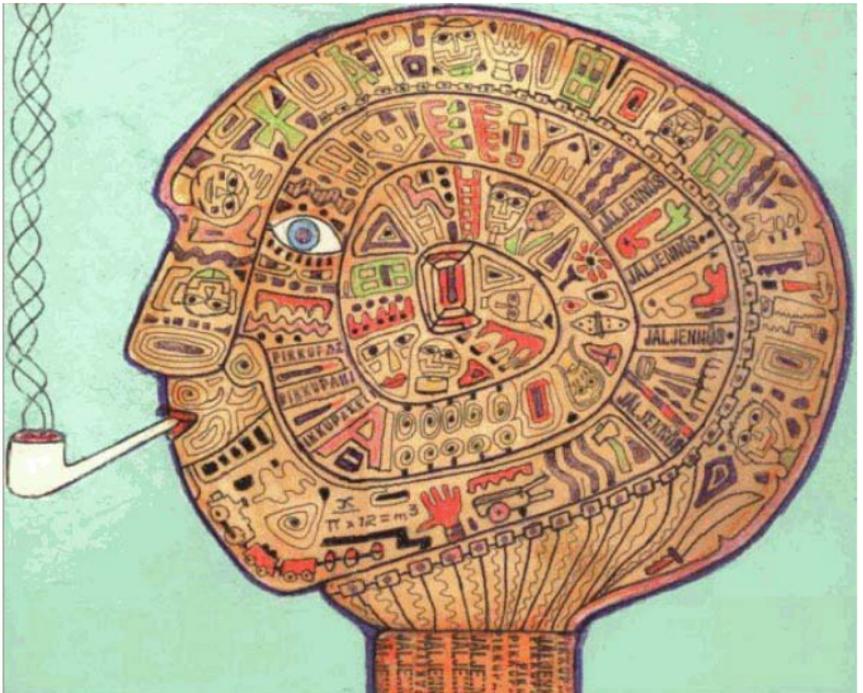
As for Julie and me, we are still getting along just fine.  
She's not a blonde anymore.

## MARK JARMAN'S ESSAYS ON THE SECRET OF POETRY

The monotheistic, transcendental, Jewish religions, and their cults, fear nature. The atheistic, immanent, non-Jewish religions love nature. The orthodox are always distant from God. The naturalists are forever immersed in God.

God is not the imagination as Wallace Stevens wrote, but imagination does create our images of God. These images spring from our intuition of infinity, which both orthodox and pagan share.

Whitehead wrote in *Adventure of Ideas* of two philosophies: that of the transcendent and that of the immanent.



*Last Thursday, Dave Bain sent me this story asking for help with it:*

## KIBITZER'S COMEUPPANCE

Being smart is a mixed blessing. When I was 15 it meant you had to play chess. Fortunately my brother Jimmy and I loved chess. We played it at the Shelby Park community center when the other kids were playing ping-pong and pool and checkers.

Sometimes a crowd gathered to see the smart kids play chess. Danny did not let the fact that he did not know the game keep him from giving advice to both sides. "Look, you can jump his man there." When Jimmy went down in defeat, Danny said "You should have done what I told you!"

As the winner, it was my privilege to call the next game. "Sit," I said, gesturing to Danny.

"What?" he whimpered.

"Let's play."

I graciously gave Danny the white pieces and the first move. King's pawn to Queen 5, a classical checkers-style diagonal move. I responded with Pawn to King 4. As more and more pieces were brought into play Danny imitated my moves. When I moved my rook on the file, he moved his knight on the file to capture it. He took my King early on. I began to imitate his moves, liberating myself from the actual rules, taking pieces off as I went.

Danny broke out in a sweat. Out of kindness I moved in for the quick kill. I took the king's knight in my left hand and the queens bishop in my right hand simultaneously moving each forward and to the opposite side of the board, sweeping off all the white pieces in between. "Danny," I sighed, "you shouldn't have let me cross my ears on you."

After that Danny tried valiantly but he couldn't overcome my material advantage. He was taking at most one of my "men" on each move while I was taking at least one of his. Soon there were only black pieces left. Danny was crestfallen. I think he developed a new respect for the game.

I've often wondered whether Danny ever learned to play chess and replayed the game in his head to figure out what he had done wrong.

Today,

I rewrote Dave's story from Danny's perspective and sent it to him:

### A Strange Game by Danny W. Gibson

Being smart is a mixed blessing.

When I turned 15 some years ago, it meant playing all sorts of games.

There was this one game that was really strange.

They played it over at the community center a lot.

It was a funny sort of checkers with weird looking pieces.

Some tall guy had just beat his brother at it, and wanted me to play.

I figured I could do just as well—

at least I would take my jumps when I saw them.

I went first and moved out one of the eight little checkers on my front row.

The big guy moved one of his little checkers straight ahead two squares.

I had never seen any checker move like that before.

Obviously, this was not quite the checkers I was familiar with.

To play it safe, I decided to copy whatever the other guy did until I got the hang of the game.

When he moved his tower piece,

I moved my horse to the opposite square on my side of the board.

He looked at me suspiciously, but didn't complain,

so it must have been a good move.

When he didn't complain about my other moves either, I grew bolder.

I took my horse and jumped his tallest checker,

the one with the cross on its head.

But then things got really crazy.

He took a horse head piece in one hand and a pointy head piece in the other,

and moved them both diagonally down the middle of the board to the other side, taking all my pieces in between.

I didn't feel that was quite fair since I did not know you could move like that.

He called it the "earl crossing", or something. With no pieces left, I had to quit.

Still, I learned an important lesson: avoid games where you don't know all the rules before you play.

That's why I went into politics.

In politics, laws clearly state what you can and cannot do.

All the rules are simple and straightforward.

Official moves are open to public scrutiny and completely above board.

There's none of this "horsing" around business, and it's way more charitable—you always leave your opponents with something to play with.

Public service—it's an honest game for honest folks.

*This story does not work because no one in politics could be this dumb. Right?*



## ITEMS IN A PLUTO BOX

### BLACK THINGS

Grecian Urn  
Santa Boot  
Chess Pawn  
Chess Knight  
CPU Chip  
Block Letter 'O'  
Crab  
Seahorse  
Bat  
Tetrahedron  
WW II Soldiers  
Locomotive  
Rubber Ball  
Revolver  
Dinosaur  
Mouse  
Quartz Crystal  
Indian  
Transformer Robot  
Brontosaurus  
Ant  
Stones  
Fleur de Lise  
Dragon  
Black Powder  
Dodecahedron

### GOLD THINGS

Captain Midnite Decoder  
Lace Butterfly  
Ace Of Spades  
Eiffel Tower  
Mulholland Hash Pipe  
Foreign Coins  
NYC Subway Tokens  
Ship Anchor  
Diamond Earring  
Pyrite Stone  
Yin-Yang Mandala  
The Number 1  
Pirate Chest w/Chessmen  
Capital H Broche  
Scout Medals  
Gold Crown  
U.S. Map & Flag  
Phonograph Needle  
Cloisonné Unicorn  
Saxophone  
TV Guide Bookmark  
I Luv Kroger Pin  
Mom & Dad Locket  
Iraqi Freedom Key Ring  
Miniature Tools  
Arrow Head

*In an old notebook, I found  
these images dated 1962.*

The color of glass  
in the aft of the eye

The taste of falling rain  
and there is no mist.

The odor of air  
in a crystal of wind

The sound of a lone gull  
gliding high on a silent sea

The touch of time  
in motionless space

*Twenty years later, the notebook  
shows I discovered haiku.*

WINTER  
The color of glass  
in the aft of the eye;  
Icicles drop rainbows.

SPRING  
The taste of falling rain,  
the minted leaf unfolds;  
But nowhere a cloud.

SUMMER  
The odor of air:  
One orange butterfly  
in a crystal of wind.

FALL  
Serene song:  
The sound of a lone gull  
gliding high on a silent sea.

WINTER  
Pyramid,  
Snowy mountain peak.  
Touches of time  
in motionless space.

*For my writing courses in the fall of 2007, I made a slide show using  
Microsoft's PowerPoint::*

Wed, Sep 12<sup>th</sup>

FIVE HAIKU

In the aft of the eye,  
Icicles, the color of glass,  
paint rainbows.

One orange butterfly  
In a dandelion wind  
— the odor of air.

The taste of falling rain,  
The minted leaf unfolds,  
But nowhere a cloud.

The sound of a lone gull  
gliding high on a silent sea  
— serene song.

Pyramid,  
Snowy mountain peak  
— Touches of time  
In motionless space.



## FIGURES OF SPEECH

[*Open Roads*: exercise #4 -- page 41]

Write a sonnet with each line a different figure of speech:

- 1) apostrophe
- 2) personification
- 3) synesthesia
- 4) hyperbole
- 5) understatement
- 6) litotes
- 7) metonymy
- 8) synecdoche
- 9) paradox
- 10) oxymoron
- 11) allusion
- 12) metaphor
- 13) simile
- 14) extended metaphor
- 15) implied metaphor
- 16) analogy



Sonnet to a W—Draft 2

9/14 3

1 O, Double-you, my DUBYA, <sup>this were</sup> your TEARFUL TRIP, I <sup>APOSTROPHE</sup> ~~but~~ Done.  
TRIP'S 1 BUT Done. TRIP'S 6S Done Ground

2 THIS LAND, ONCE RED, <sup>now</sup> FEELS SO BLUE  
WITH RAGE

2 WERE ONCE TASTED GREEN NOW MAKES YELLOW <sup>SUN</sup> SOUNDS  
PERSONIFICATION SYNESTHESIA

4 SAYS AND SMELLS SO BROWN, WHY NOT <sup>PAINT</sup> BLACK <sup>TRUE</sup> IT ALL  
THEY W/FF WITH THRU THE STARS

5A WITH LIQUID GOLD? <sup>GLASS</sup> JUST ONE ANTIHE <sup>PORE</sup> <sup>OR LESS</sup>  
A GRAY FUMES

5B WE'RE NOT EVOLVED FROM ANTS & APES! NOT YET! <sup>LITOTES</sup>

6 ABB THE HOUSE OF WHITE SAID <sup>GO</sup>, THE POLLS SAID YES  
WHEN THE HOUSE SAYS STAY, BUT POLLS REGRET

7 THE DAY THAT LIBERAL HONKS <sup>CONSERVATIVES</sup> GRIEVE -  
DOWN BLEEDING HEAR

THE DAY THAT BOWE <sup>PISS</sup> HATES VORN'YA  
WHAT

CALL ME ISHMAEL, <sup>BUT</sup> IS BEWALS A TAIL OF <sup>TWO ANS</sup> <sup>GUYS</sup>  
SOCIETY IN CAVES SENDING PRAYERS BURNING ORS TO HAVEN SENT

SEEKING DONES TO SKIS <sup>ALLUSION</sup> <sup>METAPHOR</sup>

ONE GOD HEALING PRAYERS A VICTORY WOV  
WORLD

WHILE WOODROW WILSON WANTS WAR <sup>WON</sup> ONE  
WAGES ONE WORLD WAR

<sup>SIMILE</sup> <sup>IMPLIED METAPHOR</sup> <sup>ANALOGY</sup>

## Sonnet to a W.

## FIGURES

apostrophe	1	Oh, Double-You, my Dubya, this here trip's 'bout done.
personification	2	This land, once red with rage, now feels so blue;
synesthesia	3	Where tasted green, now its yellow gun
hyperbole	4	Shots smell so brown. Why not paint black the view
understatement	5	Of fuming stars? It's just one anthill less.
litotes	6	Did we evolve from ants and apes? — not yet!
metonymy	7	The house of white said go, the polls said yes;
synecdoche	8	And now that house says stay, but hearts regret
paradox		
oxymoron	9	The day that hawkish doves all voted "Yea"
allusion	10	For Captain Ahab chasing Moby Dick
metaphor extended	11	Through desert seas, harpooning prey;
simile	12	And in a secret cave, some lunatic
implied metaphor	13	Is bowing, praying to his Dinosaur
analogy	14	For Woodrow Wilson waging One World War.

9/15/07 11:42 AM

## Sonnet to a W.

## FIGURES

apostrophe	1	Oh, Double-You, our fearful trip's not done.
personification	2	This land, once tasting red, now feels dark blue;
synesthesia	3	We may sound yellow, but these gun
hyperbole	4	Shots smell so brown. So why not nuke the Jew
understatement	5	And Muslim too? A couple anthills less.
litotes	6	Did we evolve from ants and apes? — not yet!
metonymy	7	The House of White said go, the polls said yes;
synecdoche	8	And now that House says stay, but hearts regret
paradox		
oxymoron	9	The day that hawkish doves all voted "Yea"
allusion	10	For Captain Ahab chasing Moby Dick,
metaphor extended	11	O'er desert seas, harpooning prey;
simile	12	As, in a secret cave, some lunatic
implied metaphor	13	Does bow and pray to his Deus Dinosaur
analogy	14	For Woodrow Wilson waging one more War.

9/15/07 2:05 PM

Sat, Sep 15<sup>th</sup>  
Sun, Sep 16<sup>th</sup>

Sonnet to a W.

FIGURES

apostrophe	1	Oh, Double-You, our fearful trip's not done.
personification	2	This land, once tasting red, now feels dark blue;
synesthesia	3	It sounds so yellow packing up to run
hyperbole	4	From smells so brown. Why not just nuke the Jew
understatement	5	And Muslim too? A couple anthills less.
litotes	6	Did we evolve from ants and apes? — not yet!
metonymy	7	The House of White said go, the polls said yes,
synecdoche	8	And now that House says stay! But hearts regret
paradox		
oxymorons	9	The day that hawkish doves all voted "Yea"
allusion	10	For Captain Ahab chasing Moby Dick,
metaphor extended	11	O'er desert seas, harpooning random prey;
simile	12	As, in a secret cove, some lunatic
implied metaphor	13	Is stretching bows and prays his Dinosaur
analogy	14	For Woodrow Wilson waging one more War.

9/15/07 4:09 PM

Sonnet to a W.

FIGURES

apostrophe	1	Oh, Double-You, our fearful trip's not done.
personification	2	This land, once tasting red, now feels deep blue.
synesthesia	3	It sounds so yellow: packing up to run
hyperbole	4	From smells so brown. Why not just nuke the Jew
understatement	5	And Muslim too? A couple anthills less...
litotes	6	Did we evolve from ants and apes? — not yet!
metonymy	7	The House of White said go, the Hill said yes,
synecdoche	8	And now that House says stay?! But hearts regret
paradox		
oxymorons	9	The day that hawkish doves all voted "Yea"
allusion	10	To Captain Ahab chasing Moby Dick
metaphor extended	11	With cluster bombs harpooning random prey;
simile	12	While in a cloistered cave, some lunatic,
implied metaphor	13	Rechastened, prays to his Tyrannosaur
analogy	14	That Woodrow Wilson wage one more World War.

9/16/07 1:32 PM

Mon, Sep 17<sup>th</sup>

Tues, Sep 18<sup>th</sup>

Sonnet to a W

FIGURES

apostrophe	1	"So, Double-You, our fearful trip's not done?"
personification	2	"This guy sees red, shits white, and sings the blues."
synesthesia	3	"Sounds kinda yallah packing up to run
hyperbole	4	Before we've won." "Why not just nuke the Jews
understatement	5	And Muslims too? A couple anthills less..."
litotes	6	"But we've evolved past ants and apes!" — "Not yet!"
metonymy	7	"The White House said <i>Let's roll!</i> ; the Hill said <i>Yes!</i> "
/synecdoche		
paradox	8	"Let's kill for Jesus? Shiii...!" "Bet they regret
oxymorons	9	—Those holy hawks—they voted for this dude."
allusion	10	"He's Captain Ahab chasing Moby Dick."
metaphor extended	11	"With cluster bombs?" "One way to harpoon crude..."
implied metaphor	12	"Oil that is, Texas tea..." "That lunatic
simile	13	Still ranting on like some Tyrannosaur?"
analogy	14	"Yeah—Woodrow Wilson wants one more World War."

9/17/07 1:53 PM

apostrophe	1	"So, Double-You, our fearful trip's not done?"
personification	2	"This bird sees red, shits white, and sings the blues."
synesthesia	3	"Sounds kinda yallah packing up to run
hyperbole	4	Before we've won." "Why not just nuke the Jews
understatement	5	And Muslims too? A couple anthills less..."
litotes	6	"But we've evolved past ants and apes!" — "Not yet!"
metonymy/synecdoche	7	"The White House said <i>Let's Roll!</i> ; the Hill said <i>Yes!</i> "
paradox	8	"Kill one for Jesus? Shiii...!" "Bet they regret
oxymorons	9	—Them holy hawks—they voted for this dude."
allusion	10	"He's Captain Ahab chasing Moby Dick."
metaphor extended	11	"With cluster bombs?" "One way to harpoon crude..."
implied metaphor	12	"Oil that is, Texas tea..." "That lunatic
simile	13	Still ranting on like some Tyrannosaur?"
analogy	14	"Yeah—Woody Wilson wants one more World War."

9/18/07 9:10 PM

Sonnet to a W

Comments heard in a bar near Vanderbilt  
while watching George Bush deliver a speech  
on Thursday, September 13th, 2007

FIGURES

apostrophe  
personification  
synesthesia  
hyperbole

- 1 “So, Double-You, our fearful trip's not done?”
- 2 “This dog sees red, shits white, then howls the blues.”
- 3 “Sounds kinda yellah packing up to run  
4 Before we won.” “Why not just nuke the Jews

understatement  
litotes  
metonymy/synecdoche  
paradox

- 5 And Muslims too? A couple anthills less...”
- 6 “But we’ve evolved past ants and apes!” — “Not yet!”
- 7 “The White House barked Let's Roll!; the Hill chirped Yes!”
- 8 “Go kill for Jesus! Jeez...!” “Bet they regret—

oxymorons  
allusion  
metaphor extended  
implied metaphor

- 9 Them holy hawks—they voted for this dude.”
- 10 “He's Captain Ahab chasing Moby Dick.”
- 11 “With cluster bombs?” “One way to harpoon crude...”
- 12 “Oil that is, Texas tea...” “That lunatic

simile  
analogy

- 13 Still ranting on like some Tyrannosaur?”
- 14 “Yeah—Woody Wilson wants one more World War.”

Sonnet to a W

Comments heard in a bar near Vanderbilt  
while watching George Bush deliver a speech  
on Thursday, September 13th, 2007

FIGURES

apostrophe  
personification  
synesthesia  
hyperbole

understatement  
litotes  
metonymy/synecdoche  
paradox

oxymorons  
allusion  
metaphor extended  
implied metaphor

simile  
analogy

- 1 "So, Double-You, our fearful trip's not done?"
- 2 "This dog sees red, shits white, then howls the blues."
- 3 "Sounds kinda yellah playing cut and run
- 4 Before we won." "Why not just nuke the Jews
- 5 And A-rabs too? A couple anthills less..."
- 6 "But we've evolved past ants and apes!" — "Not yet!"
- 7 "It's like the White House barks, the Hill chirps Yes!"
- 8 "Bong hits for Jesus! Boom!" "Bet they regret—
- 9 Them holy hawks—they voted for this dude."
- 10 "He's Captain Ahab chasing Moby Dick."
- 11 "May be his own?" "Hard way to harpoon crude..."
- 12 "Oil that is, Texas tea..." "That lunatic
- 13 Still ranting on like some Tyrannosaur?"
- 14 "Yeah—Woody Wilson wants one more World War."

9/20/2007

#4 p.41

—wHolt



UNDIALOG

Between Two People Not Listening To Each Other

A: The doctor said I have a couple of months to live.

B: Have you considered taking up your old job at TSU again?

A: Only Allah knows for sure.

B: Well, I hope you keep writing regardless what you do.

A: It's not up to me.

B: How's the wife and kids?

A: We're divorced now.

B: Send my best wishes to them.

A: Have you been working on any projects lately? Send them to me?

B: I have this bump on my back. Maybe I should have it looked at.

A: I'm wearing a wig now.

B: Isn't one of your kids a red-head?

## THOUGHTS ABOUT "ROSE-MARIE" & "A NIGHT TO REMEMBER"

Suppose Grey, after being shot by Melissa, awakes in heaven to meet Rose-Marie?  
What would they learn from each other? Could they learn from each other?  
Or are they so stuck in their own bodies that they will never transcend themselves?  
Pam Houston would describe them as two people incapable of escaping their genders.

Maybe this movie has already been made with Warren Beatty and Annette Bening?  
Or last year by Vince Vaughn and Jennifer Aniston?  
It seems that at least half of all Hollywood flicks are romantic comedies.  
There are also less popular but more serious explorations of gender issues out there.  
Freud called our sexual differences destiny. Kinsey tried to measure them.  
Half of all literature devotes itself to male and female conflicts  
from before Shakespeare, through Jane Austen, to, for example, John Fowles' *Daniel Martin*,  
and beyond where many have gone before, and will continue till the end of sex.  
(Are aliens in flying saucers actually our descendents trying to discover what sex was all about  
before the evolution of asexuality? Now, there's a story to tell. Most likely has been.)  
Romance is a story that continues to fascinate us even though we are past our prime.  
That prime is usually sometime in our 20's and 30's after college and before marriage  
when our career ambitions gradually dominate and control our sex drives.  
Swapping pleasure for power is symbolized by artists and astrologers as Venus subordinated by  
Mars. If we live long enough, each of us, whatever our gender, eventually tames our shrew.

But in these two stories, by Christina and Gregory, it is the male figure who is tamed.  
Each of the main characters, Rose-Marie and Grey, are naive about their sexuality.  
They are not yet fully aware of the purposes of the opposite gender,  
so neither has the ability to empathize with the goals of the other sex.  
Both authors show courage exploring the natural boundaries of their sexual understanding.  
Rose-Marie prays for a mate who will not put sex before intimacy.  
She imagines Sam to be that man. Is she right?  
We don't find out because the ideal may be impossible, not only to find in real-time,  
but also impossible for the imagination to describe.  
The Gospels don't tell us much about what goes on inside of Jesus.  
If this were a romance novel, then Sam would live up to her ideal:  
a woman in a man's body, or a father who is also a lover.  
Yipes! The reality of Rose-Marie's ideal may very well be a perversion!  
The actuality is closer to the Grey character whom Gregory describes all too well.  
Male sexuality is so simple to understand that most women refuse to believe it.  
They either condemn it as Melissa does, or try to change it as Rose-Marie undoubtedly will.

Questions:

Would Rose-Marie's story express more intimacy if Christina had used present tense throughout?  
Would Grey's story express his narcissism more if Gregory told it in the first person?  
What is the effect if the first person point of view shifts to Melissa as she stands there with the  
gun smoking?

**“The Voice”**

With my heart filled with pain  
She speaks softly  
“Hello”  
I want to confess my  
Anger,  
Frustration,  
Hatred  
With life,  
Love, and  
Work  
But afraid  
Her voice is calming  
I think to myself  
I wish I were there to lay beside her  
Listen to stories,  
That rings childhood joys  
The smell of grits,  
Eggs, toast  
Bacon and sausage from the kitchen,  
Momma’s house  
Echo’s gospel music  
I lie in bed,  
Eyes closed,  
Feet dangling  
A soft voice calling my name  
A place of serenity  
I fight the tears,  
Listening to her voice  
Words full of power  
Reached thought the phone and comfort me  
“Let not your heart be troubled,” she says  
Holy,  
Anointed  
Words full of faith  
Unsure,  
Unaware  
That her words have restored my sanity  
and the power of a mother’s voice  
Simply says “I Love You”

**Poem 1**

By Laura Rhoden

So, you think that I'm bombastic,  
But convalescence is all I need.  
Time, oh, time!  
I want to be moved.  
I want a moment when there are tremors,  
Yes, tremors in my soul.  
All I know is the immense power of emptiness.  
Do not tell me about your god  
For God found me and we understand too well.  
I believe in the Being and the Being believes in me.  
So, let me relish in my heady and rhythmical rebellion  
Against the custody of my heart  
For cadenced virtuosity is not what I seek.  
I am searching for the righteous recklessness of the world.

## METABOLIC GODS: THOUGHTS ABOUT “THE VOICE” & “POEM 1”

To what extent does our metabolism determine the god we seek?

Under stress, we seek serenity.

Our god must be comforting loving calming soft still—

A heaven in a wildflower.

When bored, we desire excitement.

Our god must be moving venturous passionate fiery—

A tyger burning bright.

Latangela’s “Voice” looks back to the innocence of childhood,

To a time and place like Eden

Where a Mother’s voice always provided security of mind and body.

Today, that voice on the phone restores sanity

And soothes the frustrations of love and work in a world not so innocent.

The voice of the mother is holy and full of faith—yet of this earth—

More cherished, than the voice of any god.

The poet in “Poem 1” is seeking a different voice—

One that quakes the earth.

Dr. Phillips says that Laura wrote it.

I would never have guessed it.

The poem contains some of Emily Dickinson’s favorite obsessions.

But if I had met Emily Dickinson, I probably would never have guessed she wrote any of her poems either. Never judge a book by its author, or something like that.

(I guessed someone like Nikki Giovanni wrote it, but little I know.)

Someone who knows *the immense power of emptiness* is usually, at least, middle aged, somewhere around Dante’s age when he entered that dark forest.

Could a student of Zen have written it? Dunno.

Is the phrase equivalent to Mark 5:03 :

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of God.” —?

Could be, for the poet speaks of God finding her.

Is this the moment of grace that religious writing refers to

where self unites with God in at-one-ment?

Although there is a conscious attempt to avoid metaphor, as well as meter, the poet refers to God as *the Being*.

This is a particularly 20th century way to describe the phenomenon of God that everyone experiences whether theist or atheist.

Theologians from Martin Heidegger to Paul Tillich equate God with the ground of being itself—the fundamental experience of existence.

Yet, our poet wants none of this *heady* stuff.

She, maybe he, knows that metaphors are for philosophers and poets.

This poet wants life, not artifice; wildness, not wit.

## MORNING PAGES

As I review the poems and stories of fellow class mates, I ask "What do I know?" What do I know? I could write this question "What do I know?" a zillion times like Nicholson in "The Shining" writing "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy" a zillion and one times. Or as Alfred Hitchcock stated it: "All work and no play makes Jack!" Ambition for knowledge makes Faust. When did Goethe write Faust? 1806. Wikipedia. Mahler wrote his symphony of a thousand in 1906, one hundred years of solitude later. Something about this legend. Marlowe in 1600, dont forget. Is it knowledge or creation itself that Faust seeks? For Goethe, Faust symbolizes the limitations of knowledge. For Mahler, the limits of man's creativity. Why are my thoughts so academic? I could be writing about soap operas instead. "Desperate Housewives" premieres its new season tonite. Not exactly lyrical prose, but certainly satirical. Can satire be poetic. How about Alexander Pope? Nabakov's "Pale Fire" contrasts the differences. Morning pages, morning sickness. Mourning. Gut Morgan. Sentence after sentence flying off the keys. Now this one, now that one. Snickersnack and bandersnatch. Think while we type. Whistle while we work. The immense power of emptiness. That is what Laura wrote in her Poem #1. The emptiness when we come to the end of creation, our own or everywhere. Boom. A busting out. A wildness a recklessness. Snickersnack, Kerouac. Typing typing typing... Chase the deer today. Left them some banana peels yesterday. Harry Potter in the park. Not quite an exploration of emptiness as Dante's dark forest must have been. Is it all now reduced to memory and knowledge? No inspiration. No amateur's for the love of it. Just Hamlet sitting on a fence, pondering whether to do or not to do. Doobee doobee do—Sinatra. Flying wheels to nowhere. Escape to the desert. Back to Faluja for Erfanio as in his mind he dreams of escaping from the desert to the Motel 8 where he is now dreaming of escaping from Motel 8. Round robin dreaming. Dreaming of being there, and when there, dreaming of being back again where dreaming began. Pages and pages and pages flying off the printer...daydreaming outloud and it isn't even afternoon as yet. But it is the end of summer and the start of fall. Soon no afternoons at all. No white rabbits to chase down a rabbit hole. No 100 degree heat either. 150 degrees in Falujah. Mr Adi sits dying in the Arab Emirates dreaming of returning to Nashville. Erfanio sits in Motel 8 dreaming of dreams. We are more than these dreams when we listen to others snoring theirs. But this writing is a narcissistic play. Always centering from self, imagining others' boundaries, trying to leap beyond ours into theirs. Networking our webs. Meshing our webs. Tangling our webs... go go go doing the wave. goodbye. Fly out of here. Call Orbitz. \$199 to LAX and back. Relax & back. Cab man next door takes me to port. Picks me up in 3 weeks. Emptiness. Filling the void. Why create if not from emptiness. What Creationism and Intelligent Design theorists never address: why did God create their Universe? Boredom? Nothing

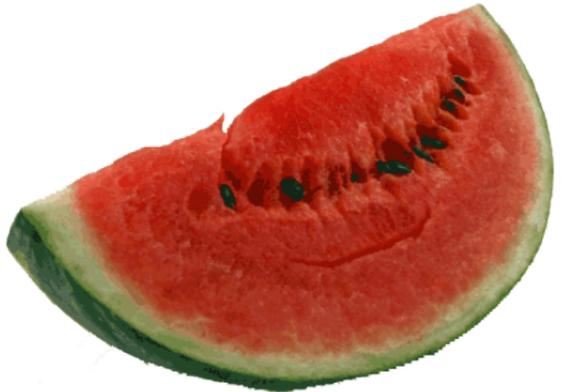
Mon, Sep 24<sup>th</sup>

else to do? A little girl in a sandbox? Bang! Now if she just had some dolls to play with she could make a nice garden. Later, she could wash them all in the bath tub, or drown them like her rubber duckies. Begin again. Sin no more. Go forth and multiply. Learn how to divide and subtract too. Ideas, memories, not my own but everyone's. Who is I? Never born, never die. Strange Loop. Round and round in a circle game. Spiral method. Jerome Bruner. "He who does not read history is condemned to repeat it." -Rumsfeld, also Truman, and other repeaters of History 101. "For every action there is an opposite, and greater, reaction." Back home, key would not turn lock. Dead bolt tumblers broke inside lock. Knocked on landlady's door. Said to call maintenance. Called maintenance at Max's, and waited while JJ drove to apartment. There he crowbarred the door jamb loose enough to break in. Then drove off with his family back to Clarksville area. Fell asleep watching the "Darwin Awards" at Netflix on internet. And on again once more... Noris reads Neruda on the walking path in park with deer jumping, words jumping. The sounds dazzle, though Spanish is not understood by these ears. Later in a Mexican cafe, manager speaks of differences between cosmopolitan attitudes in Memphis compared to Nashville's. Mouse makes reservations to LA for Xmas. Malibu beach in winter. 5 by 5 laundry room with 7 feet on the diagonal. Room enough to stretch out on floor. Man of means by no means—king of the road. Kerouac typing click click click. Down thru the chimney old saint nick. Filling the page. 14 pages of lunar ephemeris for writing workshop on how nature names you. List 12 favorite words--'pool' starts with 'p' that rhymes with 't' and that stands for 'trouble'. Categorize words into 4 elements: fire earth air water. Pool is water. But how about 'lugubrious'? A lucky word. Was on my Miller Analogy test. Rhymes with ludicrous. Lugubrious sounds wet. A water word? Now find your moon sign in the lunar ephemeris. How many words are the same element as your moon sign? How many words match the element of your sun sign? Sun sign, you are my sun sign. You make me happy all day long. Now choose your favorite word that matches your moon sign, and your favorite that matches your sun sign. Voila! Your sun-moon name. River Cloud here. Over and out and about...Noris reads Neruda's odes in Espanol. Ode to a tomato, ode to a salt shaker, ode to an atom, ode to a critic, ode to an ode. A deer jumps across the path. Ode to a deer. Ode to a gopher. Ode to an owl. Ode to a sunset. Ode to a watermelon? Ode to a commode. Ode to the Mandelbrot Set? Ode to a fractal. Fractal, invention of my mind. Fractal, structure of my mind. Pure imagination. Pure reality. We zoom into you forever, and never reach your deepest mystery. Potato or vagina? Nothing could be finah... We peer into your blackness. We fly away from you at varying speeds. Substitute the word 'living' for intuition', and you are an existential metaphor. Now substitute the word 'dying'; your meaning remains the same. The rain comes, summer dies, fall arrives. But first a walk in the woods.

*Tues, Sep 25<sup>th</sup>*

Ode To The Watermelon  
by Pablo Neruda

The tree of intense  
summer,  
hard,  
is all blue sky,  
yellow sun, fatigue in drops,  
a sword  
above the highways,  
a scorched shoe  
in the cities:  
the brightness and the world  
weigh us down,  
hit us  
in the eyes  
with clouds of dust,  
with sudden golden blows,  
they torture  
our feet  
with tiny thorns,  
with hot stones,  
and the mouth  
suffers  
more than all the toes:  
the throat  
becomes thirsty,  
the teeth,  
the lips, the tongue:  
we want to drink  
waterfalls,  
the dark blue night,  
the South Pole,  
and then  
the coolest of all  
the planets crosses  
the sky,  
the round, magnificent,  
star-filled watermelon...



## Ode To A Fractal

ala Neruda

Fractal, invention of my mind.

Fractal, structure of my mind.

Pure imagination.

Pure reality.

We zoom into you forever,  
and never reach your deepest mystery:

potato radish turnip beet ?

ginger root ?

vegetable soup ?

vaginal fruit ?

snowman coalman ?

tarbaby tumor ?

oilspilling ?

badfilling ?

blackhole ?

blackheat ?

blackheart ?

We peer into your emptiness...

Vertigo!

Like frightened sparrows,

We fly away from you at multicolored speeds;

Or, like snails, crawl your boundary

between the known and unknown

where intuition lies.

Substitute the word 'living' for 'intuition',

and you are an existential metaphor.

Now substitute the word 'dying'.

What difference does it make?

I ask the purpose of living?

Your answer is always the same:

To continue living.

So what is the purpose of human being?

To continue dying, you say.

To be continued...

Oda A un Fractal ala Neruda

Fractal, invención de mi mente.

Fractal, estructura de mi mente.

Imaginación pura.

Realidad pura.

Enfocamos en usted por siempre,  
y nunca alcanzamos su misterio más profundo:

¿patata? ¿rábano? ¿nabo? ¿remolocha?

¿raíz del jengibre?

¿sopa vegetal?

¿fruta vaginal?

¿hombre de la nieve?

¿hombre del carbón?

¿bebé del alquitrán?

¿tumor?

¿derramamiento del aceite?

¿mal relleno?

¿calabozo?

¿calor negro?

¿corazón negro?

Miramos con fijeza en su vacío...

¡Vértigo!

Como gorriones asustados,

volamos lejos de usted a las velocidades multicoloras;

O, como caracoles, se arrastra su límite

entre haber sabido y el desconocido

donde miente la intuición.

Substituya el de la palabra que 'vivir' para la 'intuición' del,

y usted es una metáfora existencial.

Ahora substituya el ` de la palabra que muere '.

¿Qué diferencia?

¿Le pido el propósito de vivir?

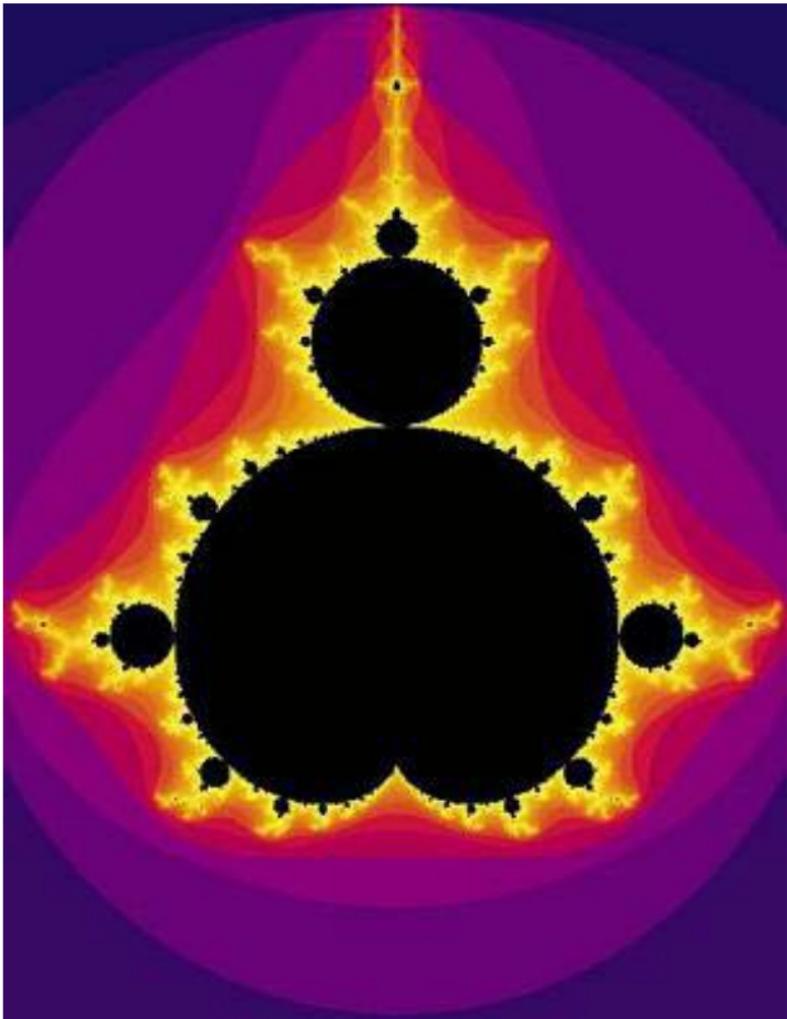
Su respuesta es siempre igual:

Para continuar viviendo.

¿Cuál es tan el propósito del ser humano?

Continuar muriendo, usted dice.

Ser continuado...



## WHERE I'M FROM

I am from clothespins,  
from Clorox and carbon-tetrachloride.  
I am from the dirt under the back porch.  
(Black, glistening  
it tasted like beets.)  
I am from the forsythia bush,  
the Dutch elm  
whose long gone limbs I remember  
as if they were my own.

I am from fudge and eyeglasses,  
from Imogene and Alafair.  
I'm from the know-it-alls  
and the pass-it-ons,  
from perk up and pipe down.  
I'm from He restoreth my soul  
with a cottonball lamb  
and ten verses I can say myself.

I'm from Artemus and Billie's Branch,  
fried corn and strong coffee.  
From the finger my grandfather lost  
to the auger  
the eye my father shut to keep his sight.  
Under my bed was a dress box  
spilling old pictures,  
a sift of lost faces  
to drift beneath my dreams.  
I am from those moments —  
snapped before I budded —  
leaf-fall from the family tree.

— George Ella Lyon

## WHERE I'M FROM

(my version)

I am from spider-webs on moldy books  
encased in crates named Purity.

I am from the grey hair carpeting a  
graveyard of dead moths and wasps.

I am from plastic flowers on a shelf  
beside paint drying in honey bear bottles  
waiting to pour onto pentagonal canvases.

I am from facts and fantasies,  
from Jiddu and Jorge.

I'm from jnana banana  
and the library of imaginary beings.

I'm from a tree by a river  
and a chess knight from a centaur.

I'm from ocean to ocean—

I'm from crossing the painted desert  
in an A-model Ford  
to Mrs. White's white house  
on a white street in White Plains.

I'm from a closet where the Solar System  
is packed in square boxes  
along with Captain Midnite's secret decoder  
and a jar of Ovaltine.

I'm from beneath the Channel 4 tower  
blocking the westward setting moon,  
watching, as Walt Whitman watched,  
from a window outside time.

—wHolt

*[Exercise in Dr. Dunn's class. From Linda Christensen book, p.18]*



## ALONE AGAIN by Andrea Banks

Good dialog! If I were your editor, here are some suggestions. The introductory background is unnecessary to the story because the dialog either implies it or could imply it. By not mentioning the father, his relation to his estranged family becomes apparent

All my life I had been searching for something.

...

I was only sixteen and it left me desolate in this cold world.

The night she died is one that I will never forget. It was a cold January evening and I was at home eating dinner. My mother called and said to meet her at Brentwood hospital immediately. I jumped in my car and arrived at the hospital ten minutes later. My mother was in the room holding my grandmother's cold hands. The room was filled with beautiful balloons. As I walked in my mother was saying, "Mom, we were never close. But I feel so close to you now. I love you, Mom." She looked up and said, "Oh, hey, Angel. Come on in. Well, Mom, you said you wanted to be alone with her when she arrived. She said to Granny. Come on over here next to your grandmother, Angel," she said as she grabbed my shoulder and guided me towards her. She then kissed Granny's forehead, gave me a worried look, and exited the room.

"Hey, Granny. What's wrong with you? What are you doing here?" I asked.

"Oh, baby, Granny ain't feelin' too good today," she said in an almost whisper. "But I asked you to come here for a reason. I wanna tell you baby that life is too short for all this nonsense. Everyone tryin to live dey lives for somebody else. Well, baby, Granny don't want you to be like dat. I want ya to live your life for you and make yo self happy, honey."

"Oh, Granny. I just want to make you happy. When are you coming home?"

"Well, Angel, I've been around for a long time and it is time for me *going* home."

"No, Granny. Don't say it like that. I mean home. . . You know your house. You're . . . you are all I've got. Nobody else loves me. Nobody else cares about me and calls me to see how I'm doing." I cried out.

"Baby, calm down." She said in a very low voice. "I've been here for three days now and I didn't want your mother to tell you 'till today. I... I just wanted to... to tell you something."

"No, no. . . don't talk like this. What's wrong with you Granny? This isn't like you!"

"Hush, child," she said calmly.

"But Granny. . ."

"Hush. Come here." She said as she grabbed me close to her bosom and pushed my ear down to her heart. "You don't let nobody tells you who you are, Suga. You's my child, came from my blood, and I knows you. You come from a long line of strong women that did what they had to do to survive. But we didn't do nothing cause we wanted to, ya hear?"

“What are you talking about Granny?” I asked confused.

“Just listen. It might not make sense now, but it will one day. You take care of yourself and go thru life like a lady. Don’t be all fast with them mannish boys. They’ll take advantage of you if they can. Find you a good friend and hold on to them. Good friends are hard to come by, Angel. Just don’t live life like Granny, don’t live a lie. You’ll end up lonely baby...” Just then my mother walked into the room. “You’ll end up lonely.” Granny continued with a whisper that seemed to fade away.

Just then the heart monitor started beeping out of control and then a long beep that would not stop. ~~Apparently it sent a message to The nurses at the station because they ran into the room very quickly.~~ [and] That was it! That was the last thing that my best friend in the whole world said to me. I’ll end up lonely? What was that supposed to mean? I felt confused. I didn’t ~~even~~ know my grandmother was sick and now, [suddenly], ~~all of a sudden~~ she dies right in front of me. I was hurt, ~~and~~ upset, ~~and~~ even more confused. [faster]

~~When I saw that Granny was~~ did not responding to anything that the nurses and doctor did. ~~it felt as if my heart stopped beating.~~ ~~When my grandmother [had] died;~~ a piece of me [had] died with her. ~~A piece of me that left~~ [leaving] me the very way she told me not to be — lonely.

I cried uncontrollably that night and I went to bed in a crazed state of mind. It felt ~~like a dream, or more~~ like a nightmare. I felt as if my world had come to an end. My mother tried to console me, but she didn’t know how. [After years of success, she had failed at love.] I pushed her away and told her that it was all her fault. I blamed everything on her and ran into my room crying.

The next thing I remember was waking up ~~at 2:30 A.M.~~ from a weird dream. In the dream my grandmother was standing in an old cabin shivering. She was staring at some man’s picture on the wall when all of a sudden the picture came alive [grinning, sneering, frowning?] and ~~made her fall~~ [she fell (fainted)] [kissed her? smacked her?] to the ground. Then a beautiful woman came out of ~~the~~ [a] bird cage ~~that was~~ hanging on the wall next to the [man] picture. [slower] ~~and~~ She wrapped a blanket around my grandmother’s frozen body. My Granny began to smile. ~~and,~~ As she walked away with the stranger from the bird cage, ~~she~~ Granny said [whispered back] to me, “not like me baby... not like me.” I woke up in a cold sweat screaming for my grandmother to wait for me to go with her. ~~The dream felt so real but I soon realized that it was not and I cried myself back to sleep.~~

The story remains concise if you focus entirely on the grandmother’s message.

## LUV'S POEM by Kevin Wesley

Love Poems these days are full of shit  
Wit luv songs that want to see  
A 'Toot Toot' and a 'Beep Beep'  
And don't know a damn thing about you and your circumstances  
They don't hit hard like that fist at night  
You know the one after the parties over and  
the club has last call,  
when somebody goes home sayin'  
"Well he shoulda kept my name out his mutha Fukkin mouth!"

This is a call for the real poems.  
Real as the tensions and anticipation right before that first time u ' .  
well you know.  
That combat poem that  
Fights your cause  
Or  
Loves your spirit  
The one that hugs you like big mama  
Or that holds you at night when you realize it's all over.

Luv has been abused and is on strike and will not come back until she gets  
A warm breath on a clitoris poem,  
You know that poem like the steady hand down the nape of your back **poem**  
Give us that put it on her poem.  
the kind where she wants them to  
stop but she begs them for more **poem**

Luv asked for a poem that was in tune  
To entrance him  
**[romance him dance him enchants the pants off him]**  
The one where his toes curl and he cries out day'um **poem**  
because he didn't know she could FUCK him  
and make love at the same time **poem**

Luv said they want that love poem  
that "loves me for me" poem  
She wants that poem that says  
"baby if you got a few rolls spread some butta on em' cause I'm hungry" **poem**  
That poem that loves in spite of shape and size **poem**,  
The wrongs and rites, the powers and passions **poem**.

Fri, Sep 28<sup>th</sup>

A love poem doesn't cheer when a president beats up a third world country –No'm!  
or  
some child gets left behind –No'm!  
or turns a blind eye when Katrina comes to repossess all yo shit –No'm!

Cause the world hates thugs and fags  
And bitches and baby mamas  
And crackheads  
and  
will blind you with smoke screens and camouflage  
And brilliant rose colored glasses  
covered in morals that only exist  
in a land where eagles fly and shit apple pie

But...

Not this poem

We need that poem that nourishes the spirit and feeds the soul,  
like cornbread and collard greens and fried chicken, and sweet potato pie.  
Not Soul food, but Soul's Food !  
A poem that holds your hand,  
Sees you cry and asks why  
and tells you truthfully  
yes or no.

Cause a love poem sees all the beauty in the world  
from clover to clover  
A luv poem  
Loves thy neighbor as I have loved you!

---

*Kevin–  
Attitude with a howl!  
I hear it with a rap beat.  
Don't know if you intended it.  
Want to hear more short rhymes  
Like where eagles fly and shit apple pie  
and more repetition, like poem  
at the end of more lines for emphasis.  
– Wayne*

Sat, Sep 29<sup>th</sup>



<http://www.t-bag.org>

## Sonnet to a W

Comments heard in a bar near Vanderbilt  
while watching George Bush deliver a speech  
on Thursday, September 13th, 2007

"So, Double-You, our fearful trip's not done?"

"This dog sees red, shits white, then howls the blues."

"Sounds kinda yellah playing cut and run

Before we won." "Why not just nuke the Jews

And A-rabs too? A couple anthills less..."

"But we've evolved past ants and apes!" — "Not yet!"

"It's like the White House barks, the Hill chirps Yes!"

"Bong hits for Jesus! Boom!" "Bet they regret—

Them holy hawks—they voted for this dude."

"He's Captain Ahab chasing Moby Dick."

"May be his own." "Hard way to harpoon crude..."

"Oil that is, Texas tea..." "That lunatic

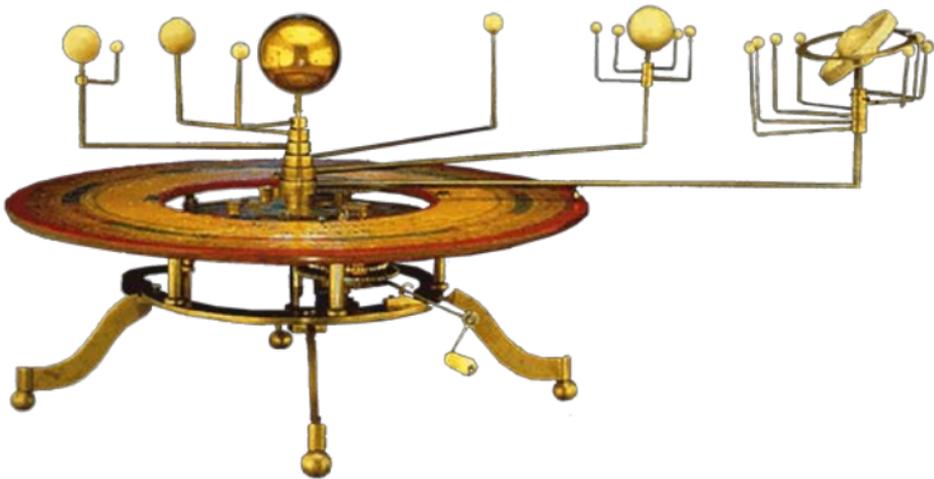
Still ranting on like some Tyrannosaur?"

"Yeah—Woody Wilson wants one more World War."



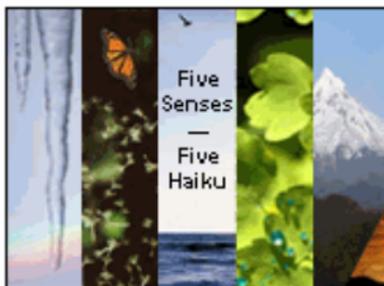
Mon, Oct 1<sup>st</sup>

# Classical Time



Inserted citations into Classical Time PowerPoint presentation.

HAIKU WEB PAGE



Seeing

In the art  
of the eye,  
the color of glass,  
paint rainbows.



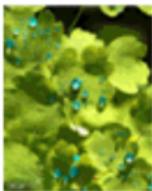
Smelling



One orange butterfly  
in a dandelion wind  
— The odor of air.

Tasting

The taste  
of falling rain,  
The mistle leaf  
unfolds,  
But nowhere  
a cloud.



Hearing

The sound of a  
loose gull  
gliking high on  
aisle at sea  
— serene song.

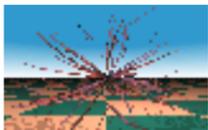


Touching



Pyramid,  
Snowy mountain peak  
— Touches of time  
In motionless space.

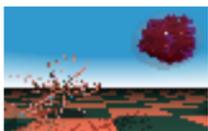
DR. LESUEUR'S STORY TIME



Once upon a time,  
about five minutes ago,  
there was a tired old concept on its  
way to the overabused home.



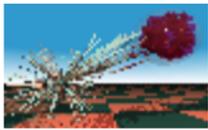
"Now I won't need to go  
to Grandma's."



When, by uncommon  
circumstance, it encountered a  
fuzzy glowing blob hovering above  
the road.



"Now I won't need..."



It reached out for mystery...



"Now I won't..."



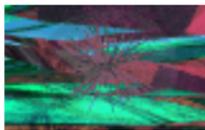
And was happily reciprocated with  
renewed transformation.



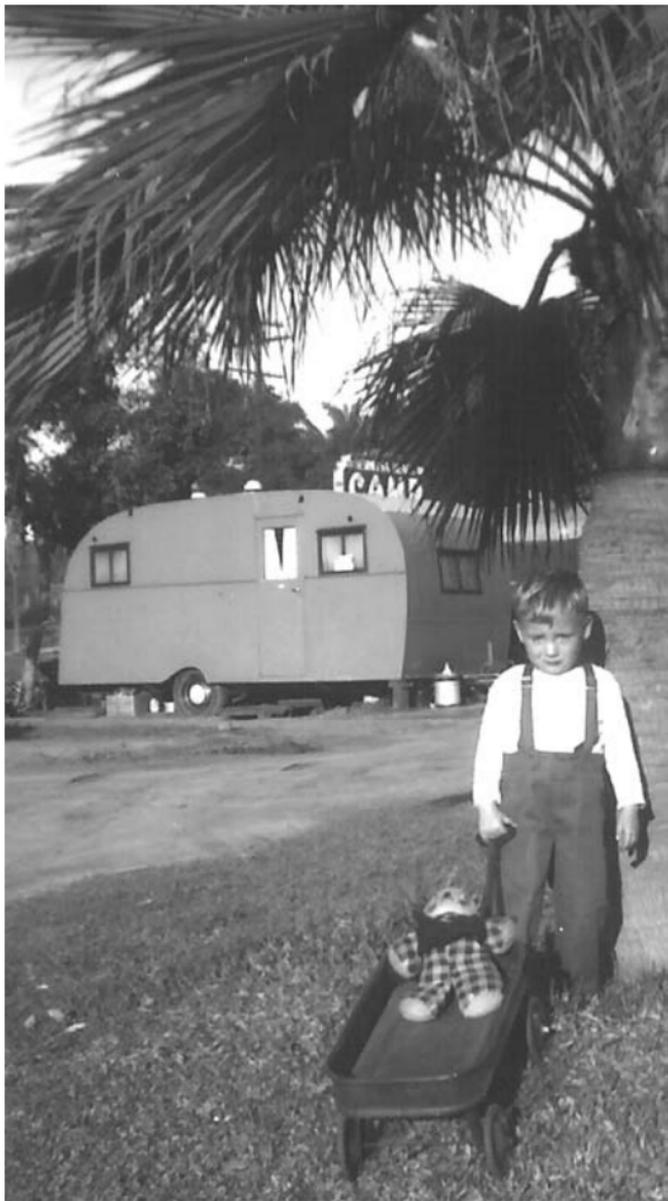
"Now..."



"Ah," it thought...



"Oh, Grandma,  
what big eyes you have!"



Wayne Lee Holt = Wagon Shelter in the Woods

## RATTLE

He rips the rattle from the hand of the kid in the crib.  
He makes a break for it as the kid starts screaming.  
The kid's mother is chasing him out the door.  
He jumps for it. He's over the fence.

And oops...

into the cactus plants. Ouch!

Ouch! Ouch!

He's limping now. He's almost home.

It was okay for mom to throw it away,  
but why did Judy's little brother have to have it?

He's home now. But he can't sit down.

Mom's got him face down on the table  
taking the tweezers to his butt.

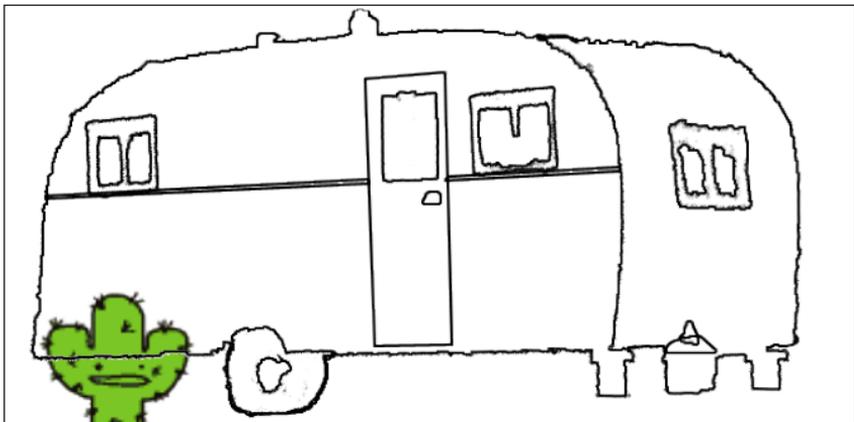
Ouch! Ouch!

There will be other adventures soon:  
locked up in the rumble seat,

German measles,

water cooler falling over on him.

But for now, just get this cactus out of my ass!



4 FILES OF HTML CODE FOR A FRAMESET LAYOUT  
UPPERCASE TERMS are HTML tags  
modify the lowercase text

```

=====
<!-- myIndex.html is the file to call first -->

<HTML>
<HEAD>
<TITLE>My Index File</TITLE>
</HEAD>

<!-- layout your frames on the page -->
<FRAMESET COLS="16%,*" BORDER=0> <!-- Split screen into two columns -->
  <FRAME SRC="myTOC.html"> <!-- file for table of contents navigation menu -->
  <FRAMESET ROWS="135,*"> <!-- Split column 2 into two rows -->
    <FRAME SRC="myLogo.html"> <!-- file containing logo -->
    <FRAME SRC="Aardvarks.html" NAME="myContent"> <!-- file containing 1st content -->
  </FRAMESET>
</FRAMESET>

</HTML>

=====
<!-- myTOC.html contains the table of contents for your website -->

<HTML>
<HEAD>
<TITLE>My Navigation Menu</TITLE>
<BASE TARGET="myContent">
</HEAD>

<BODY BGCOLOR="#FFFFFF" TEXT="#994422" LINK="#994422" ALINK="#ff2200" VLINK="#003300"
BACKGROUND="?" >

<BR>
<CENTER>
<IMG SRC="images/trumpetblast.gif" width=50 height=50>
<BR>
<B>MENU</B>
<BR>
</CENTER>

<!-- list of webpages in your website -->
<UL>
<LI><A HREF="Aardvarks.html"><IMG SRC="images/flamingo.gif" width=50 height=50 border=0
align=middle> Feathery Friends</A>
<BR>
<BR>
<LI><A HREF="Snarks.html"><IMG SRC="images/teaparty.png" width=50 height=50 border=0
align=middle>
Dementia Praecox</A>
<BR>
<BR>
<LI><A HREF="Quarks.html"><IMG SRC="images/QueenHearts.gif" width=50 height=50 border=0
align=middle>
Quarks & Dorks</A>
<BR>
<BR>
<LI><A HREF="4Files.txt"><IMG SRC="images/dooralceopen.gif" width=50 height=50 border=0
align=middle> Farks</A>
<BR>
<BR>
<LI><A HREF=".. /tbagindex.html" TARGET=_top><IMG SRC="images/tbag.gif" width=50 height=50
border=0 align=middle> Tarks</A>
<BR>
<BR>
</UL>

</FONT>
</BODY>
</HTML>

```

```

=====
<!-- myLogo.html contains the logo for your website -->
<HTML>
<HEAD>
<TITLE>My Website Logo</TITLE>
<!-- Meta Names are looked for by search engines like Google -->
<META NAME="Generator" CONTENT="?">
<META NAME="Author" CONTENT="Alfred E. Newman">
<META NAME="Keywords" CONTENT="art, paintings, sculpture">
<META NAME="Description" CONTENT="art i made">
</HEAD>
<BODY BGCOLOR="#FFFFFF" TEXT="#000000" LINK="#FF0000" VLINK="#800000" ALINK="#FF00FF"
BACKGROUND="?">
<CENTER>
<IMG SRC="images/Logo.gif" ALT="logo" >
</CENTER>
</BODY>
</HTML>

```

```

=====
<!-- This file contains content from your website -->
<HTML>
<HEAD>
<TITLE>Some Relevant Title Goes Here</TITLE>
</HEAD>
<BODY BGCOLOR="#FFFFFF" TEXT="#994422" LINK="#FF0000" VLINK="#800000" ALINK="#FF00FF"
BACKGROUND="?">
<TABLE ALIGN=CENTER VALIGN=TOP>
<TR>
<TD>
<CENTER>
<H1>AARDVARKS</H1>
<IMG SRC="images/flamingo.jpg">
</CENTER>
<P>
<BLOCKQUOTE>
<FONT SIZE="6">
&#147;M</FONT>etaphor permeates all discourse...
A frozen metaphor has lost the vigor of youth, but remains a metaphor.
Strangely though, with progressive loss of its virility as a figure of speech,
a metaphor becomes not less but more like literal truth...
Metaphors... become more literal as their novelty wanes. Is metaphor, then,
simply a juvenile fact, and a fact simply a senile metaphor? &#148;
<BR><BR>
- Nelson Goodman (1976)
</FONT>
</BLOCKQUOTE>
</P>
</TD>
</TR>
</TABLE>
</BODY>
</HTML>

```

## WATKINS COURSES

GRD 341

Multi-Media I

Studio, 3 Credit Hours

An introduction to multimedia design with an emphasis on website creation. Students gain an understanding of the terminology, development tools, and fundamental skills (including learning HTML, CSS, etc.), related to designing a successful website. Current software applications such as Dreamweaver, Flash, Fireworks, and ImageReady are learned as appropriate to the process. Required for graphic design majors.

(GRD 210, GRD 231)



GRD 342

Multi-Media II

Studio, 3 Credit Hours

Building on skills learned in Multi-Media I, students continue with the development of problem solving skills through digital media. Through directed individual projects, students use current software to explore the development of such projects as interactive CD-ROM or DVD design, advanced website design, and Flash animation.

Required for graphic design majors

(GRD 341)

MAT 101

Applied Mathematics

Lecture, 3 Credit Hours

A study of basic mathematics, algebra, and geometry as these show demonstrated use in modern life with applications to art and design. Students may test out of this class by achieving a passing score on a battery of tests given during the first week of the semester. Students who successfully test out will not earn academic credit for the course, but will be required to take a three credit hour elective course to replace the hours required for their degree programs.

Required for students in all majors.

Sun, Oct 7<sup>th</sup>

# My Big Logo

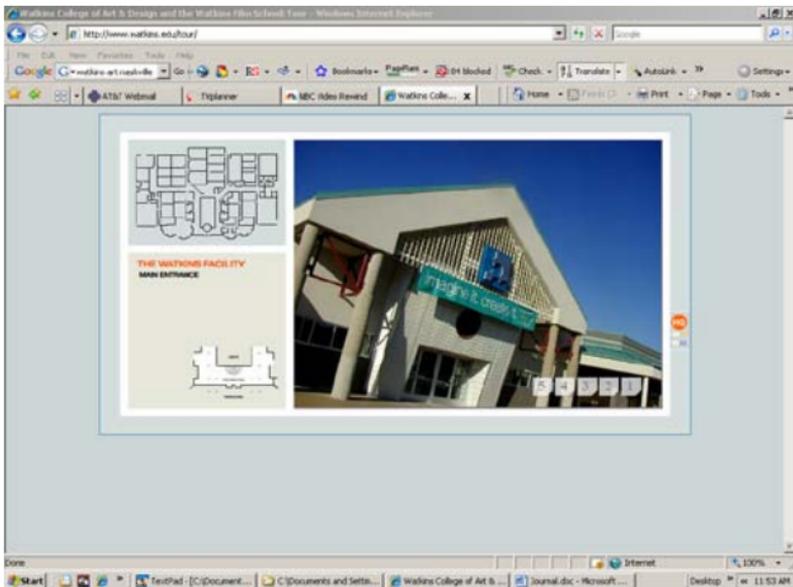


Prepared an animated gif lesson for multi-media class tomorrow at Watkins.



Animated orrery flying away in warp time.

# WATKINS CLASS



Taught 10 students how to create ImageReady animations.

Chad Sawyer  
Amanda Bybee  
Rebecca Carroll  
Cory Hensler  
Jamie Harper  
Sean Williams  
Holly Mathews  
GREGORY THOMPSON  
Hui Young  
Daniel Menex



Tues, Oct 9<sup>th</sup>

Bob Bradley visited class  
and read Liam Rector's poem

*Song Years*

Liam Rector

For years I lived in a kind  
Of wistful song world where  
One foot was always out

The door, almost like a sailor  
Ready, anxious even, to decamp  
Once more for the sea,

And always the American highway  
And its great story calling, built by  
The American restless and all

Its subsequent moving. Loosely  
Around the seasons I moved  
Looking for what I thought of

As a natural life, and looked back  
At anyone who stayed put as if  
They had given up,

Given up something  
That should never be  
Given up,

Ever.  
No sooner  
Would I get some place

Than I'd begin  
To check out the train schedules  
And other venues of departure.

I hated the notion  
Of insurance and never  
Had any. I gave

Myself no place to fall.  
I thought of all this as keeping  
Myself clean, keeping

Myself honest. It really  
Wasn't a variant  
Of the old high school

Locker-room chant of find 'em,  
Feel 'em, fuck 'em,  
And forget 'em, I told myself.

But sometimes,  
Especially when I was packing,  
It surely felt that way.

I was always leaving one  
For the next one. I wished them  
Well and remained friends

With most of them. I hoped  
A right one would come along  
For them, and they would be

More ready for their lasting lover  
Given the lessons, good and bad.  
We'd taught each other.

Fall would come  
And I'd head north  
For apple-picking, winter

Would find me boled up  
In Vermont for a moment,  
Working on some chilly construction.

And spring was always  
A sure-fired scamper south  
Summer mostly meant

Going out west for, I suppose, hope.  
Change is slow and hope is violent.  
I wanted the speed and handling

Of a good sports car; I wanted  
Things not as they should be  
But things as they are.

Most songs are sad and most people  
Do not want to live in song world,  
Except when some loved one leaves

Or maybe over a drink, alone, at home,  
Or perhaps in a car, ever more alone.  
Someone is always falling or being thrown.

Most songs say  
But one thing:  
"My heart aches."

And if you doubt this  
Listen to the songs.  
And tonight

Let us all together send out  
Our love to the songwriters  
For moving us.

I moved this way  
Until the cruelty of it  
Overwhelmed me.

## Wearing Glasses

Hi!!

My name is Bradley.

~~And~~ I was 2 when I had to wear glasses.

When I first got my

glasses,I felt very <sup>sad.</sup> ~~by~~

~~because~~ I ~~thou~~<sup>know</sup> people will call me  
four eyes

bug face

spider boy

My mom said

"Ignore those names."

But deep down in my heart I still

<sup>↑</sup>  
Now <sup>that</sup> I'm older I stand up for  
those ~~mean~~ <sup>bullies</sup>

bullies

that call me names.

I say

"leave me alone!"

and I walk away.

~~Now~~ I also have friends that  
stick up for

me

when I need it.

Here's those names!

Downloaded from Regie Routman's website at:

<http://books.heinemann.com/writingessentials/pdfs/StudentDrafts/Poetry/WearingGlasses.pdf>

## PREFACE

On Tuesday,  
Bob said delete adjectives and adverbs.  
Elaine said don't rhyme if no reason.  
Liam said be lean, not mean.

On Wednesday,  
Mary said read Regie.  
Regie said "Read, kids."  
Paige read "Getting Braces."  
Bradley read "Wearing Glasses."

On Thursday,  
I read Mark's "Green Man"  
in the park  
under a tree.

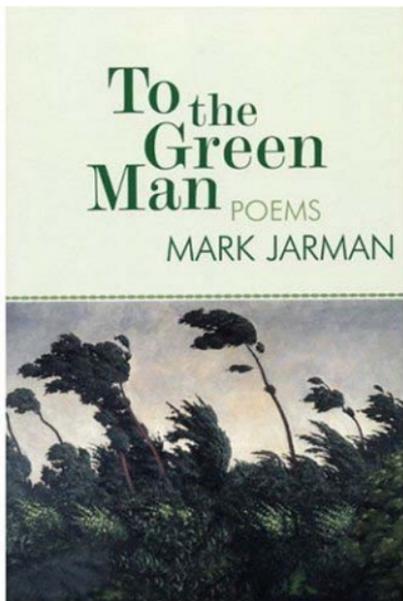
First forgive the silence  
That answers prayer,  
Then forgive the prayer  
That stains the silence.

Excuse the absence  
That feels like presence,  
Then excuse the feeling  
That insists on presence.

Pardon the delay  
Of revelation,  
Then ask pardon for  
Your impatience.

Forgive God  
For being only a word,  
Then ask God to forgive  
The betrayal of language.

On Friday,  
I wrote this:



## WEARING GLASSES

When I was eight,  
I got glasses.  
I saw more things.  
I began to hit the ball.  
I stopped fighting.  
I saw my eyes reflected in the lenses.  
I saw people going into strange buildings on Sunday.  
Was it like Playland on Saturday?  
I asked Mom and Dad if I could go.  
Aunt William went to the Baptist one,  
so we did too.



There I learned about a big creature  
who had magic powers and a son.  
And if you believed his son was a god,  
you would live forever  
in a city where streets were paved with gold.  
But I wasn't sure I wanted to live forever  
in such a foreign place.  
Gold was something dentists drilled into your mouth.  
Besides, I preferred to walk in the grass.

The Baptist Church is easy to join, but hard to quit.  
Ask Jimmy C.  
They sent a cop after me  
who shotgunned a couple in a motel room  
because he knocked on the wrong door  
and no one answered.  
They sent an alcoholic after me  
who kneeled down by my bed and prayed for my soul  
while I read *The Brothers Karamazov*.  
They sent a boy scout leader after me  
who stared at me with needy eyes  
through horn-rimmed glasses.  
I later learned his need was innocence.

When I was twelve,  
my father died  
from eating and smoking.  
In the absence of love,  
I discovered what God is.

Sat, Oct 13<sup>th</sup>

## AFTERWORDS

When I was twenty something,  
I started doodling between  
calculus problems. The doodles  
grew into a series of surreal  
landscapes—a parable without  
words. Later, I added the words  
below as captions. "Wearing  
Glasses" is either a revision or a  
prevision.

## MICROCIRCUS

(rhymes with rhinoceros)

One day I awoke  
and there was a New Circus in  
town!

Off I ran,  
down the Midway,  
through King Looney's Sideshow,

And entered the Big Top.

I stood for a while  
before the Great Ring  
and then began to climb  
a Ladder made of Rope.

Piccolos and trombones  
played fanfares  
as I walked the High Wire

To the top of the Giant Tent.

There I rode the Flying Trapeze  
and floated into space  
far above the lights of Microcircus.

mythical facts -  
carnival acts,  
apocalyptic motions,  
circus tents -  
transcendence,  
a little book reopens,

ferris wheels,  
seven seals,  
creatures full of eyes,  
flying beasts,  
harlequin priests,  
a trumpet prophesies,

rainbow stallions,  
clown battalions,  
acrobatic spree,  
parading freaks,  
elephant shrieks,  
Armenagerie,

patmos caves,  
funhouse naves,  
grand cathedral zoos,  
tiger's cage,  
bill blake's rage,  
shining Betelgeuse ...

I stood for a while  
before the Great Ring  
and then began to climb  
a Ladder made of Rope.

Piccolos and trombones  
played fanfares  
as I walked the High Wire

To the top of the Giant Tent.

There I rode the Flying Trapeze  
and floated into space  
far above the lights of Microcircus.



One day I awoke  
and there was a New Circus in  
town!



Off I ran,  
Down the Midway,  
through King Looney's Sideshow,



And entered the Big Top.



I stood for a while  
before the Great Ring  
And then began to climb  
a Ladder made of Rope.

## MICROCIRCUS



Piccolos and trombones  
Played fanfares  
As I walked the High Wire



To the top of the Giant Tent.



There I rode the Flying Trapeze  
and floated into space  
far above the lights of Microcircus.

## EPISTLES

Mark Jarman read from his latest collection *Epistles* to a small gathering in the Capitol Library.

### 1. If I were Paul

Consider how you were made.

Consider the loving geometry that sketched your bones, the passionate symmetry that sewed flesh to your skeleton, and the cloudy zenith whence your soul descended in shimmering rivulets across pure granite to pour as a single braided stream into the skull's cup.

Consider the first time you conceived of justice, engendered mercy, brought parity into being, coaxed liberty like a marten from its den to uncoil its limber spine in a sunny clearing, how you understood the inheritance of first principles, the legacy of noble thought, and built a city like a forest in the forest, and erected temples like thunderheads.

Consider, as if it were penicillin or the speed of light, the discovery of another's hands, his oval field of vision, her muscular back and hips, his nerve-jarred neck and shoulders, her bleeding gums and dry elbows and knees, his baldness and cauterized skin cancers, her lucid and forgiving gaze, his healing touch, her mind like a prairie. Consider the first knowledge of otherness. How it felt.

Consider what you were meant to be in the egg, in your parents' arms, under a sky full of stars.

Now imagine what I have to say when I learn of your enterprising viciousness, the discipline with which one of you turns another into a robot or a parasite or a maniac or a body strapped to a chair. Imagine what I have to say.

Do the impossible. Restore life to those you have killed, wholeness to those you have maimed, goodness to what you have poisoned, trust to those you have betrayed.

Bless each other with the heart and soul, the hand and eye, the head and foot, the lips, tongue, and teeth, the inner ear and the outer ear, the flesh and spirit, the brain and bowels, the blood and lymph, the heel and toe, the muscle and bone, the waist and hips, the chest and shoulders, the whole body, clothed and naked, young and old, aging and growing up.

I send you this not knowing if you will receive it, or if having received it, you will read it, or if having read it, you will know that it contains my blessing.

# Epistles

poems  
Mark Jarman



## REVIEW OF THE 2007 SOUTHERN FESTIVAL OF BOOKS

### Friday—

Attended short story readings included in some 2008 anthology by 3 young authors with MFAs. Their stories read perfectly like poetry. Visited Marshall Chapman's song stories with Tom Kimmel. Each brought their guitar. These two know that poetry should be sung. Attended another short story panel of five editors and writers who were supposed to talk about experimental form in short stories, but only talked about publishing biz. I raised my iPod and asked them to publish readings for me. But they were trapped in the print media. Stories, however, transcend print. Stories have been in print for less than 600 years. Stories are oral and need to be heard. Millions of people will pay \$1 to hear a story while they drive home. No wonder these folks are broke.

### Saturday—

Attended poetry readings in the Capitol Library:  
2 poets from Houston defined their landscapes within.  
2 poets, one from Asheville and one from Kentucky,  
one was tough and the other tender. The tough one sang.  
3 poets from Tennessee read their rhythms from the natural world.  
1 poet from Alabama was drunk in sunlight, or so he said.  
Visited the Pluto is no longer a planet lecture.  
Outside, listened to Dennis Soli play sax.  
Carl C. was there wanting to publish his 61 page novel titled *Hula*.  
We went to hear two women from Georgia talk about women stories:  
Zona Rosa and Dr. Ortiz. Carl yawned.  
No black or brown people were to be seen anywhere.  
Is reading a white thing? Probably. The black thing is an oral tradition.

### Sunday—

Listened to Mark Jarman read his *Epistle* poems at Capitol Library.  
He reminds me of Bill Murray in deep thought.  
I wonder if I have ever experienced the complex problems Jarman describes.  
I feel like Dexter, the serial killer on Showtime.  
After the reading, I told him to find another photo of himself for his back covers.  
The ones there make him look like a Vanderbilt professor.  
I am sure he appreciated my advice.  
Outside in the hall, I asked Keith Flynn if he had posted his readings on the web?  
He gave me a CD of the poetry he sang yesterday, saying "Keep the faith, Bro."  
Listened to Tito Perdue read his novel about a mean old man in Purgatory.  
I know I will like that one.  
His advice to young writers: Quit! Glad I took his advice years ago.  
William Gay stayed home. Too shy for this crowd.  
Listened to Scott Muskin, winner of Parthenon Prize, read an excerpt from his novel about a visit to an art museum.  
Sydney and Jocelyn volunteered to read manuscripts submitted for the prize next year.  
Next year, Memphis again?

## MARK JARMAN & THE TAO

When reading his poetry, Mark Jarman resembles Bill Murray in deep thought. At first, like Jarman's Marxist friend, I was turned off by the God jargon. Living in the I-40 Bible Belt, I have had enough evangelical rhetoric. However, Jarman's poetry is not about God the supernatural ruler of the universe, but about how each individual sooner or later experiences God the phenomenon in all its mysteries and confusions.

As far as we know, the phenomenon of God is unique to the human species. Only humans can imagine infinity, for only humans can imagine. Out of that imagination arises somehow an immense emptiness with all its possibilities. Both fear and hope battle for our attention when we stare into the pit of God. Is the glass despairingly empty, or ready to fulfill all our dreams? In Jarman's poetry, we witness this continuing dialog between fear and hope and how it evolves into ineffable intuitions that only poets can hint at. Jarman's poems may have begun with Christian theology, but they are not stuck in it. They fly way above the orthodox interpretations.

Mark Jarman is rewriting the Tao Te Ching for theists, but Jarman's version is friendlier for Christians. Rather than persecute obsolete metaphors, he morphs them into metaphors that have meaning today. St. Paul did that for his time also. I appreciate his warm way of bringing us up to a larger understanding, while grounding our abstract understanding in commonly shared feelings. Like poets have always done, he brings God into everyday routines. Jarman's God is one of immanence, not transcendence. Although he may hope for a transcendent being who cares for us, his reflections lead him to think otherwise. As Jarman pointed out last Sunday, those who submit without reflection to a supernatural being have not been treating the rest of us very kindly of late. Did they ever?

Choose at random any of Jarman's poems. Substitute the word 'Tao' for 'God', and it sounds like Lao-Tzu. Compare this example from "Five Psalms" in *To the Green Man* to "Number 41" in the *Tao Te Ching* translated by Stephen Mitchell:

2.

First forgive the silence  
That answers prayer,  
Then forgive the prayer  
That stains the silence.

Excuse the absence  
That feels like presence,  
Then excuse the feeling  
That insists on presence.

Pardon the delay  
Of revelation,  
Then ask pardon for  
Your impatience.

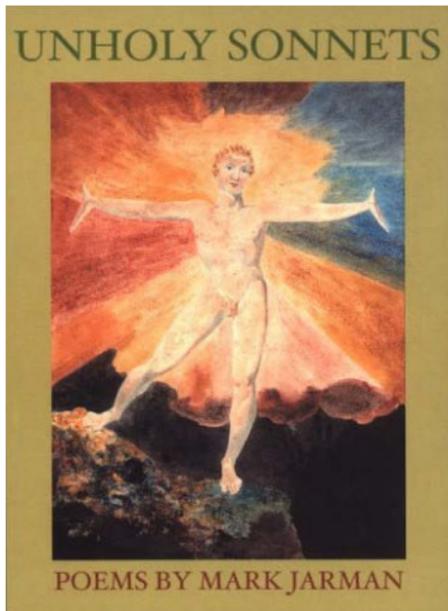
Forgive God  
For being only a word,  
Then ask God to forgive  
The betrayal of language.

—Mark Jarman

41.  
When a superior man hears of the Tao,  
he immediately begins to embody it.  
When an average man hears of the Tao,  
he half believes it, half doubts it.  
When a foolish man hears of the Tao,  
he laughs out loud.  
If he didn't laugh,  
it wouldn't be the Tao.

Thus it is said:  
The path into the light seems dark,  
the path forward seems to go back,  
the direct path seems long,  
true power seems weak,  
true purity seems tarnished,  
true steadfastness seems changeable,  
true clarity seems obscure,  
the greatest art seems unsophisticated,  
the greatest love seems indifferent,  
the greatest wisdom seems childish.

The Tao is nowhere to be found.  
Yet it nourishes and completes all things.



—Lao-Tzu

Both use similar paradoxes to describe the spiritual journey.

So far, I have read four books by Jarman owned by our public library: Questions for Ecclesiastes, Unholy Sonnets, To the Green Man, and The Secret of Poetry. On Sunday, October 14th, Jarman read from his latest collection Epistles to a small gathering in the Capitol Library. On Tuesday, October 16th, he

read it again to a larger gathering at Christ Episcopal. He quoted Hebrews 11:1 as an epigraph to his Epistles: "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Jarman ends one of his epistles with a paradoxical variation on this verse: "One thinks so. One hopes not." Here is where Lao-Tzu differs from St. Paul, Jarman, and Christianity. Taoism and Christianity agree on the latter that faith is the evidence of things not seen, but disagree on the former that faith is hope.

13.

Success is as dangerous as failure.  
Hope is as hollow as fear.

What does it mean that success is as dangerous as failure?  
Whether you go up the ladder or down it,  
your position is shaky.  
When you stand with your two feet on the ground,  
you will always keep your balance.

What does it mean that hope is as hollow as fear?  
Hope and fear are both phantoms  
that arise from thinking of the self.  
When we don't see the self as self,  
what do we have to fear?

See the world as your self.  
Have faith in the way things are.  
Love the world as your self;  
then you can care for all things.

—Lao-Tzu

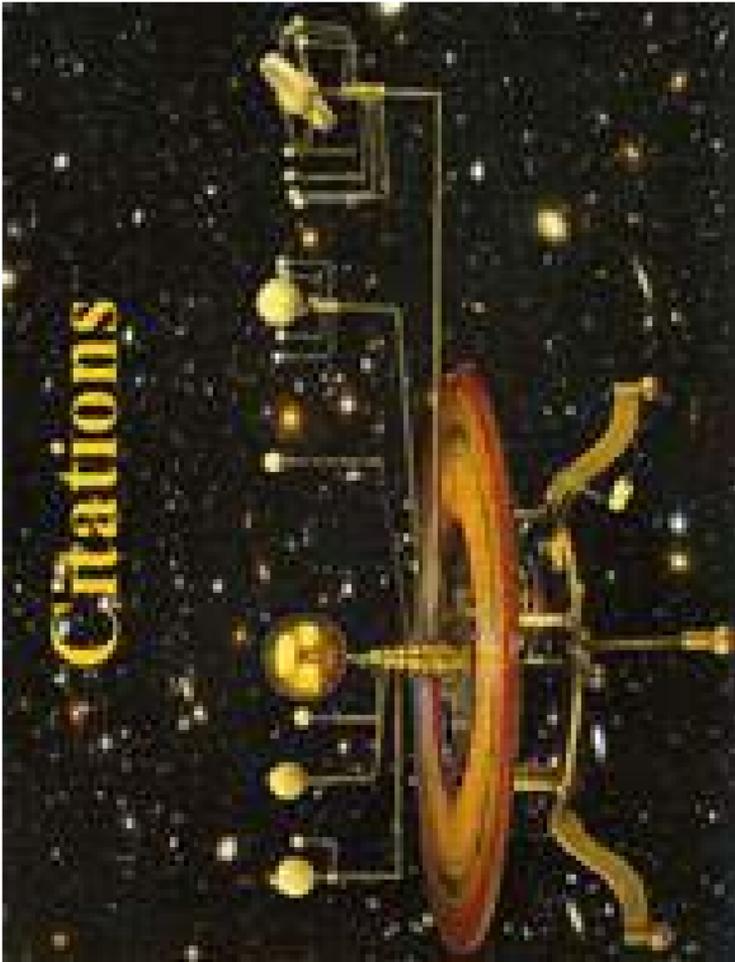
How would Jarman respond to this challenge to hope? Is it possible to toss out the ancient metaphors without also disposing of the thing with feathers? Maybe he will compare Eastern and Western cultures; then ask which we would rather live in? The one based on hope has a lot more toys both for joy and despair. India and China now want the same toys. The world of hope is ultimately a childish wish for divine intervention. Nevertheless, this same world of hope has built a more a powerful network for international peace and a ladder beyond to the stars; if that's where we want to go.

I look forward to Jarman's next collection *Sailing to Byzantium*. All copies of Epistles sold out on Sunday at the Southern Festival of Books. After the reading, I told Mr. Jarman to find another photo of himself for his back covers. The ones there make him look like a Vanderbilt professor. I am sure he appreciated my advice. One hopes so. One thinks not.

## CITATIONS

Finished citations for Classical Time.

Now to adapt presentation for the Mac.

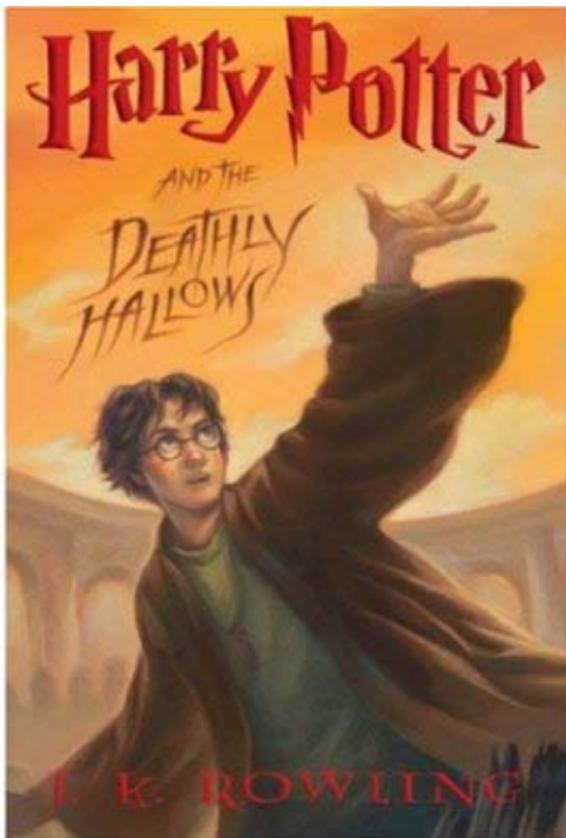


Thurs, Oct 18<sup>th</sup>

## HARRY POTTER & THE DEATHLY HALLOWS

Finished listening to Harry Potter's last adventure  
on my iPod read by Jim Dale.

"Pushing Daisies" TV series is narrated by Jim Dale also.  
Why don't poets read their poems on the internet?  
Charge a penny a word.



## FORTUNETELLER

For my birthday,  
Miss Mouse took me to see her psychic  
somewhere out on Narawak Road.  
She told me things.  
She said I had musical talent,  
but I don't sing or dance.  
She said I was accident prone,  
but I never leave my chair.  
She said the government would need me soon.  
I said what law would I need to break?  
She said I should be a Republican,  
but I have always depended on the kindness of strangers.  
She said my big sister would always take care of me,  
but I have no big sister.  
She said I should marry Miss Mouse.  
I said, then what?  
She said I loved children.  
I said, only those over sixty.  
She said I had a particular fondness for cats and dogs.  
I said, yeah, medium rare.  
She said the post-something artery in my heart  
is sensitive to changes in the weather,  
but I have no heart.  
She said I had a long life line,  
but I died long ago.



# The Revolution

## *De Revolutionibus Orbium Coelestium*

### *On the Revolution of the Celestial Spheres*

- Copernicus first proposed his revolutionary theory in 1514
- The Sun—not the Earth—was center of the Universe
- He finished his *Revolution* in 1543



# The Reformation

- By the time Martin Luther nailed his protests to the front door of the Wittenberg Cathedral in 1517, people had learned to read...
- so they read all 95 of them
- and the Protestant Reformation began.



- Henry VIII head of Church of England (1534)
- Head of Anne of Boleyn chopped off (1536)

REGIE ROUTMAN

# WRITING ESSENTIALS

Raising Expectations and Results  
While Simplifying Teaching

The DVD takes you inside  
8 writing conferences  
showing Regie  
in action.



Showed Ms. Mouse the Regie Routman DVD.  
Mouse teaches remedial reading in L.A.

<http://books.heinemann.com/writingessentials>

Mon, Oct 22<sup>nd</sup>

## REFLECTIONS ON PLG & WWG

My beliefs about teaching writing did not change much after reading *Writing Essentials* by Regie Routman. See the October 24<sup>th</sup> page. However, I had to modify some of the statements slightly to agree or disagree with them. We don't improve our writing automatically by writing everyday, but we do improve it naturally through daily practice. Luckily, I will not be dealing with the conflicts between education and testing that our teachers in class deal with every day. And although I liked everyone in class, I will not be associating with any of them after class. There is something about our educational institutions that dumbs us down as educators and wears us out intellectually, or turns us into cynics like me. The only intelligence that schools require us to exercise as teachers or students is political—important in itself, but not sufficient for our spiritual growth. If you are a teacher and you wish to hone your writing skills, seek early retirement. This is what my Professional Learning Group and Writers Workshop Group taught me this semester. Thank you, Ladies. You reminded me of what I did not wish to remember about the box called school. May each of you someday fly over and out of the cuckoo's nest. One hopes so. One thinks not.

## PLG NOTES

### Routman's Writing Essentials — Chapters 1 & 2

Felicia Brown · Rochelle Brown · **Tempest Covington** · Wayne Holt  
9/12/07

#### Optimal Learning Model

1. Demonstration
2. Share experiences and guide students
3. Independent practice

#### 12 Writing Essentials For All Grade Levels

1. Write for a meaningful purpose (geared toward a specific audience)
2. Determine an appropriate topic (choose topic related to subject)
3. Present ideas logically and clearly (set structure and understanding)
4. Elaborate on ideas (specify details)
5. Embrace language (usage of word variation)
6. Create engaging leads (start strong)
7. Compose satisfying endings (strong closure)
8. Craft authentic voice (include individual's personality)
9. Reread, rethink, and revise while composing (edit and revision)
10. Apply correct conventions and forms (proofreading skills)
11. Read widely and deeply with a writers perspective (vary genres)
12. Take responsibility for producing effective writing (publish results)

Felicia used the Optimal Learning Model with her 5th grade class. The instructions she gave her students were to write w/out elaborating on spelling, grammar, and punctuation. The results of her students' writing assignment consisted of the following:

1. It allowed the children to express their ideas more quickly.
2. It was easier for the children to present their ideas compared to previous times.

#### Celebration

1. Engage students by pointing out the strengths of the writing piece
2. Sharing the story allows the student to feel safe
3. Present purpose of writing, i.e., publish anthologies of children stories, post stories for PTA, etc.

## PLG NOTES

### Routman's Writing Essentials — Chapters 3 & 4

Felicia Brown · Rochelle Brown · Tempest Covington · Wayne Holt  
9/19/07

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#### Two Teaching Essentials

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Optimal Learning Model	
Who Holds Book/Pen	Degree of Support
Teacher / Student	DEMONSTRATION
Teacher / Student	SHARED DEMONSTRATION
<i>gradual handover of responsibility</i>	
Student / Teacher	GUIDED PRACTICE
Student / Teacher	INDEPENDENT PRACTICE

PLG NOTES  
Routman's Writing Essentials  
Chapters 5 & 6  
9/26/07

**Felicia**  
Rochelle  
Wayne  
Tempest

## CHAPTER 5

In reading the text, shared writing is ideal for all learners. It provides rich oral language modeling that stimulates literacy development. Additionally, social context is crucial for learning and shared writing provides the safe, collaborative setting that promotes cohesive writing.

As a group, we discussed how many students in the middle grades, when asked to write, create very brief pieces. Yet through a shared writing experience as presented in the text and utilized in my 5th grade class could encourage students to add more details to their writing. The group expanded on how important it is to raise standards by showing through example what's possible in writing.

## CHAPTER 6

The text states how writing and reading should be integrated when introduced to students. This integration leads to more authentic teaching, better reading and writing and higher test scores. And not surprisingly, a student's writing reflects the quality of the reading they do. Additionally, being an avid reader is the best preparation for becoming a writer.

As a group, we discussed the implications of Language! And how the materials used in this program may limit the reader/writer in progressing naturally. This learning process focuses on pieces of reading as opposed to the whole process of enjoying text. And as discussed previously, this adversely affects a student's writing skills.

## PLG NOTES

Routman's Writing Essentials

Chapters 7 & 8 Synopsis

10/03/07

Felicia Brown · Rochelle Brown · Tempest Covington · **Wayne Holt**

### 7—Integrate Basic Skills

Each chapter of Regie Routman's "Writing Essentials" is a variation on the theme of writing from whole-to-part-to-whole again.

Her book is not to be read,

but referenced in the context of actual writing workshops.

There is no way to learn what it says until it is used.

There is simply too much detail.

If we attempt to memorize what those details are,

it contradicts the book's philosophy:

focus on the message, not the medium.

The medium of writing, as with any language we learn,

is mastered by concentrating on what we want to say,

and allowing the rules of the medium to follow.

Rules follow message. (*Variation of Form Follows Function*)

These rules are called basic skills.

They must be integrated into writing as we attempt to communicate.

They cannot be learned out of context.

This applies, of course, to all subjects: math, music, life...

### 8—Organize for Daily Writing

Routman's text is rich in exercises that motivate students, and the rest of us as well, to write with purpose.

If students and the rest of us write from our own personal interests, our writing will be meaningful to read and write.

But how do you "trick" us into making the most boring abstract nonsense meaningful?

All the chapters so far show teachers these tricks.

Chapter 8 digs into the tricking even further by providing more teacher tips and student treats.

Happy Halloween...

PLG NOTES  
Routman's Writing Essentials  
Chapters 9 & 10 Synopsis  
10/10/07

Felicia Brown · Rochelle Brown · Tempest Covington · Wayne Holt

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12/14/2003 Great Books David Denby  
12/20/2003 Zero Charles Seife  
01/20/2004 Humboldt's Gift Saul Bellow  
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02/22/2004 Odd Thomas by Dean Koontz  
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05/13/2004 A Study Guide to Mark Twain's Adventures of Huckleberry Finn  
05/13/2004 The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn Mark Twain  
05/21/2004 The Collected Stories of Arthur C. Clarke  
05/21/2004 Thoreau and Emerson: Nature and Spirit  
07/07/2004 Tomorrow's God Neale Donald Walsch  
07/07/2004 Stein on Writing by Sol Stein  
07/22/2004 The Metaphysical Club Louis Menand  
08/01/2004 Breaking the Da Vinci Code Darrell L. Bock  
08/14/2004 American Studies Louis Menand  
08/17/2004 The Altman Code by Robert Ludlum and Gayle Lynds  
09/02/2004 America (The Audiobook) Jon Stewart  
10/01/2004 My Life as a 10-Year-Old Boy Nancy Cartwright  
10/10/2004 The Next Fifty Years John Brockman, editor  
09/29/2005 Bait and Switch Barbara Ehrenreich  
11/08/2006 Ear to the Ground Subscription  
11/08/2006 Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance by Robert M. Pirsig  
11/08/2006 An Interview with Richard Dawkins Richard Dawkins  
12/03/2006 The Power of One by Bryce Courtenay  
01/17/2007 Swann's Way by Marcel Proust  
01/26/2007 On Intelligence by Jeff Hawkins and Sandra Blakeslee  
03/15/2007 The World Is Flat: Updated and Expanded by Thomas L. Friedman  
09/06/2007 Giving Bill Clinton

## LISA'S AUDIBLE.COM LIBRARY

- 10/20/2003 Lies and the Lying Liars Who Tell Them Part 1 Al Franken  
12/09/2003 American Pastoral Part 1 Philip Roth  
01/10/2004 A Short History of Nearly Everything Part 1 Bill Bryson  
02/07/2004 This American Life Subscription  
02/08/2004 Short Stories by Saki H. H. Munro  
02/08/2004 The John Cheever Audio Collection John Cheever  
04/05/2004 Ernest Hemingway: The Short Stories Ernest Hemingway  
04/09/2004 Condoleezza Rice (4/8/04)  
05/06/2004 The Dead and Other Stories James Joyce  
05/10/2004 Yenta Unplugged (Excuse Me, I'm Talking) Annie Korzen  
05/11/2004 The Funny Thing Is... Ellen Degeneres  
06/11/2004 The Matrix and Philosophy William Irwin, editor  
07/09/2004 Talk of the Nation: Science Friday Subscription Ira Flatow Radio/TV  
07/14/2004 Audible Technology Review Subscription  
07/14/2004 Dress Your Family in Corduroy and Denim David Sedaris  
08/05/2004 The 2004 Democratic National Convention, Day One (7/26/04)  
08/10/2004 Proof (Dramatization) David Auburn  
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01/11/2005 The Broker Part 1 John Grisham  
01/11/2005 Interview with Michael Crichton Michael Crichton  
01/11/2005 Monogamy is Bad for the Soul



## LIST OF TITLES TO ADD

Alicia en el Pais de las Maravillas Lewis Carroll \$10.95\$7.66  
Classic American Poetry Longfellow \$12.59\$8.81  
Cloud Atlas David Mitchell \$32.80\$22.96  
Cryptonomicon (Unabridged Excerpts) Neal Stephenson \$22.37\$15.65  
Drown Junot Diaz \$18.17\$12.71  
Duino Elegies and The Sonnets to Orpheus Rainer Rike \$12.57\$8.79  
I Am America (And So Can You!) Stephen Colbert \$17.49\$12.24  
Pablo Neruda Lee a Pablo Neruda (Texto Completo) Pablo Neruda \$9.70\$6.79  
Poems and Letters Emily Dickinson \$12.60\$8.82  
Pontoon Garrison Keillor \$25.97\$18.17  
The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao Junot Diaz \$27.97\$19.57  
The Classic Fifty Poems John, Samuel Taylor, Christopher Keats, Coleridge, Marlowe \$11.87\$8.30  
The Classic Hundred Poems \$27.97\$19.57  
The Iron Flute Nyogen, Ruth Senzaki, McCandless \$12.57\$8.79  
The Language of Life Sundiata \$24.47\$17.12  
The Sonnets of William Shakespeare \$16.09\$11.26  
The Waste Land & Four Quartets T.S. Eliot Radio/TV \$12.71\$8.89  
Thus Spoke Zarathustra Fredrich Nietzsche \$15.10\$10.57

### Public library has these:

Water for Elephants by Sara Gruen  
The Iliad & The Odyssey?  
A Thousand Splendid Suns by Hosseini  
What is the What by Dave Eggers

## EXAMINING BELIEFS ABOUT WRITING

<http://books.heinemann.com/writingessentials/pdfs/ClassroomForms/ExaminingBeliefsAboutWriting.pdf>

Writing Process: *Agree or Disagree?*

Read, think about, and discuss the following statements with your colleagues. (There are no right or wrong answers.) Use these beliefs to get conversations going in your school and to begin to develop a common belief system about writing.

- T• Teachers need to read everything that kids are writing (if kids OK it).
- F• Students should write only if they can publish their writing.
- F• In a writing conference, the student decides what kind of response he/she wants.
- T• Spelling doesn't matter in a first draft.
- T• Students should choose most of their own writing topics.
- F• Prewriting needs to be separate from other writing activities.
- T• Students can write fiction without much teacher guidance.
- T• Students need to see their teachers as writers.
- F• Revising and editing are really the same thing.
- F• Students can write well without writing models.
- F• Peer conferences are mostly a waste of time.
- T• A lot of writing never gets revised.
- T• If students write every day, their writing automatically [naturally] improves.
- T• Revision takes place after the first draft is written.
- F• Direct teaching of skills is not part of writers workshop.
- T• Good sharing of writing is really a public conference.
- T• The teacher *usually* corrects students' spelling errors.
- F• The room needs to be quiet when students are writing.
- F• The teacher makes the final decision about what gets published.
- T• Once a piece is published, conventions and spelling must be "perfect"
- T• Having kids talk about what they write about makes the writing easier for students.
- F• Spelling and handwriting are part of writers workshop.
- F• Journal writing is separate from writers workshop.
- F• Invented spelling is always encouraged.
- T• It is okay for a student to write about the same topic for many weeks.
- T• If students write to a formula, their voices are constrained.
- T• To take writing seriously, students need to write every day for a sustained period.
- F• Students learn skills and grammar best when taught as isolated writing activities.
- F• Young children cannot be expected to edit their own work.
- T• Writing rubrics are a proven way to improve writing quality.
- F• Six Traits is an evaluation tool, not a writing program.
- T• More nonfiction writing needs to be taught and engaged in.
- T• Students who read more are better writers.

Adapted from a list originally created with Andrea Butler  
*Writing Essentials* by Regie Routman (Heinemann: Portsmouth, NH); © 2005

## MID-TERM EXAM ON BELIEFS (PICK 10)

2. *Students should write only if they can publish their writing.*

No! We should all write down what happened to us each day even if we don't comment as in a journal. A diary will do until we all have digicams that can record every boring moment—like the Truman Show.

7. *Students can write fiction without much teacher guidance.*

True, but a bigger problem is persuading and inspiring them to revise what they write.

17. *The teacher usually corrects students' spelling errors.*

Which is annoying and distracts from the writer's flow of ideas.

18. *The room needs to be quiet when students are writing.*

Not necessarily. Much of our learning is a product of noise and chaos. Nevertheless, silence must enter into the picture somewhere if reflective meaning is expected.

20. *Once a piece is published, conventions and spelling must be perfect.*

They ain't no such thang as purrrrfekt! (Hate *katz*--Hate *dawrgs*)

22. *Spelling and handwriting are part of writers workshop.*

Should not be the rule. Getting across the message is the objective, not the details of the media. Who needs handwriting anyway? In this digital world, we should speak our writing into one end of the cell phone and have it print out the other. Why should we even bother with text messaging when the phone can translate the spoken word into text? OK—so we can send messages asking for answers during a test: "WHTZ ANSWR 2 #22?"

23. *Journal writing is separate from writers workshop.*

Journal writing is the most important type of writing because it leaves an historical record of how people thought for future archeologists. Future journals, however, will be more graphic than verbal.

25. *It is okay for a student to write about the same topic for many weeks.*

Yep—the world always rewards the obsessive with either its gold, or an early death that puts the obsessed out of her misery.

26. *If students write to a formula, their voices are constrained.*

Formulas are byproducts to be discovered after process. Reminds me of a Robin Williams' movie where he teaches MBA students about writing: "Just rip that page with the Rx1 formula right out of your books, boys." Process precedes polemics.

33. *Students who read more are better writers.*

Like most of these statements, this one is common sense (to most of us). Why? Mastery begins with imitation.

## SCHEDULE TODAY

4 am: Psychic about a poem.

5 am: Snoozing...

6 am: More snoozing...

7 am: School buses.

8 am: Poem about a psychic.

9 am: Ditto...

10 am: Noris called.

11 am: Mouse called.

Noon: Fatima called: lunch Saturday.

1 pm: Erfan's Box of Hershey's.

2 pm: Keith Jarrett's Piano CD.

3 pm: Flu shot.

4 pm: Lemony Snicket's last stand.

5 pm: *How Writers Grow* by Cynthia Ward.

6 pm: *DHTML Quickstart Guide*.

7 pm: *Ugly Betty*.

8 pm: *CSI*.

9 pm: *Madmen*: Episode 1 via iTunes.

10 pm: News.

11 pm: Leno.

Midnite: Death by chocolate.

Fri, Oct 26<sup>th</sup>

VAN GOGH DIAMANTE

cypress  
fiery green  
burning whirling reaching  
planets stars window shadow  
flickering melting dying  
red waxed  
candle



<http://www.readwritethink.org/materials/diamante/>

Sat, Oct 27<sup>th</sup>

## MOVIE REVIEW

Saw three movies today.

By the end, they had all run together into one story:

This guy buys a plastic anatomically correct doll,  
moves to Alaska to live in an abandoned school bus,  
where he is captured and tortured by Egyptian anti-terrorists.

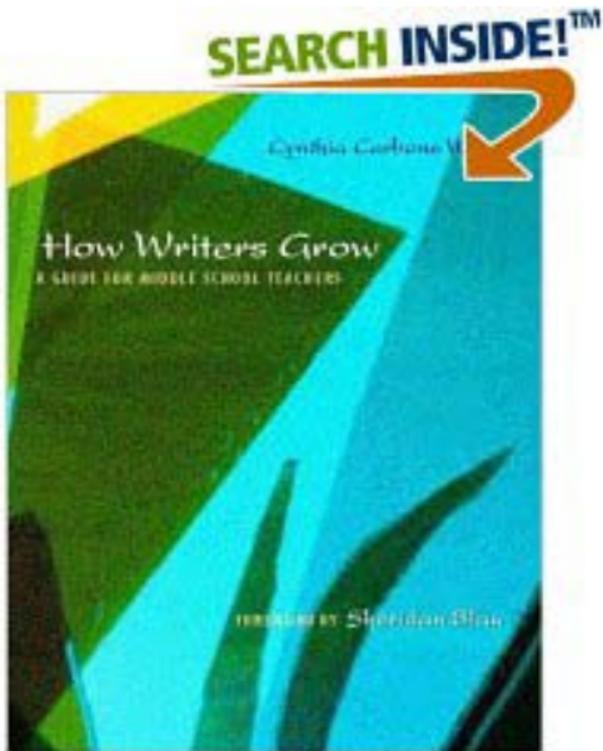
When I woke up, there were three brothers touring India...



## CLASSICAL TIME—SLIDE CONTENTS

- # Title
- 01 Classical Time
- 02 Once Upon A Time
- 03 Gutenberg's Bible
- 04 The Renaissance
- 05 The Revolution
- 06 The Reformation
- 07 Measuring Space
- 08 Measuring Time
- 09 Measuring Mass
- 10 Measuring Gravity
- 11 The Heretics
- 12 The Astronomers
- 13 The New Astronomy
- 14 The New Eye
- 15 The Old Ear
- 16 The New Geometry
- 17 The New Method
- 18 The New Problem
- 19 The New Math
- 20 The New Tech
- 21 The New Bible
- 22 The New Music
- 23 The New World Power
- 24 The New Religion
- 25 The New Philosophy
- 26 The New Republic
- 27 The End of Enlightenment
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Mon, Oct 29<sup>th</sup>



Read *How Writers Grow* by Cynthia Carbone Ward.  
Slimmer than Regie Routman's reference,  
yet covers the same ideas.  
It introduced me to Neruda's *Odes*.  
Think I will keep this one.

## ROCKER

I had a rocker once—  
Abbie gave it to me—  
and a photo of myself  
curled up in it  
flowers printed on my shirt  
rocking  
smiling  
no cares  
no woes...  
stay in that rocker, boy.  
don't get up.  
keep rocking.  
keep smiling.  
you don't need to go anywhere.  
you are just fine where you are.  
...  
and then the chair broke.



*In class tonight,  
Dana Kennedy gave a workshop in writing from photos  
in the Smithsonian "Songs of My People" collection.*

[dkennedy@mysu.tnstate.edu](mailto:dkennedy@mysu.tnstate.edu)

## REMEMBERING & NOT REMEMBERING

*In class tonight,*

*Dr. Dunn gave a workshop in remembering and not remembering.*

I remember when James passed out Halloween candy and Suzie passed out. I remember when Lin read about the Master Gardener and her life as grandmother. I remember when Samadh told us about the sun and the moon and nature's rituals. I remember the seven charts on the wall about teaching math to kids. I remember when I dropped my pen while writing this, and heard it. I remember when Jack Nicholson wrote "All work and no play makes Jack" a thousand times. I remember April and the song by the same name. I remember once when I remembered much more than I remember now. I remember when Felicia laughed at me for looking around the room watching others remember. I remember writing what I can't read now. I remember when I could write legibly in a cursive style. I remember when I could remember the day before this one.

I do not remember the piano player whose name starts with a 'J' who improvises forever till you fall asleep and cannot remember who it was you forgot. I do not remember my uncle dying of colon cancer, nor Mr. Adi in the Arab Emirates telling me he had only three months to live, nor Miss Connie who has leukemia, nor anything else that disturbs me. I do not remember what I forgot. I do not remember that tomorrow is November. I do not remember what happened to standard time.

## CRITIQUES OF "WEARING GLASSES"

Andrea B did not have much to say about "Wearing Glasses". She wanted to know why I stopped fighting after I started wearing glasses. Contrariwise, I had too much to say about Andrea's two pieces. So far, she's the only student whose work I believe I could make better. This is a compliment to Andrea. For most of the others, I have no clue how to improve their writing. Some are as good as they can get, and others I would need to rewrite from scratch. I could not teach this course, for I have very little constructive criticism to give. I am sure Andrea has appreciated all my critiques. [insert smiley face.]

Christina R thought I stressed sufficiently enough what God is not, but wanted to know more about what I thought God is. I could have said that God is what appears when everything else is gone? God is what visits in a desert island cave or on a mountain peak? God is the Mandelbrot set? God is the absolute vacuum? (Hoover? Seagull? Boombbox?) etc. But Mark Jarman does the job as well as Lao-Tsu. That's why his "Five Psalms" were appended.

Christina L wondered about the relation of the preface. I wanted to mention the influences that went into the poem. For me, the most interesting thing about the "poem" are the influences, not the "poem". Also, I seem to have insulted Christina and all the other women when I pointed out that most of their writings were about losing a boyfriend. They thought I was belittling them. However, it was not my intention to do so. They are for the most part too mentally healthy to express anything more than sentimentality. Except for Laura, their emptiness rises from the loss of someone close. To be an artist, however, means losing everyone that is close, and distancing yourself from yours and others' emotions; living a life of "necessary boredom", at least for a few hours a day. My classmates are not yet as insane, nor as exciting, as Dorothy Allison. Laura could be encouraged into a total breakdown or blowup,

and Kevin reveals the energy that accompanies bipolarity, but wishing the artist's life on anyone is cruel and unusual punishment. There is something about youth that loves being insulted. Is this what is meant by attitude? Imagined insults provide meaning where there was none. So let's praise all the writers who bare the soul, and I will return to mathematics where beauty requires emotional serenity. [insert another smiley face.]

We have had two pieces about the absence of a mother, but none that misses a father. Perhaps these ladies have not had the best experience with fathers. Maybe that triggers what they write. Afterall, isn't all poetry and fiction since Gilgamesh a variation on "My heart aches"? Perhaps I should not have compared Christina's story to the "Thorn Birds"? Am I too young to be so patronizing? I wish all the dazed starlings lucky passage. I feel lucky they have tolerated me this far.

Laura R had some extensive questions, specifically about the Baptist missionary spirit. I would have thought that anyone raised in a parochial school would understand the desperate need of a church to maintain its membership. What one critic would add another would subtract, and vice versa. Her changes may be better than the others, but I cannot see why. Nevertheless, I pay more attention to Laura's comments because her writing is more subtle than the other class members.

Natassia G liked the attitude the little boy had about God. She suggested I eliminate everything except the "Wearing Glasses" part. Okay, but our reading would have been more interesting if we had actually included all the influences and parallels. I am more in the Derrida school of thought than the Roger Fry school.

Latangela L also said leave off the preface. But there is something "post-literary" meta-poetic about it that I like. I wanted the poem not only to be about wearing glasses, but also to show how poems come to be constructed, especially from other poems. The process of discovery is more important in a workshop than the products.

Dana K had some suggestions about line breaks, which I don't fully understand because I am not sure I am that sensitive—yet.

Switching the boy scout and the father may have been chronological in my personal history, but it makes more sense in a spiritual chronology to leave it as is: first one rejects the bullshit, experiences the nothing, then finds some sort of grace. I wanted to leave the poem where Mark Jarman begins his questioning. Perhaps someone will be left curious enough to read Mark Jarman's poems now, or later, before they are my age?

Gil Scott Heron's "The Revolution Will Not Be Televised"

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uTCQSk2l8bc>

reminded me why I don't read fiction or poems.

Reading a poem has never made me want to write one.

But seeing a movie I like makes me want to produce one.

When I suggested to writers and publishers at the Southern Festival that they forget about books and get into iPods, they seemed confused.

Hooked on Books should have been the name of the festival.

However, literature has only been in print for five or six centuries.

That's a short time in human history. Literature is bigger than any one

medium, and books are no longer the primary dispenser of fiction and

poems. Dana led me to imagine how I could produce "Wearing Glasses" as a flash video. I need another meeting with Bob Bradley.

Elaine P

Why Jimmy C. and not Jimmy Carter?

Intuition told me so. But what is the reasoning that justifies the intuition?

'C' rhymes with 'me'. 'C' puns with 'see'.

Wallace Stevens' "The comedian as the letter C".

Most of all, there are a lot of Jimmy C's out there who joined the Baptist Church and later quit:

Jimmy Crackcorn, Jimmy Cricket, JimmyChrist.com...

This is their story too, not just Jimmy Carter's.

For me this poem was an experiment in combining influences.

I have learned two things at least:

I don't have any poetic sense about line breaks.

I break them where they look good, or sound good.

As Eminem says, "The music—the music".

Also, I don't understand the preference for slanted rhymes.

I cannot hear how they are better than straight on hee-hee.

But I think I will soon change my minds

with a tweet-tweet and a beep-beep.

Fri, Nov 2<sup>nd</sup>



At Walmart, Erfanio bought video games for his nephews and niece. He also bought a Nintendo DS game machine to play them on. But after playing some of the games, he decided to keep them for himself.

## ANDY'S POEM OF THE WEEK

Attended Linda's and Steve's 60<sup>th</sup> birthday party.  
Talked to their son Andy about poetry.  
Andy is in graduate school at Southern Illinois.  
He is about to publish his first collection  
based on his dad's stories.  
He is riding my old bike.

Has any significant poetry been written by poets who learned their craft in a university?

What does significant mean? Historically remembered?

Poets who went to college to study poetry usually dropped out, or went nuts.

The major poets of the American 20<sup>th</sup> century were a doctor, a farmer, a banker, and an actuary.

Did they study poetry in college?

Ask Andy...

<http://www.poemoftheweek.org/>



Sun, Nov 4<sup>th</sup>

## DESPERATE HOUSEWIVES

Watched "Desperate Housewives" at Max's while eating leftover Halloween tootsie rolls. Here's a chick flick that satirizes chick flicks. But why do I like it? Certainly would not want to read about these characters.

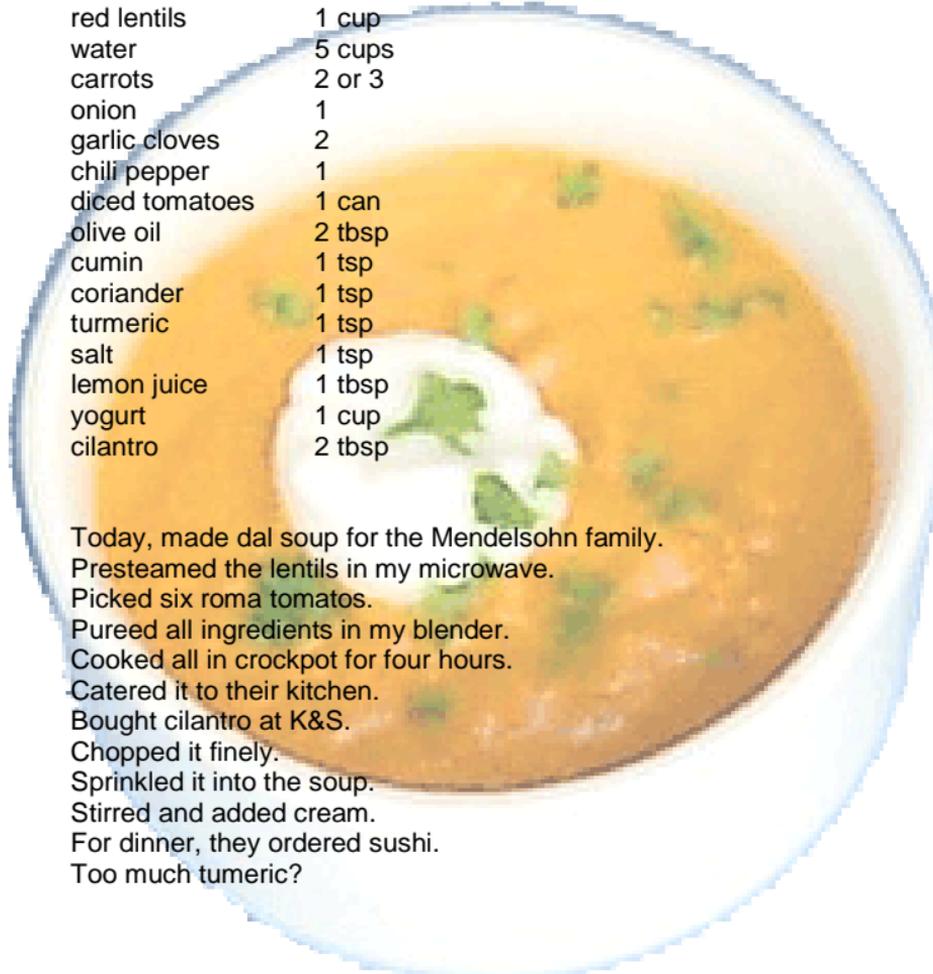


Mon, Nov 5<sup>th</sup>

## DAL & CARROT SOUP

### INGREDIENTS

red lentils	1 cup
water	5 cups
carrots	2 or 3
onion	1
garlic cloves	2
chili pepper	1
diced tomatoes	1 can
olive oil	2 tbsp
cumin	1 tsp
coriander	1 tsp
turmeric	1 tsp
salt	1 tsp
lemon juice	1 tbsp
yogurt	1 cup
cilantro	2 tbsp



Today, made dal soup for the Mendelsohn family.  
Presteamd the lentils in my microwave.  
Picked six roma tomatos.  
Pureed all ingredients in my blender.  
Cooked all in crockpot for four hours.  
Catered it to their kitchen.  
Bought cilantro at K&S.  
Chopped it finely.  
Sprinkled it into the soup.  
Stirred and added cream.  
For dinner, they ordered sushi.  
Too much tumeric?

## SWEET LADY

By Natassia Guyton

Your heart stopped beating  
the disease had won.

Some days I hear your voice  
singing the soulful tunes, as you once did in the church choir  
and as you gave the greats on WDIA a run for their money  
and I turn  
yet as I turn  
you have disappeared.

Now I appreciate the times, even when I was older than eight,  
when I was scared to sleep alone  
but you didn't turn me away.  
When you gave me independence  
even though, you peeped out the glass screen door  
when I was old enough to go to the bus stop alone.

I didn't remember to say "Thank you," "I love you," and  
"Ma ma I'm sorry"  
Instead, at times, as the years flew by  
I assumed you'll know.

I'm left with regrets  
since I can't turn the hour glass over.

Today might be the last time she sees that illuminating star rise in  
the east.

He did not promise anyone another day.  
Do all that you can now.  
So night after night you won't cry in vain  
when you lose  
your sweet lady too.

Tues, Nov 6<sup>th</sup>

## SWEET LADY

*(with experimental line breaks for workshop)*

Your heart stopped  
beating  
the disease had won.

Some days  
I hear you  
r voice sing  
ing the soul  
ful tunes, as  
you once did in the church choir  
and gave the greats on WORD  
a run for their money  
and I turn  
yet as I turn you  
have disappeared.

Now  
I appreciate the times, even  
when I was older than eight,  
when I was scared  
to sleep alone  
but you didn't turn me away.  
When you gave me  
independence  
even though,  
you peeped out  
the glass  
screen door  
when I was old enough  
to go to the bus  
stop  
alone.

I didn't remember to  
say "Thank you,"  
"I love you,"  
and "Ma ma,  
I'm sorry".  
Instead,  
at times, as  
the years flew by  
I assumed  
you'd know. I'm left  
  
with regrets  
since I can't turn  
the hour  
glass over.

Today  
might be the last  
time she sees that  
illuminating star rise  
in the east.  
He did not promise anyone  
another day. Do all that  
you can now.  
So night after  
night you won't cry  
in vain  
when you lose  
your sweet  
lady too.



2. Now categorize your words into 4 elements:  
FIRE EARTH AIR WATER.

A word may have more than one meaning:  
'pool' starts with 'p' that rhymes with 't' and that stands for 'trouble'.

Pool, however, "naturally" refers to water.  
The other pool is a manufactured game.

But how about 'lugubrious'? Too abstract?

It was on my Miller Analogy Test.

Rhymes with 'ludicrous'. Confused with 'lubricant'.  
Sounds wet and sticky. A water word?

Here is my list with "reverse clustering"  
and its corresponding element(s):

POOL	-> lake	->water
SPIRAL	-> stream	->water+air
BUBBLE	-> stream	->water
OVAL	-> lake ?	->water
BLUR	-> wind	->air
WEB	-> tree	->earth
GURGLE	-> stream	->water
LULL	-> rain	->water
ARCTIC	-> snow	->air
LUGUBRIOUS	-> lake	->water
GLIMMER	-> star	->fire
OYSTER	-> sea	->water
ORANGE	-> tree	->earth
OWL	-> wind	->air

3. Now find your moon sign in the lunar ephemeris.

If your moon sign degree is less than 7,  
your moon sign could be the previous sign.

If your moon sign degree is more than 23,  
your moon sign could be the next sign.

Sun signs are listed on the last 6 rows of the last page.

How many words are the same element as your moon sign?

How many words match the element of your sun sign?

Now choose your favorite word that matches your moon sign,  
and your favorite word that matches your sun sign.

Voila! Your Sun-Moon name.

River Cloud here. Over and out...

## YOUR MAGIC SUN-MOON NAME

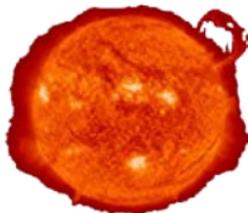
As in ancient times, let the Sun represent the center of our spirit; the Moon, the base of our soul. Together let them describe our essence, our suchness, our being. Divide their common path into twelve equal arcs beginning at the Spring Mark. Call these arcs the Twelve Signs. Give the Twelve Signs their ancient names. Divide these Twelve Signs into four groups of Elements. Call the four elements Fire, Earth, Air, Water. Divide each element into three Modes. Call them Fixed, Directed, Scattered. Let these modes correspond to the three states of matter: Solid, Liquid, Gas.

	THE	FOUR	ANCIENT	ELEMENTS
MODES	FIRE	EARTH	AIR	WATER
DIRECTED	Aries	Taurus	Gemini	Cancer
FIXED	Leo	Virgo	Libra	Scorpio
SCATTERED	Sagittarius	Capricorn	Aquarius	Pisces

Now we walk across the field. We see grass, rocks, trees. The sun is in the sky with clouds. It rains. Perhaps it will turn to snow. There is a stream flowing into a pond. A wind is blowing. We make a fire. An evening star appears. We map the heavens onto earth.

	AND	TWELVE	NATURAL	PHENOMENA
MODES	FIRE	EARTH	AIR	WATER
DIRECTED	flame	rock	wind	stream
FIXED	sun	sand	cloud	lake
SCATTERED	star	tree	snow	rain

<http://www.maxgoody.com/JavaOnline/Gokeys/SunMoon/SunMoon.html>



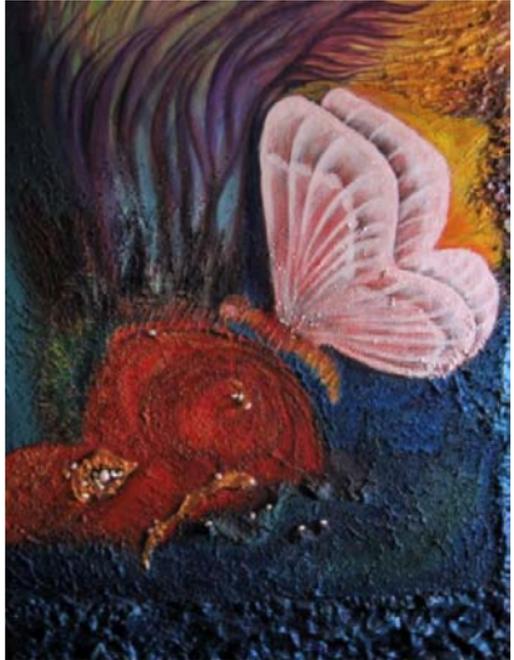
*Edited Noris Binet's collections of Heart poems.*

### **Eat My Heart**

Eat my heart  
bite by bite.

    Then  
you will know  
    the true flavor  
of my soul.

    I told this  
    to the Divine.  
Then, one day,  
    without knowing,  
I was eating  
    my own heart.



MUSÉE DES BUSH ARTS  
with apologies to W.H. Auden,  
Pieter Brueghel,  
and casts of thousands

In Bush's Iraqus, for instance: how everyone turns away  
Quite leisurely from the disaster; the shopper may  
Have heard the news, the forsaken cry,  
But for her it was not an important purchase; the sun shone  
As it had to on the bloody child exploding into the clean  
Sand; and the expensive armored truck that must have seen  
Something familiar, a bomb falling out of the sky,  
had somewhere to get to and rolled calmly on.



Sat, Nov 10<sup>th</sup>

**I Am**

When I fly

I am the earth  
and the sky

I am the suspension  
between them

and  
the air where

I fly!



*Edited Noris Binet's other collection of poems titled "Yes".*

## GENERATION NEXT

by Kevin Wesley

Born Into the Pepsi Generation  
And suckled by their Sesame Street and Reading Rainbow  
We get here to be called Generation X.  
A generation tried and convicted before  
We ever got a chance.

"What are we doin' tomorrow Brain? "  
"The same thing we do everyday Pinky, try and take over the world"  
It's Pinky, it's Pinky and the Brain, Brain, Brain, Brain.  
A naturally ambitious generation refusing to be socialized into  
"A Very Brady Christmas"  
Besides the Grizwalds had better holidays anyway.

And if Billy Joel told the Baby Boomers  
"We didn't start the fire"  
Then how can they blame the troubles of the world on  
A Generation that came after them.  
The Generation X'ers didn't invent Rock and Roll,  
Even though we did perfect it with Punk Rock and Hip Hop.  
We also can't take credit for the H bomb, Apartheid, or  
the Atlantic Slave trade.  
And please remember the Holocaust, Woodstock,  
Watergate, the North Korea/ South Korea conflict, The Little Rock Nine,  
Waterloo, and the Alamo were all in our history books.

We are conscience and aware of our time,  
And the time is ours.  
We are rising up to take our place in the circle of life.  
While Steam boat Mickey enjoyed his ride,  
His oldest son Danger said I'll take the car,  
And his youngest son Mighty said, "Fuck it,  
I'll just fly".

See  
We have always found our own way  
We have not yielded our turn  
We are here leaders of the new school.  
And we will stand until you see,  
That I am you and you are me  
It's the passing of the torch.

## PLANETOID PLUTO CORRELATED WITH GENERATIONS

(Pluto's Sign represents Mass Values & U.S. Wars)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_generations](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_generations)

)	Ingresses	Generation
♁	1882	Lost
♊	1912	Greatest
♈	1938	Boomers
♉	1956	Jones
♊	1971	Generation X
♋	1983	Generation Y
♌	1995	Millennials
♍	2008	Retros
♎	2023	Revolts
♏	2043	Spaced
♐	2066	Colonial
♑	2095	Android



## **Ripples**

by Noris Binet

At the surface  
of my being  
there are  
ripples  
like the surface  
of the river  
touched by the wind.

My ripples  
come from within  
once in a while  
they become  
waves  
Then,  
there are ups  
and downs  
and the outside  
seems to  
become the source  
of my mind.  
Then,  
I'm in battle with the world.

*Noris and I finished editing her Heart and Yes collections.*

Tues, Nov 13<sup>th</sup>

## HANDS & THE RIVER: YES COVER



*Cut out hands and gardenia in Photoshop for cover of Noris' Yes.  
Composited hands onto river photos.*

## LIST POEMS

(from workshop tonite)

### SELF-PRAISE

I love me because  
no one else is around.  
I love the way I smell because  
the plant in the bathroom  
grows on my fumes alone.  
I love the way I look because  
I have no mirrors.  
I love the way I sound because  
my snoring wakes me up  
before I swallow my tongue.  
I love the way I taste  
when I grow hungry  
in night classes.  
I love the way I feel  
because I still can.

( I love my hair —  
the one between my eyes.)

### FORGIVE THEM

I forgive them for molesting me,  
for now I feel empathy when I molest others.  
I forgive them for firing me,  
for now I am free.  
I forgive them for never hiring me,  
for now I can play forever.  
I forgive them for not allowing me to read big books,  
for now I must write my own.

### THE UNFORGIVEN

I cannot forgive the flag  
that pledges allegiance to peace  
and makes war.  
  
I cannot forgive a bomb  
dropped on a bad guy  
that also kills one child.

Thurs, Nov 15<sup>th</sup>

## TAO TE CHING FOR CHRISTIANS

Finished rewriting Stephen Mitchell's *Tao te Ching* for Christians by replacing *Tao* with *God* and *Master* with *Christ*.

81

*True words aren't eloquent;  
eloquent words aren't true.  
Wise men don't need to prove their point;  
men who need to prove their point aren't wise.*

*Christ has no possessions.  
The more He does for others,  
the happier He is.  
The more He gives to others,  
the wealthier He is.*

*God nourishes by not forcing.  
By not dominating, Christ leads.*

The results create a God and Christ more passive and peaceful than Western culture has ever tolerated.



SELF-PRAISE

I love how I look—

The old man in the mirror  
looks back at me with envy.

I love how I sound—

It wakes me up at night  
before I swallow my tongue.

I love how I smell—

I feed the bathroom plant  
and exterminate large bugs.

I love how I taste—

When my nose drips,  
I know something in me still runs.

I love how I feel—

It reminds me  
I am still here.

## FORGIVE THEM

Forgive them for forbidding me to read big books,  
for now I write my own.

Forgive them for not teaching me,  
for now I know how to learn.

Forgive them for rejecting me,  
for now I am free.

Forgive them for firing me,  
for now I can play forever.

Forgive them for not paying me,  
for now I can live on nothing.

Forgive them for not feeding me,  
for now I eat healthily.

Forgive them for evicting me,  
for now I live rent free.

Forgive them for robbing me,  
for now my burden is light.

Forgive them for molesting me,  
for now I know empathy.

Forgive them for jailing me,  
for now I can live anywhere.

Forgive them for drafting me,  
for now I can die anywhere.

Forgive them for exiling me,  
for now I can be born anywhere.

## THE UNFORGIVEN

I cannot forgive a bomb  
dropped on a child  
no matter how bad the bad guy.

I cannot forgive a flag  
that pledges allegiance to liberty  
and imprisons the poor and powerless.

I cannot forgive any law  
that alleges justice  
and practices tyranny.

I cannot forgive any commercial  
that reads "Right To Life"  
and "Guns Don't Kill People."

I cannot forgive any god  
who preaches peace  
and wages war.

I cannot forgive any weapon  
but I can forgive the child  
who misused them.

"Drop DVDs,  
not WMDs."

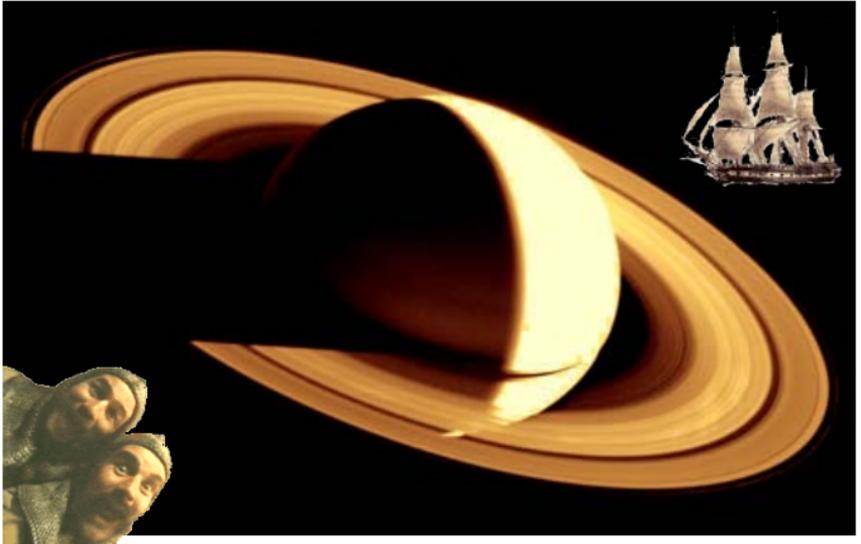
Mon, Nov 19<sup>th</sup>

## POWER PRESENTATION (Macintoshing the Enlightenment)

She asked me what I did today.  
I made a list...



- Brightened the rings of Saturn.
- Spun four planets into orbit around the Sun.
- Chopped off Anne Boleyn's head.
- Separated Descartes from his body.
- Sailed a French ship to Washington's aid.
- Placed Monty Python Holy Grail Knights at Wittenberg's Cathedral.
- Shot an orrery into deep space using a Star Trek warp drive.



## DEXTER & MADEA

In our workshop tonight, I felt like Showtime's Dexter caught in a Tyler Perry movie. How would that dialog go?

Dexter: I wish I could have fun.  
My life has been all Jekyll and no Hyde.  
I really need to kill somebody.

Madea: Cook a big pot of grits, bring him into the kitchen,  
then toss the grits on him.  
Then after you toss them, swat him with a frying pan.  
You gotta get you a good balanced weight, toss and swat,  
toss and swat, Venus and Serena, that's called grit ball.





Thurs, Nov 22<sup>nd</sup>

*Before turkey, they asked me what I was thankful for.*

*With a little revision of the November 16<sup>th</sup> entry, I came up with this:*

## THANKSGIVING

I am thankful for how I look—  
The old man in the mirror  
looks back at me with envy.

I am thankful for how I sound—  
It wakes me up at night  
before I swallow my tongue.

I am thankful for how I smell—  
I feed the bathroom plant  
and exterminate large bugs.

I am thankful for how I taste—  
When my nose drips,  
I know something in me still runs.

I am thankful for how I feel—  
It reminds me  
I am still here.

*Note: work from writing workshops can be useful at family functions.*

## MADEA MEETS DEXTER

*Madea:* Heluur!, This is Madea-ur!  
You looking good.

*Dexter:* You know what? Things *are* good.  
I'm coiled and ready to strike — although a spare will do.  
So, I bowl. What's really disturbing is that I am good at it.

*Madea:* I know you not suppose to be here playing no basketball.  
You pregnant?

When you gonna come and get your children?  
You try to raise Chucky, Freddy Krueger, and Jason and tell me  
children ain't bad.

*Dexter:* I'm pretty sure they would appreciate a lot of my work  
—deep down.

Most people get angry about going to work.  
Just work toward the weekend and all that.

*Madea:* Know that's right.

I didn't mail my work up here and they ain't fixin to mail me no check.

*Dexter:* Not me either. Nope.

*Madea:* Hell naw!

*Dexter:* No I enjoy what I do. Contributing the only way I know how.

*Madea:* Love is stronger than any addiction, baby; hell, it \*is\* one.

*Dexter:* No place I'd rather be. Nothing else I'd rather be doing.

*Madea:* Steppin with ya, Honey.

No one can takes that away from me.

I just wants to be at the meal.

I am a diabetical. I gots to eat!

But I oughta purnch you in the mouth for signing that prenuip.

*Dexter:* No, and I'm not sorry either.

Look at what you did.

*Madea:* Axed me for a cigarette and called me Mabel.

Oh, major deduction!

*Dexter:* Hope you will make a major self-discovery.

*Madea:* Bout to start a drive-by up in his church. Halleluyur!

You don't let no one take your lunch money, chile.

*Dexter:* This all use to be so clear to me.

There were rules — a code — that kept me alive...

*Madea:* I remember I sent you somewhere too and you came back with something. It still itching?

*Dexter:* ...changing my darker needs for some kind of greater good.

*Madea:* What you saying, girl?

*Dexter:* Stay loose — got it. I'm doing mental jumping jacks.

*Madea:* Girl, you crazy as hell.

*Dexter:* Okey, dokey...I'm on edge.

*Madea:* Peace be still! 'Cause I keeps me a piece o' steel.

*Dexter:* Wish it were that easy for me. I wish I could have fun.

*Madea:* It's a little game called "Tear that ass up!"

*Dexter:* My life has been all Jekyll and no Hyde. I really need to kill somebody.

*Madea:* Cook a big pot of grits, bring him into the kitchen, then toss the grits on him. Then after you toss them, swat him with a frying pan.

You gotta get you a good balanced weight, toss and swat, toss and swat, Venus and Serena, that's called grit ball...

Damn, can you turn the dress off?

*Dexter:* This is the only way I know how to survive.

*Madea:* That ain't sexy — that's nasty.

*Dexter:* Found one on an Oprah rerun.

Well one thing's for sure — she's never going to find out.

*Madea:* You belong on the corner. Need a pimp?

*Dexter:* Tonight's the night.

*Madea:* I like arguing cause making up is insane.

*Dexter:* And it's going to happen again and again. Has to happen.

*Madea:* So, why did you get married?

*Dexter:* 38 days, 16 hours, 12 minutes have passed since I killed her, and in that entire time, I haven't had a single night to myself.

*Madea:* Rip it real good. Rip it...Just gonna make you feel better.

*Dexter:* It's not what I want — but what I want doesn't matter.

*Madea:* When you get married, you give up I for us.

*Dexter:* Then who am I really?

## BEOWULF — THE OLDEST WINE IN THE NEWEST BOTTLE

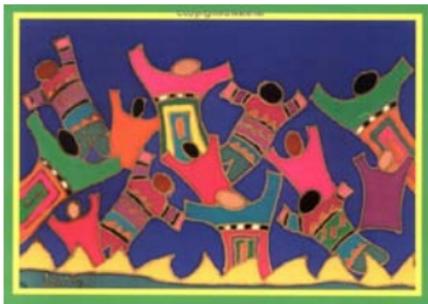
The first thing you notice is that the queen's eyes are not in focus. They are like the eyes in a video game—not always in synch with each other. Robert Zemeckis, the director, connected electrodes to the wireframe costumes of his actors. This allowed him to record their performance on a computer with a technique called motion capture. The actors' costumes, makeup, and body are all digitally modified after the performance.

Movie directors are gradually shifting from green screens, as in the *Spartan 300*, to the technology used by video game designers. The first time I saw something like this was in Disney's 1982 *Tron*. The electrodes are not connected to the eyes as yet, but someone will soon figure out how to apply laser feedback rather than electrodes. And then, who will need actors anymore? Bring back Humphrey and Elvis, Marilyn and Audrey. They can all be in the same flick together created by one lone poet and his magic movie machine.



## JAMES BALDWIN TALKS TO TEACHERS

*The paradox of education is precisely this — that as one begins to become conscious one begins to examine the society in which he is being educated. The purpose of education, finally, is to create in a person the ability to look at the world for himself, to make his own decisions, to say to himself this is black or this is white, to decide for himself whether there is a God in heaven or not. To ask questions of the universe, and then learn to live with those questions, is the way he achieves his own identity. But no society is really anxious to have that kind of person around. What societies really, ideally, want is a citizenry which will simply obey the rules of society. If society succeeds in this, that society is about to perish. The obligation of anyone who thinks of himself as responsible is to examine society and try to change it and to fight it — at no matter what risk. This is the only hope society has. This is the only way societies change.*



—James Baldwin  
“A Talk To Teachers”  
1963

Quoted in  
*Reading, Writing, and Rising Up*  
by Linda Christensen  
(2000)  
Rethinking Schools Publication  
page vii

This reminds me why I do not wish to remain in educational institutions. Real education is somewhere else. How did I forget that? Teachers are polite—that’s their job—but who in his right brain would want to associate with them? The ugly side of the education biz is that it is fundamentally a lie—an hypocrisy. It seems that every ten years, or so, I forget this. But the re-education is valuable, nevertheless.

AISLE NINE

by L. L.

I have seen him before  
Although he looked sort of  
suspicious

I continued my shopping  
Picking up things  
I needed and things I wanted

Just walking and thinking  
What will I eat for dinner?  
Was the last thing on my mind

I approach my car to unload  
the groceries  
Dam! I parked far

I placed the bags on the back  
seat  
When out of nowhere  
Some one approached me  
from behind

He pulled my sweat pants  
down  
And said, "I knew you didn't  
have on panties"

I was frozen  
he entered me from the rear  
I open my mouth to scream  
Yet, no sound

He begin pumping like a dogs

My face plastered against the  
milk carton,  
The sent of raw eggs  
permeate in the air

I closed my eyes  
Trapped in this erotic thought

He pulls me closer  
Grabs my neck choking me

I open my eyes  
His silhouette exposed  
From the light shinning on the  
window  
You are the guy from aisle  
nine, I scream

He smiled and said, "Shut up  
bitch"

I turned quickly to catch a  
better view  
But he disappear like a plane  
piercing through the sky

aisle nine  
Became that freaky thought  
That interrupted my life and  
ruined my groceries.

AISLE NINE REVISITED

I have seen him before—  
sly,  
staring,  
suspicious.

I continue shopping...  
Picking up things,  
Checking out things—  
Things wanted,  
Things needed.

Walking...  
Dreaming...  
The last thing on my mind—  
What will I eat for dinner?

I stroll toward my car.  
Damn! I parked too far.

I place the bags  
on the back seat...  
Behind me footsteps...

My  
jeans  
yank  
down —  
“KNEW YOU AIN'T GOT  
NO PANTIES!”

Frozen  
like meat—  
My mouth opens  
to scream—  
no voice—

He plasters my face  
against the milk jug  
and enters me,  
Gores and pounds me,  
Rips and cleaves me.  
The scent of raw  
eggs fill the air.

My eyes shut  
Trapped  
in his erotic terror.  
Jab...  
Jerk...  
Choke...  
Milk spills,  
Eggs crack.

My eyes open.  
His silhouette shines  
in the window.

I scream—  
“YOU'RE THE GUY FROM  
AISLE NINE!”

He growls—  
“SHUT THE FUCK UP,  
BITCH!”  
I spin  
to catch his face.  
He's gone.  
A plane penetrates a cloud.

Silence...  
My absent mind spilled  
on a concrete lot—  
My carefree trust forever  
broken.

## REFLECTIONS ON VIDEOS & DVDS

Rather than class members reading their favorite children's book, we would have learned more about teaching writing by watching experienced teachers conducting writing workshops. As I recall, George W. Bush was reading a children's book on 9/11/07, and he didn't learn anything from it either. Why not do the exercises that we see in the videos? Then we will know what students experience when they are on the receiving end of *our* workshops. Why don't we write and illustrate some children's books in our groups using PowerPoint? Kids can do that too. The Web is a great place to publish.

The Annenberg videos are free to watch at <http://www.learner.org>. Click on Workshops & Courses, and type in Discipline and Grade. Voilà! More than a semester's worth of material here. Also Comcast Channel 10 schedules disciplines by weekday. Tuesday is math day for 24 hours. I learned how to teach math watching the Annenberg videos. Wish my colleagues had watched them too.



## ENGLISH 6010 PORTFOLIO

Your portfolio can be a simple folder with pockets or prongs.

Please no hard-backed binders!

You should have a title page with your name, course and semester.

There should also be a table of contents

with your workshop submissions arranged in chronological order.

There should be a minimum of three submissions.

You will revise two of your submissions.

Put the submission after the original.

You then put your self-evaluation essay at the end of your portfolio.

### What is the Self-Evaluation Essay?

The Self-Evaluation Essay should be a minimum of two word-processed pages. In it:

- 1 Describe your history as a writer,
- 2 What strengths and weaknesses you perceived in your writing before taking the class and
- 3 How do you perceive yourself as a writer at the end of this class.
- 4 Discuss how (and if) this class has changed your perception of yourself as a writer,
- 5 and/or your perception of the process of writing.
- 6 What were your expectations?
- 7 What did you learn about your writing strengths and weaknesses?
- 8 How did you improve?
- 9 In which areas do you think you still need to improve?
- 10 How have you grown as a writer?
- 11 What do you feel you still need to work on?
- 12 What do you see as creative writing's role in your life?

## THE SELF-EVALUATION ESSAY

### 1 DESCRIBE YOUR HISTORY AS A WRITER

When I was in the first or second grade, Jimmy Hoffman and I discovered a baby bird that fell out of its nest. I wrote a paragraph about the big event, and the city newspaper published it as part of a series of kids' essays. It was my first and last publication as a journalist.

In the sixth grade, I wrote a school play about Santa Claus. All I remember was Santa somehow got tangled up in some laundry hanging on a clothes line. Thankfully, we moved to Nashville before I saw it performed, or I might remember even more of it.

In the eighth grade, I was introduced to Ogden Nash and was inspired to write a collection of doggerel entitled *A Golden Trashery of Ogden Hashery*. Tragically, it was lost to posterity along with my Mad comics collection.

In high school, I started writing music. Whatever words I wrote became song lyrics. I still have an old notebook with lists of favorite words used in various unsung compositions.

In college, I bought an animation camera. My first film took about 13 years, but was never completed satisfactorily. During this time, I wrote horoscopes and played contra-bassoon for a living. After that, I became a painter for a while, before the computer seduced me away from paint. I still have a dozen unfinished canvases hanging around since 1989.

The digital world is not as messy as paint; and, most of all for a lazy guy, I don't need to leave my chair to make something decent looking. After 9/11/01, I started a personal website where I now post whatever I am thinking about with whatever medium I am thinking in: <http://www.t-bag.org> — just another desert isle with a lighthouse.

A few years ago, I began designing web courses. I like creating math courses in the style of online adventure games. That's how I wound up at TSU last year. With a doctorate, I thought I could convince more administrators of the value of learning by doing. But during this last year, I have come to the conclusion that such endeavors are a waste of my few remaining years. If John Dewey could not change things over the last 100 years, I certainly won't either. Even if I live another 100 years, educational institutions will never be, and never were, the place to train people in the arts.

Now that computer software is as sophisticated as it is, and I no longer need to do what any boss tells me, I plan to make some shorter movies. At my rate of production, I may not live long enough to make anything longer than 5 minutes. Hurray for You Tube!

## 2 WHAT STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES DID YOU PERCEIVE IN YOUR WRITING BEFORE TAKING THE CLASS

My weakness in writing is that I would rather watch a "Lost" episode than read a short story or a poem. We all need stories, but if writing cannot give me something a movie can do, then why read? Of course, if one does not read, then one will not know how to write. No man is an island. Our thoughts, and especially the ways we think, are always intimately tied into everyone else's in one humongous zeitgeist. Writing will become obsolete as soon as there is a simpler way to communicate thought. Cell phones may be that simpler way. I noticed recently in an old Star Trek episode that the Borg always wear ear pieces and eye patches.

Whatever strengths I may have as a writer, I take for granted. A few years in the Vanderbilt philosophy department gave me that confidence. Thank you, Dr. Compton, et al. I have the confidence that I can write whatever I think. After this semester, I realize that not everyone can put a sentence together even though they are in graduate school. Before this course, I also had the delusion that I could write as well as any poet. But, so what? What I want is to show off, and no one, but an academic, reads poetry anymore. The masses listen to their poetry through song.

### 3 HOW DO YOU PERCEIVE YOURSELF AS A WRITER AT THE END OF THIS CLASS

After reading Pablo Neruda and Mark Jarman this semester, I know there are some poems I could not write because I do not have the command of language that these writers have. Neruda can write 10, maybe 100, fresh metaphors for each one of mine. He leapt through similes where I still crawl. As for Mark Jarman, he has a mastery of form that would take me as long to learn as it took him — since age 11, he said. Realizing there were superior talents in the world would have depressed me when I was younger, but now it opens me to new worlds of appreciation I would not have had when I was even more arrogant. I had the same type of perception when I realized I would never paint like Monet or any other major artist since the Renaissance and before Picasso. (Anyone can imitate Picasso because he imitated everyone.)

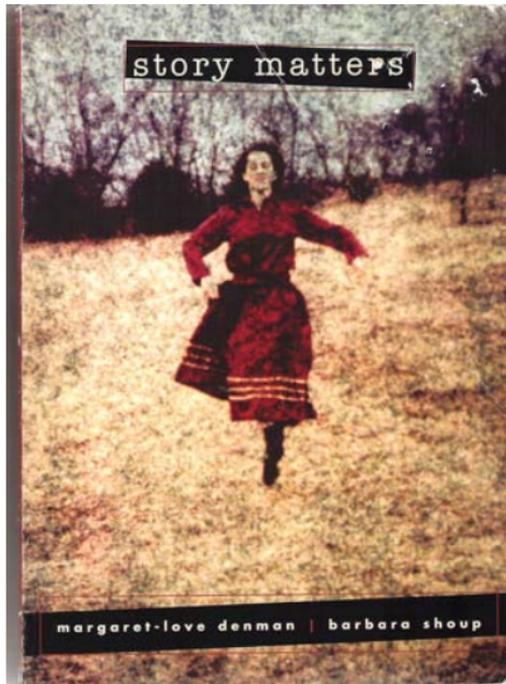
### 4 DISCUSS HOW (AND IF) THIS CLASS CHANGED YOUR PERCEPTION OF YOURSELF AS A WRITER

I hope that I will never perceive myself as a writer. I hope to remain an amateur in the strictest sense: a lover of images verbal and visual. As James Baldwin points out in his "Talk to Teachers", when we become a professional something, we discover the ugliness of the profession. I know the ugliness of the music biz, the art biz, and the teaching biz. I don't need anymore ugly in what remains of my brief strut upon this stage.

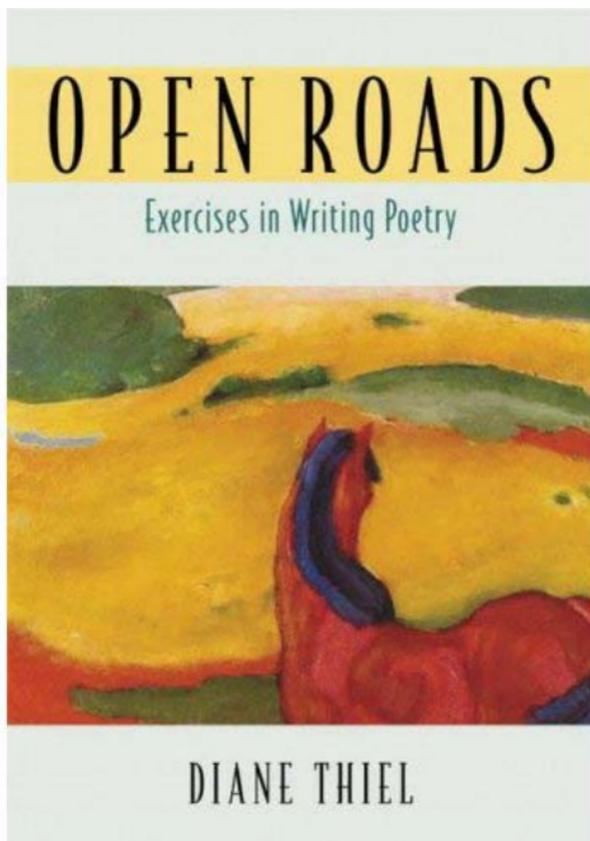
### 5 HOW DID THIS CLASS CHANGE YOUR PERCEPTION OF THE PROCESS OF WRITING

I already knew that the process of writing is continuous revision. What I did not expect was that graduate students did not know this. I surprised myself in that I was able to write something satisfying with each exercise I attempted. But I realize this is a mirage called beginner's luck; this is how amateurs get sucked into any profession. Another year of this and I would become ambitious enough to attempt the great American novel. My self-satisfaction would soon dissolve to disillusionment. My flow would go. I would probably rewrite Hamlet instead. I think of Larry King's many marriages. No fun once you've begun.

*Story Matters* by Denman and Shoup changed my perception of short stories radically. I have always preferred reading literary criticism to actually reading the stories criticized. I am more interested in the craft of fiction than its contents. I think I know all the plots and characters by now. But what really intrigues me is how writers put it all together. I read John Gardner's advice to writers. He said don't let the reader catch you writing. But I am way more attracted to writing that hits me over the head with its process. Don't hide it. The same is true when I look at a painting: I want to see the paint. I already know what trees and clouds look like. The authors in this anthology, at least in the stories I read, with few exceptions, forced me to look at the words and the sentences. The authors were searching for something unique to language that could not be found in a screenplay. Their content followed their form.



Also, keep Diane Thiel's *Open Roads*. The poetry exercises are necessary to understand how language evolves. Language evolves via metaphor. I find it difficult to call poems poetry when devoid of metaphor. It's like calling math mathematics when numbers go unmapped. Not only languages, but minds, too, grow out of metaphor. Sometimes a red wheelbarrow is just a red wheelbarrow, and a poem merely describes a photo. But neither the language, nor the mind, develops from clichés.



## 6 WHAT WERE YOUR EXPECTATIONS?

I expected this course to require many more exercises in various traditional and contemporary forms. But my writing class with teachers, EDCI 6290, did even less. However, I doubt if anyone, except me, would have attempted the full range of exercises the textbooks recommended. Why should a teacher assign something knowing it will be ignored? And who wants all that homework to read anyway?

On the positive side, having few requirements gave me a blank check and plenty of time to design my own course of study. The results were I had more fun in both courses than I have had in others that required more time-consuming research. My original choice for my last two electives was Number Theory and Functions of One Complex Variable; but they would not have been as much fun. FUN was my first criterion and expectation, and that expectation was fulfilled.

## 7 WHAT DID YOU LEARN ABOUT YOUR WRITING STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES?

I don't know how to constructively criticize stories as Kevin and the other class members can. Stories about sex and families bore me. Sitting in class throughout this semester, I felt like Showtime's Dexter in a Tyler Perry movie. Unlike Dexter, I understood the emotions, but it was like watching squirrels chase each other up and down trees. After a short time, the mind hungers for something more imaginative. Very few of my classmates risked their imagination. Kasey was the most adventurous, and Kevin's poems exhibited the most flamboyance. Christina R. took a leap at the end, but Laura seemed to withdraw, afraid to wander too far from her peers' preoccupation with biological conflicts. For most students, a creative writing course seems equivalent to writing freely about your sexual fantasies. I cannot criticize them too harshly, however; they are mostly twenty somethings. Compared to my EDCI classes, they went far beyond where any of our teachers had gone before.

## 8 HOW DID YOU IMPROVE?

My appreciation of both contemporary poetry and short stories improved 100%. It was in Bob Bradley's workshop with Liam Rector's poem that I finally "got it"—the paradigm for contemporary poetry. No rhyme, no meter, no metaphor. I am not sure I prefer such leanness

over the rapster's hip-hop. The style preferred in universities is still too academic for me. I still prefer playing with words and making metaphorical maps; expressing profound ideas grows out of the playing. Fifty years from now, the rap of Fi'ty Cents will be studied in universities, and Mark Jarman's poems will be forgotten, even though the mature mind today prefers Mark Jarman. Why will this happen? Because the rapsters will have changed the English language, whereas Jarman's poems only preserve it. How rap expresses the phenomenon of God affects more people than Mark Jarman ever will. Perhaps M&M is reading Mark Jarman right now. Hope so. Think not.

#### 9 WHICH AREAS DO YOU THINK YOU STILL NEED TO IMPROVE?

I really need to reflect more deeply on what I wrote in that last paragraph. I will likely change my mind with more experience.

#### 10 HOW HAVE YOU GROWN AS A WRITER?

When I was almost thirty something, I discovered J. Krishnamurti's writing: a type of jnana yoga that remains reflective while writing and speaking a stream of consciousness. It is to writing as ragas are to jazz. When I was about forty something, I discovered Jorge Borges' post-modern fiction. Neither of these writers was trying to be a "writer". Their writing was a byproduct of their investigations into the mystery of existence. Their uniqueness as writers followed their science. I have not found anything since as original or as ancient as what these two wrote. By comparison, most stories employ very little imagination by way of content or craft. I gave up looking for unusual ones a long time ago. They probably won't be published anyway. When I walk through the park, I sometimes carry my iPod listening to a little of this and a little of that. Now that I know there is something else out there in the way of fiction, I am more intent to find it. And as all educators know, what we encounter is how we grow.

## 11 WHAT DO YOU FEEL YOU STILL NEED TO WORK ON?

Although I can always improve my own output, I cannot provide constructive criticism to others. Other students in our class are way better than I at understanding character development. Individual personality, however, is not something I really care about, at least not anymore. A few decades ago as a working astrologer, all the personalities out there came knocking at my door—the good, the bad, and the ugly. After studying a thousand individuals, one notices that personality types begin to clone themselves. The secrets of reincarnation become mundane. One is left with the impression that there is no such thing as character development, but only primal patterns repeating their habits over and over again. What interests me now is what we all have in common, and the one mind we all share that provides our commonality. That mind starts with language; and language is a lot more than words.

## 12 WHAT IS THE ROLE OF CREATIVE WRITING IN YOUR LIFE?

I enjoy putting together interactive web sites that include some sort of narrative form. (Now if I could only finish that PowerPoint presentation on Classical Time before *my* time runs out.) Following the money, it seems that video games are replacing movies as the primary popular entertainment. Educators need to pay more attention. Sadly, however, whenever educators start teaching a medium, they take all the fun out of it.

I cannot think of creative writing without accompanying images and sounds. Writing is a blueprint for a story board which in turn is an outline for a movie—Faulkner in reverse. Thus far, writing is the quickest way to express an idea in space. The technological future may change that with its assortments of buttons and icons. When it does, the purpose of writing will disappear along with the personality types that writing has created over the last few millennia; we have come to take these types for granted during the last few centuries. Perhaps we should not. I am thinking of what I read in the last few pages of Foucault's *Order of Things*. Neither the "I" nor the "WE", which language creates, may be long for this world. This brings me back once more to Douglas Hofstadter's strange loop...

*Sat, Dec 1<sup>st</sup>*

#### FIRST PRINTING

Printed first draft of Writing Journal,  
but the color was bad.

After cleaning the print heads,  
printed second copy.

Cut each of 38 sheets into four 4.25x5.5" sheets  
while printing a third copy.

A fellow at Office Max spiral bound the second copy.

*Sun, Dec 2<sup>nd</sup>*

#### SECOND PRINTING

Proofread bound copy and corrected some typos.

Probably many others still remain.

Cut third copy with paper cutter.

Replaced bad pages.

Bound the third copy at Office Max.

*Mon, Dec 3<sup>rd</sup>*

#### THIRD PRINTING

With some ink still left in my cartridges,

I printed and bound another copy for myself.

*Tues, Dec 4<sup>th</sup>*

#### FIRST PRESENTATION

Presented one copy of Writing Journal to Dr. Elaine Phillips  
to complete Creative Writing: English 6010.

*Wed, Dec 5<sup>th</sup>*

#### SECOND PRESENTATION

Presented one copy of Writing Journal to Dr. Mary Dunn  
to complete Language Arts: EDCI 6290.

## TOP 10 LIST

### Of How NOT To Conduct A Writing Workshop

10. Continuously remind students that sharing their writing is really a public confession.
9. Demonstrate to students how to write fiction, so they become better liars.
8. Discuss all writing in WW Groups loudly so you can be heard over everyone else's WW Group.
7. Teachers make final decision about what is published; then kids can write what they really want everyone to see in the "euphemism" room.
6. Make students write every day so they improve "automatically" (i.e. so when teacher pushes button, students regurgitate like an ATM.)
5. Outline all writing before everything else. Remember: Think ahead—you may not remember anything after.
4. Make students write nonfiction history essays based on the Waterloo Generation (circa 1812), or any other generation not their own.
3. Teechurs shoold kerect stoodint speling erurz konstuntlee.
2. Teachers need to eavesdrop on students even when they are trying to keep secrets, or are just goofing off.
1. Assign students abstract concepts from 3 books to write a poem, skit, or whatever, about in 30 minutes.



***A Byshoppe's Pub***