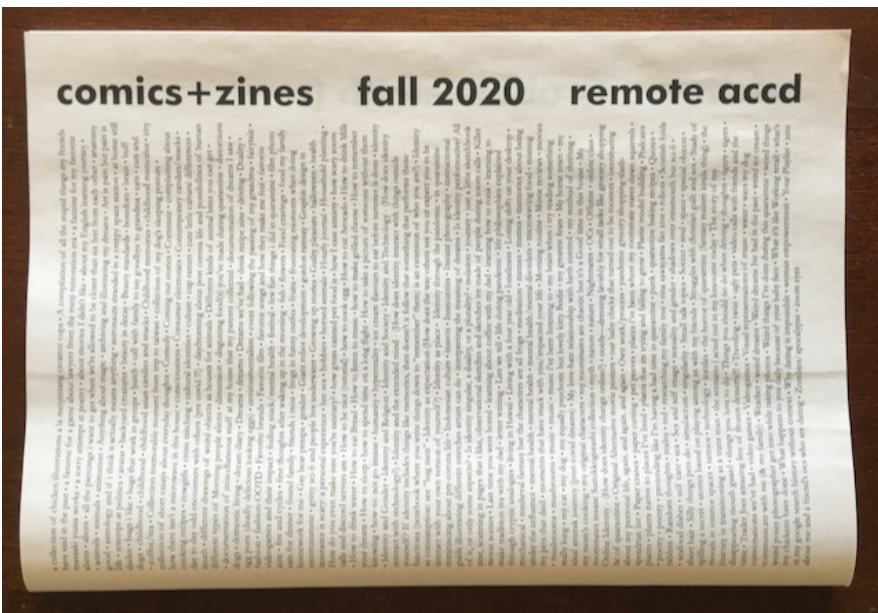


allison dalton self-study 2016-2021



Cover images, from top Type+Authorship “Destroy the Ear” student-made publication set up for distribution at release party and reading, Fall 2019; the book I designed as my “final class project” in Comics & Zines, Fall 2020, to showcase student writing (and from which I am recycling the layout to make this book); *Librography*, a library in the form of a book I hand-made to be shown in “About the Biblioteca” at the Huntley Gallery in the library at Cal Poly Pomona from October 2021–February 2022.

I’ve officially been teaching for 20 years! And I’ve been thinking in project form for the past five. If sabbatical did anything—other than allow me to start and finish an artist’s book, and more abstractly to collapse my craft into my “making” and that into my writing—it was to shift my thought process into something better expressed against a form with shapes and conventions more interesting (or at least more varied) than a text document running samely page to page, top to bottom. In remote times I’ve gotten pretty decent at the art of “the deck” (oh how the usurping of this corporatized word by educators bugs me... though I know it sounds more pro than “a powerpoint”) but this book seemed like a better way to keep you from rolling your eyes at my one-note pedagogic in-joke and to keep me both focused and moderately snark-free.

allisonlaytindalton.com for more writing and project photos / information

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a lecture, then asynchronous class discussion through Perusall annotation, now a co-written (with C+Z students) chapter of something	52

ARTCENTER COLLEGE of DESIGN

September 2005–present

ASSOCIATE PROFESSORFaculty Director of Educational Planning
as of summer 2016Faculty Director of Integrated Studies
as of spring 2015

Full-Time Faculty as of spring 2012

New course *Comics & Zines* developed and taught in Fall 2020 in response to student activism and teaching/learning remotely. Teach electives *Beautiful Argument*, *True Comics*, *Project-Writing Studio*, and *Genre Literature: Gothic, Detective, Science Fiction*. Have also taught upper-division electives *Narrative Strategies* and *The Graphic Novel*

Co-taught *Type+Authorship*, producing an entirely student-written and -made publication each term. Taught interdisciplinary courses *Advanced Entertainment Project Studio*, *Evidence Books*, *Think Green Zine*, and *Food: Investigation & Inspiration*

Writing, research, communication instructor for Tama Art University (Tokyo) exchange program: *Designing Along Fault Lines* 2007, *Aging Desires* 2010, *Influencing Dining* 2013, *Sanctuary* 2015, *Eco Research Lab* 2017, *Undercover Street Culture* 2019

Conduct Independent Studies with students working on Creative Writing Minor Capstone, project-based writing (illustrated books, interactive web-based story collections, animation and graphic novel projects, etc.), all undergrad plus grad Graphics

Developed courses *Writing for Video Games*, *Advanced Game-Writing Studio* (these taught by instructors who work in the field), and *DotEco* website creation & curation course

Led Curation zine workshop, the first in a series promoting libraries as maker-spaces, made possible by a grant from Institute of Museum & Library Services

Conduct faculty presentation to new students during orientation each term. Faculty advisor to student clubs *The Stitchuonists* (public fiber crafts) and *Alter* (a zine originating in Anti-Racist Classroom activities and Grad Media Design Practices)

Acting Chair of Integrated Studies Spring 2019 while Chair Wendy Adest was on sabbatical. Schedule all courses for both Integrated Studies (Foundation) and Illustration, the two largest departments at the college

Key contact for Heller Consulting while they conducted a Scheduling and Facilities Management review plus Change Management workshops. Co-chaired Scheduling and Facilities Management subcommittee of the Campus Facilities Committee, including coordination of online “Room Book” tool for course and event scheduling built in collaboration with Enrollment Services and IT department. In this capacity, also was liaison to the Campus Technology Committee (through 2018)

Facilitated three moves of departments into new facilities: Illustration to 870 S. Raymond (Fall 2014), Illustration and others to the 6th floor of 1111 South Arroyo Parkway (Fall 2015), and Integrated Studies and others to the 3rd floor of same (Fall 2016)

Committee work: 2018–present first-year integrated course of study, 2017–18 Provost Search, 2017–18 Third Campus Committee on Scheduling and Access

Central relationships/references

Karen Hoffman, Provost; Jane McFadden, Chair H&S; Wendy Adest, Chair INT; Ann Field, Chair ILL; Kendra Stanifer, Executive Director ILL; Armando Zúñiga, Faculty Director ELL; Sam Holtzman, Director of Faculty Development; and Greg Yamamoto, Head Registrar

**OTIS COLLEGE
of ART & DESIGN**

January 2001–May 2006

ADJUNCT ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

Head of and advisor for the Creative Writing Interdisciplinary Program, a minor in creative writing, which included leading a workshop for seniors writing 30-page Capstone projects

Taught first-semester English, *Critical Analysis and Semiotics*, and second-semester English, *Composition and Critical Thought*; compiled and edited the course-wide rhetoric reader

Developed, created syllabi for and taught: beginning and intermediate *Creative Writing: Graphic Novel*; *The Art of Fact*, a literary non-fiction course; *The Short Story*

Originated and published *Wash* magazine, a student publication; 400 copies hand-made and distributed every semester for eight issues total, Winter 2001–Spring 2006

Taught summer school for five years, *Composition* plus upper-division electives

Taught developmental English in an intensive program for students transferring as juniors from Seoul, Korea’s Samsung Arts & Design Institute, for two years

Freshman-level educational advisor for two years, after-hours writing tutor for three

Participated in Academic Assembly meetings and Student Life committee

EDUCATION**Columbia University**

MFA, fiction writing

Studied with Maureen Howard, Michael Cunningham, Peter Carey, David Lehman, Richard Howard, Andrew Serris, James Schamus

University of CA, Santa Cruz

BA, literature/creative writing

Studied writing with Ron Hansen, Louis Owens, Page Stegner

READINGS, AWARDS, Etc.

Librography, entirely handmade artist’s book, in “About the Biblioteca” at the Huntley Gallery in the library at Cal Poly Pomona. **October 2021–February 2022**

Prosopography: Souvenir Views and *Duplicity and Other Indices* in TOMES at the Williamson Gallery. I was the only ArtCenter faculty with work in this show. **July–December 2019**
[TOMES press release](#)

Integrated Studies Faculty Exhibition
Prosopography: Souvenir Views. **January 2019**

Reconstructing Practice Conference, attendee
Also hosted student panelists from Creative Reaction Lab, social justice design program. **June 2018**

Kore Press Short Fiction Award, finalist
For my short story *One Thousand Lights*, one of 13 read by judge Edwidge Danticat. **January 2017**

1913 Press Open Prose Book, semifinalist
For my short story collection *Reasons for Admission*. **September 2016**

“Columbia Selects” alumni reading series
Read from *Prosopography*, KGB Bar, New York. **May 2016**

Diagram Magazine Essay contest, semifinalist
For adapted text of *Here Is What I Know: I Know Very Little*. **March 2016**

Pre-Sabbatical

The Art of Text: Attended the Kenyon Review sponsored hybrid text and book arts workshop for a week at Kenyon College

ThatCamp proposed panelist: Digital Writing/Digital Humanities conference, NY

Glimmertrain “Family Matters” Contest, top 25: For *Here Is What I Know: I Know Very Little*

ArtCenter Faculty Enrichment Grant: To complete *Skin Doll* as an “artist’s e-book”

AICAD Student Affairs Conference panelist: “Campus Ecosystems: Contemporary Models for Student Success”

ArtCenter Faculty Commons panelist: “Digital, Physical, Intellectual Space”

Nightingale, a short story, published in Chinquapin, Volume 15

AWP Intro Journals Award for short story *Cleavage*, published in *Indiana Review*, Volume 16, Number 2

teaching

BEAUTIFUL ARGUMENT

An advanced argument-writing class in which students will read, study, and generate persuasive writing in “non-traditional” forms or with unexpected rhetorical strategies, leaning especially toward image and page/publication design as part of argumentation. The class will also: build and exercise radical visual literacy; require responsible, generative research; posit theory as making; introduce students to a range of topics, and ways thoughtful makers engage with the world; and inspire reevaluation of assumptions about persuasive writing—what it is and what it can be. Students will engage with course readings and collaborate to deconstruct and make meaning of the language demands inherent in persuasive writing as a bridge toward creating their own persuasive writings. We will:

- Revise and expand our understanding of writing: Its forms, rules, possibilities, applications in art and design
- Acquire a toolbox of persuasive techniques and structures, both for writing generally and for writing texts that employ image/text/design in combination
- Develop a writing, research, and planning process for projects such as an undergrad capstone or grad thesis
- Engage with assigned readings as a writer does, deconstructing and making meaning by attending carefully to the author/designer/artist’s choices
- Engage with critical theory, parsing and comparing points of view
- Demonstrate knowledge gained in expository and creative writing assignments, plus during classroom discussion and in online comments
- Further develop reading, research, and public-speaking/presentation skills

COMICS&ZINES: CURATION, CONVERSATION, COMMUNITY

This course will engage students in reading and making comics, zines, and other systems of dissemination, offering these as a site for argument, for curation, where the maker can explore a theme of interest not just by reproducing their own work, but by collecting material from multiple contributors and presenting it in thoughtful combination. These kinds of projects: exercise writing and organizational skills plus critical and editorial thinking; inspire those the maker asks to submit; and foster/promote/demonstrate the idea of creative community, which is especially meaningful in divisive, distanced times. Students of all majors are encouraged to enroll: anyone with a creative practice, regardless of skill set, can work within this form. We will:

- Revise and expand our understanding of writing: Its forms, rules, possibilities, applications in art and design
- Strengthen writing and communication skills, emphasizing the value of student knowledge, research, and languages
- Learn reading, writing, and organizational practices that are generative and support thinking and making process
- Engage with assigned readings as a writer does, deconstructing and making meaning by attending carefully to the author/artist’s choices
- Acquire a toolbox for thoughtfully engaging with a community through writing, image, systems of dissemination
- Develop both community and individual agency by investing in and expressing our identities, experiences, and ethics; and making space that invites others to do the same

GENRE LITERATURE: GOTHIC, DETECTIVE, SCIENCE FICTION

Much of today’s popular storytelling is informed by genre conventions that originated in literature more than 100 years ago, specifically (and chronologically) in Gothic, Detective, and Science Fiction novels and short stories. Understanding the “language” of these genres makes us more fluent and adept contemporary storytellers, and can inspire us to innovate, to create something new. This class will define, track, and evaluate conventions in these genres through to the present day, attending especially to texts that combine tropes from more than one kind of story. We will:

- Understand the tropes and conventions employed &/or subverted in these genre.
- Gain a broader understanding of narrative structures and techniques in literature, generally and in these genres
- Engage with critical theory written on the subject, parsing and comparing points of view
- Demonstrate knowledge gained during classroom and online discussion, plus in expository and creative writing assignments
- Further develop reading, research, presentation, and writing skills

GRAPHIC FACT: TRUE COMICS

We examine the application of comics language to represent facts, information, “the truth.” This class 1) engages participants in a model research process and 2) develops visual and other literacies by immersing ourselves in a medium uniquely suited to offer a meaningful view into, and connection with, other peoples’ interests, histories, perspectives, and lives. Broad topics include memoir, autobiography, biography; journalism & reportage; and histories, philosophies, misc. facts & figures. Students will read comics and theory, lead and engage in discussion of these texts, and make at least one true comic of their own. We will:

- Understand the symbols and conventions employed &/or subverted in comics language
- Evaluate how these aid, challenge, complicate comics written about real events
- Engage with critical theory written on the subject, parsing and comparing points of view
- Engage generally with issues of social justice and perspectives outside of our own, specifically how comics can responsibly convey these to a broad audience
- Demonstrate knowledge gained during classroom and online discussion, plus in expository and creative writing assignments
- Further develop reading, research, presentation, and writing skills

PROJECT-WRITING WORKSHOP

An advanced writing workshop that offers the time, structure, support, and rigor it takes to complete an ambitious writing project. Each participant is responsible for: 1) Achieving substantial progress on a writing/making project (i.e. the first issue of a magazine, a web comic, an illustrated cookbook, a short story collection, a ’zine, a graphic novel, or something else entirely) they commit to on the first day of class, and 2) Contributing to their classmates’ progress through thoughtful reading and critique. We will:

- Develop a writing and planning process for large-scale projects
- Write habitually, several times every week
- Write well-composed texts that 1) Meet the drafting markers we collectively establish, 2) Observe, employ, and experiment with the conventions of the proposed genre and 3) Function within the form and context of the proposed finished work
- Find and thoughtfully read/view like texts as part of the research/writing/making process
- Critically read student texts, parsing the writer’s choices thoughtfully, considering the above three criteria for each text on its own terms
- Critically read published texts (if assigned) with a writer’s eye
- Actively participate in constructive discussion of writing during every class
- Draft their project through deep revision toward its most successful iteration and ultimately to a pitch-ready presentation

Central effort one: Move course content away from the white-supremacist values, theory, and canon I was educated in, and toward “supplying a mirror and a window” for all students (quoting Dr. Sumi Pendakur’s language here).

Central effort two: Make a space in which students can both function as individuals and have a significant intellectual experience that connects to their overall studies. Within this space, students learn the practice of responsible, rigorous meaning-making.

Central effort three: Avoid downloading “facts and expertise” into them and expecting them to spit it back out “correctly.” Avoid thinking of or expressing that flexibility in approach and outcomes is “being easy” on students (though I hear this very thing suggested in a lot of different ways by faculty and leadership).

Graphic Fact, 2017, was my first attempt to create a class in which talking about issues of social justice, addressing institutional and individual bias and white supremacy, were intrinsic to the class’s efforts to learn about the named subject of study. The opposite page lists other changes I’ve made and/or practices developed in the past five years, starting with *Graphic Fact*, that are now operating in all of the classes I teach.

20FA CLASS RECORDINGS

[Comics+Zines week 10](#)

11-20-2020 My context-setting intro for guest speaker Erin Williams, plus her talk (she’s brilliant)

[Graphic Fact week 11](#)

12-3-2020 students discuss their culminating writing assignment

[Graphic Fact week 12](#)

12-10-2020 student critique of final projects

THE CLASS INCLUDES AND ENGAGES EVERYONE

Course is designed for flexibility in: student approach, skills, response, and comfort with platforms

Students feel that we’re all co-learners

Students are doing stuff for most of every class (-not- just listening to me)

TEXTS ARE IMPORTANT. TEXTS ARE MADE BY STUDENTS

Share contemporary, accessible examples in engaging ways

Challenging and varied in idea, concept, platform, form

Made by lots of different kinds of people, including people like them

Aspiration, inspiration, AND “we could totally make that”

STUDENTS USE WRITING IN AUTHENTIC AND MEANINGFUL WAYS (and so do I, along with them)

Change the perceived and the actual audience and the stakes for “turning it in”: it’s not a note to your professor proving you did the work, it’s an acknowledgement of and contribution to your community of thinkers

Process, conversation, making

In combination with their other skills

STUDENTS MAKE THINGS THAT MATTER (and so do I, along with them)

Frame with ethics, frame with the imperative of the artist/designer to “take care”

Make space for students to try, to choose, to invest

We build, practice, enjoy, benefit, benefit from, and value community

I try to practice active and open intellectual humility. Expertise is only interest plus attention plus time and thought invested. I have specific taste, interests, aesthetics, a point of view that operate even when (or mostly when) I’m not aware they’re doing so. My addressing and checking this is an ongoing element of class conversation.

This quote, shared by Dr. Pendakur in her workshop “The Art and Science of Inclusive Teaching” (see page 32), names an effort I’ve been pursuing in all classes: “Transparency means teaching students about more than just the course subject matter. It means telling students about your rationale for how and why you’ve chosen to shape their learning experiences.” So, I do a whole lot of explaining and contextualizing and offering rationales... that’s most of the talking I do during class, actually.

I lecture as little as possible. When I do, I introduce lectures as an example of how I personally make meaning out of what we’ve read and discussed, and ensure students that their connections and path through the material can be and should be different than mine. I use image-heavy slideshows that keep me brief and on track, and which include extensive annotations and hyperlinks to other course materials; they are shared with the class in PDF form as a resource for students’ future reference and study.

Courses are organized, generally, “like studio class”: Process, examination, investigation for the first seven or eight weeks, with low-stakes assignments to generate and record emerging ideas, then a more significant assignment through the end of the term that offers a framework and space within which students can work out what they know.

See page 14 for sample process assignments, and the student work chapter for outcomes.

Courses offer multiple ways for students to engage in and out of class, and for them to develop and demonstrate knowledge. I try to plan for several of these actions each class period. They are combined for a grade percentage rather than valued separately.

By using Basecamp.com as our course site and location for homework submission, I promote classwork as conversation: Students all see each others’ responses in a “thread” format. Those responses are therefore necessarily “process,” and they become course material rather than “proof of achievement.”

Texts we use in each class are made by people with different class, racial, ethnic, academic backgrounds, and who use different approaches to understanding. They come from a variety of contexts: academic, popular, editorial, professional, etc. The texts model responsible, rigorous intellectual meaning-making appropriate to their contexts. We treat guest lectures, podcasts, and other “live” information as texts. We look at texts in which the maker is designing, illustrating, etc. as well as writing (see text lists on next page).

Students are often allowed to choose from a list of related texts to read, and become responsible for representing that text to the class. They control the text they’re investing time in, and they control the discussion of that text in relationship to others used for class (see *Graphic Fact* reading list on next page).

Perusall.com has revolutionized the way we read and make meaning of readings. When students can discuss with each other in their own time, and aren’t put on the spot during class, they develop complex meaning, ask each other questions, connect to other things they know (see annotation samples on pages 41-43).

I announce my expectations for the class community on the first day (see “my current first day of class statement” on page 21). This includes the invitation to point out and discuss with me my own inevitable mistakes and misunderstandings as part of class.

Before we workshop projects, students read deconstructions of workshop/critique and discuss. This allows them to understand the power dynamics and assumptions traditionally made about what workshop is for, then collectively build their own set of useful expectations. Students assign a timekeeper and an ombudsperson in their workshop group.

I hold open hours for students to drop in and discuss anything, for at least three hours each week split over several days and time blocks.

BEAUTIFUL ARGUMENT

Ways of Seeing, John Berger | **Another Water: The River Thames, for Example**, Roni Horn | **Beautiful Evidence** and **Envisioning Information**, Edward R. Tufte | **New York Atlas**, Rebecca Solnit | **It Is Almost That: A Collection of Image & Text Work by Women Artists & Writers**, Lisa Pearson | **Blind Spot**, Teju Cole | **How To Read Nancy**, Kerasik and Newgarten | **Several short sentences about writing**, Verlyn Klinkenborg | **Madness, Rack, and Honey**, Mary Ruefle | **Notes on Glaze**, Wayne Koestenbaum | **The Beautiful Brain: The Drawings of Santiago Ramon y Cajal** | **Sheila Hicks**, designed by Irma Boom | **Dear Data** project, Stefanie Posovic and Giorgia Lupi | **Citizen**, Claudia Rankine | **Why Art?**, Eleanor Davis | **Believing Is Seeing : Observations on the Mysteries of Photography**, Errol Morris | **Everything That Rises: A Book of Convergences**, Lawrence Weschler | **Swimming Studies**, Leanne Shapton | **You Animal Machine**, Eleni Sikelianos | **Here**, Richard McGuire | **The People of Paper**, Salvador Plasencia

Plus, guest Armando Zúñiga and a tour of the ACCD Library's Special Collections.

COMICS&ZINES: CURATION, CONVERSATION, COMMUNITY

Readings

On the Politics of Italics, Jumoke Verissimo | **Argument against Punctuation: On the Freedom of Violating Convention**, Andrea Dworkin | **You Make Publics around the Ideas**, an interview with Martine Syms | **Nobel Prize lecture**, Toni Morrison | **Reyna Grande on Translating Her Own Book Into Spanish** | **Emerson Whitney on "Heaven" and Rewriting a Body** | **Surrendering**, Ocean Vuong | **Essay on Craft**, Ocean Vuong | **McSweeney's** remote live readings OR Teju Cole's latest Instagram project-in-progress, **"Counter"** | **Black Body: Rereading James Baldwin's "Stranger in the Village,"** Teju Cole | **Unsilencing the Writer's Workshop**, Beth Nguyen | **We Owe More to Our Young Writers**, Ru Freeman | **For N.K. Jemesin, World-Building Is a Lesson in Oppression**, Jason Parham | **How Learning to Draw Can Help a Writer to See**, Kiley Bense

"Booktours"

If we were meeting in person, I'd bring these to class for us to look through together. Since /while we're remote, I supply videos of myself paging through each book, about five minutes each.

Citizen, Claudia Rankine | **I Live Here**, eds Mia Kirschner et al | **A Humament**, Tom Phillips | **Grandma Grandpa Cook**, Evelyn Liang, Michael Wolf, Yeung Yang et al | **Black Imagination**, curator Natasha Marin | **Plantation Slave Weavers Remember: An Oral History**, ed Mary Madison | **Food for Thought, Thought for Food: A Reflection on eBulli's Ferran Adria, and on the Worlds of Avant-Garde Cooking and Art**, eds Richard Hamilton and Vicente Todoli | **Girls Standing on Lawns**, Maira Kalman and Daniel Handler | **Guest Book Ghost Stories**, Leanne Shapton | **Unnecessarily Beautiful Spaces for Young Minds On Fire**, ed International Alliance of Youth Writing Centers

Plus, guests Simone Fujita, Elaine Lopez (AICAD fellow, MICA instructor) and her students, and Erin Williams.

GENRE LITERATURE: GOTHIC, DETECTIVE, SCIENCE FICTION

The Castle of Otranto, Horace Walpole AND **Otrant's Castle**, Jan Svankmajer AND **Geek Love**, Katherine Dunn

The Maltese Falcon, Dashiell Hammett AND **Gun, With Occasional Music**, Jonathan Lethem AND **My Favorite Thing Is Monsters**, Emil Ferris

Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep, Philip K. Dick AND **Black Box**, Jennifer Egan AND **The Semplica Girl Diaries**, George Saunders

GRAPHIC FACT: TRUE COMICS

Understanding Comics, Scott McCloud AND **Inventing Comics**, Dylan Horrocks

Fun Home, Alison Bechdel AND one of the following, student's choice:

March (book 1), John Lewis & Andrew Aydin | **Epileptic**, David B | **Photobooth: A Biography**, Meags Fitzgerald | **The Best We Could Do**, Thanh Bui | **In Waves**, AJ Dungo | **Commute**, Erin Williams

Paying the Land, Joe Sacco AND one of the following, student's choice:

Threadbare: Clothes, Sex & Trafficking, Anne Elizabeth Moore and The Ladydrawers | **Pyongyang: A Journey in North Korea**, Guy Delisle | **The 9/11 Report: A Graphic Adaptation**, Sid Jacobson & Ernie Colón | **A.D.: New Orleans After the Deluge**, Josh Neufeld | **Rolling Blackouts**, Sarah Glidden

Unflattening, Nick Sousanis AND one of the following, student's choice:

The Beats, Harvey Pekar & Ed Piscor et al, | **The Influencing Machine**, Brooke Gladstone & Josh Neufeld | **Thunder & Lightning: Weather Past, Present & Future**, Lauren Redniss | **Oak Flat**, Lauren Redniss | **Tenements, Towers, and Trash: An Unconventional Illustrated History of New York City**, Julia Wertz

Plus, guest speakers Arden Stern, AJ Dungo, Mark Frauenfelder (founder, BoingBoing).

TAMA WRITING STUDIO: UNDERCOVER STREET CULTURE

The design problem: Anchor the project brief (different each time) in culturally relevant and responsible, academic themes and texts that students visiting from TAMA will gain context and additional meaning from.

Field trips

Joined Ethan Johnson's American Graffiti class for his on-site tour in El Sereno, met at The Little Knittery yarn store in Los Feliz to interview Kat Coyle and Jayna Zweiman about the Pussyhat Project, a tour of the ACCD library to share relevant texts from the collection and initiate research.

Guests

Armando Zúñiga to discuss tools for collaborative communication, street artist [Cache](#) to discuss and demo his work, [Lucky Nakazawa](#) using influences from multiple visual cultures in his illustrations and comics.

Readings

Articles about Little Tokyo's activist past and present: The Atomic Café, Bunkado's hidden Japanese music store, Tuesday Night Cafe open mic, Visual Communications. **Dear Los Angeles: The City in Diaries and Letters, 1542 to 2018**. And books of their choice from those curated by our liaison librarian for our visit and tour.

BEAUTIFUL ARGUMENT Caption assignment due week two

- 1) Read the excerpt of **Ways of Seeing**
- 2) Pick an image of any sort that you have made and that you have strong feelings about
- 3) Look at the “Caption Examples” PDFs, posted [here](#). Don’t forget to read everything in the excerpt, including introductions or prologues, tables of contents, etc.
- 4) If you don’t know what I mean when I say “Logos, Ethos, Pathos,” look it up

Write three separate non-fiction captions for the image you have picked. One should be 20 words or less, one should be about 50 words, and one should be about 200 words. One of them should appeal using Logos, one using Pathos, one using Ethos.

BEAUTIFUL ARGUMENT Manifesto assignment due week five

Read **Why Art?** and the excerpt of **Citizen**. Annotate using the text annotation protocol introduced week 3 (if you need a reminder, it’s linked [here](#)).

Read the excerpt of -either- **Madness, Rack, and Honey** -or- **“Revising One Sentence”** (your choice). Annotate using the text annotation protocol.

Central to a manifesto is that it is unwavering and unapologetic; it conveys absolute conviction. It is often theatrical (is theatre an unflattering of rhetoric?). But it can come at its declarations straight-on or sideways, with deadly seriousness or with humor. Other than the readings/examples due this week, you may want to recall Koestenbaum’s introduction to **Notes on Glaze** as an example. Other texts we’ve read are manifesto-like even as they tell us they are in place just to question, to start a conversation (**Unflattering, Ways of Seeing**) rather than to claim territory.

Have you seen these? (there are many, many more)

[The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism](#)

[First Things First](#)

[Black Creatives Manifesto](#)

Write your manifesto. It can incorporate image, form, page design, but it doesn’t have to; it’s up to you to determine how it best and most effectively makes its argument to readers and/or viewers.

COMICS+ZINES Reading to Transgress in class week two, due week three

During class break, look at these five posted reading lists: “Groundbreaking Mixed-Media Literature,” “Making Sense of a Bullshit Society,” “Making to Transgress: Riso Printing as the Practice of Freedom” from Elaine Lopez’s MICA class, “A Master Class in Women’s Rage,” “Read BIPOC.”

Then spend 30 minutes during class making your own reading list, in this format:

Reading to Transgress [everyone uses this title]

Subtitle goes here: use it to identify your list’s organizing principle. For example, mine might be *“fuck women’s work: craft does not equal decor”*

Book titles can be real (please include author names) or imaginary (also include author names), about 10 total. These will be posted and shared before the end of class.

Homework: Make a personal “pocket library of transgression.” You will be given the names of three other students; pick one title from each of their lists. Make/design a relevant and thoughtful and RESPECTFUL book cover for each; these requirements don’t mean it can’t be fun. These become the three inside spreads of a mini-zine. The cover/back cover should be for a fourth book, made from your own list.

You may not plagiarize images, though you may borrow and re-contextualize if you make a note of the source(s). Include at least 30 words of text on each cover... not what would be on a book cover traditionally, but something that you write that works with the title/design. Is it word art of some sort, language collage, a kind of caption, poetics, fridge magnet brilliance, a song?

Assignments (as seen to the left), are as specific as they can be about the material they are anchored in and what is required to complete them. But they are very open in terms of -how- a student might choose to craft a response.

Admittedly, many of the elements of an excellent response in my courses (and in Humanities classes generally?) are difficult to quantify or rubric-ize. This is something I’ve discussed before with Sam Holtzman, showing him student work so that he could reflect back to me whether my observations of student success were not just my own. I’ve included a collection of student work, starting on page 34, from activities to weekly process to finals, to demonstrate how things like “engagement,” “representation of knowledge and references gained during class,” “deliberate choice-making,” “meaning-making,” “risk-taking,” “thoughtfulness,” “point of view authentic to the individual,” etc. manifest in their work.

I do try to mitigate the subjectivity on the evaluation end, and the student uncertainty that comes with freedom of outcome, without limiting the choices individuals might make: Assignments are tied to concrete examples of published work. I model responses to the assignments myself, as part of class discussion. I show examples of past student work, A, B, C and “not a suitable response,” and discuss what determines those grades. This gives students a rubric for evaluation of each of their significant assignments. We also talk about completed student work as part of class material. So, students understand what is expected, how it is evaluated. Students are not surprised by the grade they receive.

I grade weekly, in a program that allows me to attach comments and rubrics, and generate progress reports. I share reports with students privately around week 5, week 8, and week 11 each term. Students understand that these are open for conversation, and that I might make mistakes they can help me correct.

If the assignment has an abstract “deliverable,” like a presentation, or leading a class discussion, a grading rubric is part of the assignment. Presentation grades are based half on my assessment, and half on the average peer assessment (made anonymously on a rubric that highlights the required elements of the assignment).

Sample grading rubric I use (subjective terms clarified with students beforehand):

Volunteered? yes no Time started/finished: Presents self (speaking, stance etc.):
Main point clear and appropriate 10-0; Discusses most relevant info 10-0; Demonstrates knowledge gained during term 10-0; Creativity of presentation 10-0; Organization of/ preparation for presentation 10-0; Sources used responsibly and correctly cited 10-0
Discussion of the book as representative or subversion of its genre(s)? yes no notes
Identifies tropes/conventions used / subverted (including visual)? yes no notes
Discussion of how author makes meaning by employing these elements? yes no notes
Addresses questions?: yes no n/a notes Notes/organization of presentation

Sample peer evaluation rubric:

Presents book as genre example, not book report; Seems authoritative: has read book carefully and understands well; Clearly identifies tropes/conventions and how used in this book; This identification/discussion is reasonable and convincing; Demonstrates knowledge gained this term

I owe a lot of my evolving course design to my students, for being honest with me. I ask for their feedback, concerns, requests for flexibility. I read my evaluations and make changes!

For example: Fall 2020, several students said that Comics+Zines assignments from the first day through to their central project were confusing: students weren’t sure how everything connected, or why they were doing specific individual assignments. So to better connect, I’m shifting the focus of their first assignment from a question about their personal ethics to one about serving community with their work, and have changed the form of several early assignments to mini-zines and comics from other more abstract outcomes. I plan further adjustments, too; later today I have a meeting with my TA from last term to discuss changes from her point of view.

other work

RECENT WORK

Four new works in book form 2018–2020:

Librography

Repeat the Question

Overlapping: A Crazy Quilt

Duplicity and Other Indices

Unstitched States Curated (with Gretchen Henderson), designed, and built site for “digital quilt” project in response to hate crime escalation after the 2016 election, first released MLK Jr. Day.

January 2017–ongoing

Prosopography: Souvenir Views. Artist’s book, sabbatical project. **January 2017**

Brevity Charm Pack Illustrations in the form of embroidered quilt squares for online magazine. (Hover over each square, click to see full image.) **January 2017**

Various process books:

OH OK LA **December 2018**

paper non yarn again later **December 2016**

EA17

SP|SU18

Reasons for Admission: Web-based, ergodic collection of stories. **April 2015**

The Blue-Sky Boy: Cut-paper stop-motion animation of my short story

Skin Doll: Artist’s ebook

Here Is What I Know: I Know Very Little: Book with illustrator Jane Lee. **2014**



Librography



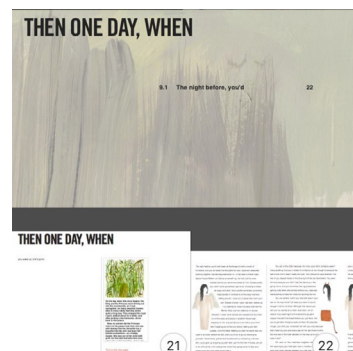
Repeat the Question



Overlapping: A Crazy Quilt



inserts, Duplicity and Other Indices



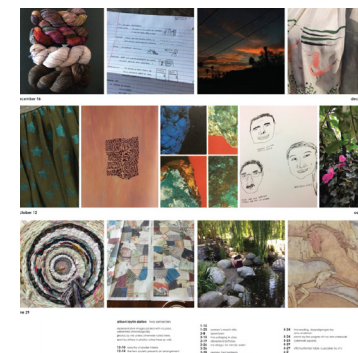
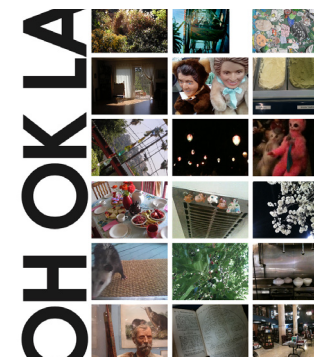
Skin Doll



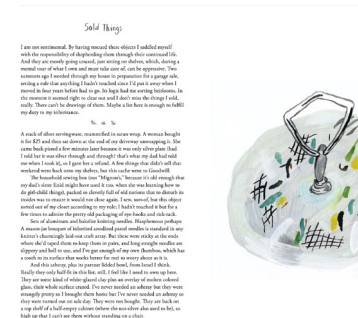
Prosopography: Souvenir Views



Brevity Charm Pack



term process books



Here is What I Know: I Know Very Little

ANTI-RACIST, ANTI-WHITE-SUPREMACIST WORK

Courses currently attending

[Black Design in America: African Americans and the African Diaspora in Graphic Design](#)

HHIS-101 Intro to Design Studies
with Arden Stern

Conferences & workshops attended

Reconstructing Practice conference; also hosted two students from Detroit

LGTBQIA/SAFE ZONE workshop
with Sai Isoke

Building Intercultural Awareness workshop
with Erika Bertling (twice)

Disability/Accessibility allyship workshop

The Art & Science of Inclusive Teaching
workshop with Dr. Pendakur

“Lunch and Learn” Decolonizing Syllabus
workshop offered by Faculty Council

Antiracist Classroom “Press Pause” student
workshop to listen and as a faculty ally

Met with Jessica Rath & Armando Zúñiga to
work together on our diversity statements

Joint Humanities and Writing Studio Cohorts
Meeting to discuss DEI

Writing curriculum cohort meeting to discuss
antiracist class materials and pedagogy

Antiracist Faculty meetings to organize
our support for Antiracist Classroom
student group

PEDAGOGY IN A REMOTE ENVIRONMENT

Workshops & trainings attended

Remote teaching, Zoom & DotED

Faculty Showcase: Owen Freeman, how to
build a virtual crit rail in DotED

Faculty Showcase: Fernando Olmedo, remote
teaching tools

Faculty Showcase: Ming Tai, Mural
and Bluescape

Advanced DotED

Yuja and Zoom

Faculty Showcase: Michelle Constantine,
flipping the classroom

My current first day of class statement:

All classes I teach value student knowledge, interests, research, process, and languages. Our classroom is actively anti-racist and anti-misogynist, aims to interrogate and challenge white supremacy, and is an LGBTQ+ Safe Space. I will make mistakes, and your calling attention to those mistakes so we can discuss as a class is essential to our effort as a community of makers to teach and learn from each other.

Tema Okun, in a workbook offered by [dRworks](#) (Dismantling Racism Works), names characteristics of white supremacist culture in organizations and institutions, then offers their respective “antidotes.” Reading this list clarified my focus more than any other antiracist work I’d done previously.

Yes, in the list I recognized practices of the institution I’m part of (see next page), and how they exploit and oppress students and other members of our community, including myself (a cis-presenting white woman teaching and working here from my early 30s to almost 50).

Significantly, though, I also recognized my own white supremacist values, beliefs, and practices in this list. Some are so automatic to me still—as I grew up in and was educated in white supremacist culture and values in my family, my community, and at both liberal and conservative institutions of higher education—that no matter how “aware” of these I am I still perform them often, in and out of the classroom. Here they are, my Big Four: Perfectionism; defensiveness; fear of open conflict; and “I’m the only one” (argh, my WHOLE LIFE... ask me about Children’s Theatre in my junior year of high school).

BUT, I also saw, in Okun’s “antidotes,” some actions I hadn’t named as such but had already started trying to adjust toward—as experience in the classroom and collaboration with others in this community have taught me better, and as our students and the world have changed. Here are practices I have been asking of my students and of myself much more actively and transparently than I had in the past:

- Develop a culture of appreciation; develop a community in which it’s expected that everyone will make mistakes and those mistakes offer opportunities and/or lead to positive results; when offering feedback, speak to the things that went well before offering criticism; realize that being one’s own worst critic does not actually improve the work.
- Understand the link between defensiveness and fear (of losing power, losing face, losing comfort, losing privilege); work on one’s own defensiveness; give people credit for being able to handle more than you think; discuss the ways in which resistance to new ideas gets in the way of community and individual goals.
- Look for ways to measure process; learn to recognize those times when you need to get off the agenda in order to address people’s underlying concerns.
- Work on developing the ability to notice when people do things differently and how those different ways might improve your approach; when working with communities from a different culture than yours, be clear that you have some learning to do about the communities’ ways of doing.
- Realize that everybody has a world view and that it affects the way they understand things; realize this means you too; push yourself to sit with discomfort when people are expressing themselves in ways that are not familiar to you; assume that everybody has a valid point and your job is to understand what that point is.
- Understand that discomfort is at the root of all growth and learning; welcome it as much as you can; deepen your political analysis of racism and oppression so you have a strong understanding of how your personal experience and feelings fit into a larger picture; don’t take everything personally.

OK, so. A “Big Four” for ACCD, and therefore practices that I either must actively work against or by default I support and perpetuate. Language borrowed from Okun.

Defensiveness: The organizational structure is set up and much energy spent trying to protect power as it exists rather than to facilitate the best out of each person or to clarify who has power and how they are expected to use it. Criticism of those with power is viewed as threatening and inappropriate (or rude). The defensiveness of people in power creates an oppressive culture.

Only one right way: The belief there is one right way to do things and once people are introduced to the right way, they will see the light and adopt it. [“But this is ArtCenter, and that’s how we do things here” as a rationalization for all sorts of oppressive, inflexible, un-evolving practices in classrooms and departments.] When they do not adapt or change, then something is wrong with them (the other, those not changing), not with us (those who ‘know’ the right way). Sees only value in their beliefs about what is good.

Paternalism: Decision-making is clear to those with power and unclear to those without it. Those with power often don’t think it is important or necessary to understand the viewpoint or experience of those for whom they are making decisions. Those without power understand they do not have it and understand who does. Those without power do not really know how decisions get made and who makes what decisions, and yet they are completely familiar with the impact of those decisions on themselves.

Progress is bigger, more: Observed in how we define success. Progress is an organization which expands or develops the ability to serve more people (regardless of how well they are serving them). Gives no value, not even negative value, to its cost: Ways in which those we serve may be exploited, excluded, or under-served as we focus on how many we are serving instead of quality of service or values created by the ways in which we serve.

I offer the above, and my own list on the previous page, to contextualize two actions I have taken in the past year to push back against ArtCenter’s white supremacy. One was very internal (I swallowed fear of confrontation to not let a co-worker with significant power get away with an inappropriate and unconstructive interpretation of #blackataccd student voices), one slightly less so (my using the “Faculty Showcase” best-practices forum run by San Holtzman to model anti-white-supremacist pedagogy in the guise of educational platform use).

When #blackataccd posts mentioned faculty by name, if I had a relationship with the Chair of the department, I made sure they saw what students were saying about the experience in that faculty’s classroom, by screen-capturing and sending those images in emails. In a response to a set of these student complaints, one of the recipients wrote “... it looks like we need to address certain issues department wide: No touching, period. Making a list of subjects that are not appropriate to discuss, including faculty personal matters. Limiting project budgets so that everyone regardless of economic status has an equal chance of getting a good grade. Although I have to say if students are so thin skinned about being told their project has been done before maybe they don’t belong in art and design school. Faculty often have to put pressure on students to step up their game and sometimes the more talent a student has the more pressure is applied. If faculty have to be so careful that they can’t say anything critical to a student for fear of being “outed” it may limit student growth.”

Here’s what I wrote back.

1) There are quite a few ways to urge students to keep developing their work that don’t involve saying dismissive things (especially in front of the rest of the class?) like “that’s been done before.” Yes students need to adjust to critique, to being pushed, but one hour of a critique presentation during orientation is certainly not enough to give them the tools to be able to do that well—and at ArtCenter, that’s all they really get. Faculty have all of the power in the room, they’re the grownups, they should be aware of and responsible for the way they communicate. Ask questions rather than dismissing and cutting off further conversation. Show examples of work that’s similar, maybe. Ask the student to do more research and point

them in a few possible directions. Show them that their interests and ideas are valid and worth pursuing with care and rigor.

2) If a student begins to feel uncomfortable or unsafe in a classroom because they’ve been tokenized, or embarrassed, or made an example of, or dismissed (which is a valid feeling... facing five hours in a room with the same smallish group of people every week would be awful), each time they have to go back into that room is worse than the last. They begin to process everything through the alienation they feel. That’s where all of the “gray area” incidents build up, because they’re more sensitive to slights and discomfort, they’re on alert. And when we see the same faculty are called out several times, it’s pretty clear that those classrooms feel less safe for more students. Yes, the faculty had a different experience than the student. Yes, other students in the room had a different experience than the one who is reporting. I’m not suggesting that all individual “gray area” offenses be addressed. But it’s worth looking at the pattern.

3) I truly believe that fewer students would be angry and posting on Instagram if they had felt comfortable voicing their opinions in class, being listened to in class, being able to have a legitimate conversation with faculty about the reasons behind their critique, etc. It’s faculty’s job to create a classroom environment where students feel like they can do so. And their job to be approachable so students aren’t scared of being able to address something that happened in class in order to resolve it so they feel OK going back the following week.

4) Trusting that the faculty are good teachers because the class produces good work isn’t working for everyone in the class. Too many faculty think of themselves as the purveyor of all wisdom and thus cut themselves off from students. I think some of the “but this is ArtCenter and we’re tough on you for your own good” thinking that follows us around is very damaging, keeps a bubble of self-satisfaction around us that leads to our defensiveness when a student describes their own negative experience. This isn’t about not being critical in the classroom, of course that’s part of our job. But shouldn’t we be thinking about -how we are critical-, how to get through to students in ways that

engage and respect rather than belittle and alienate? And shouldn’t we expect that faculty be self-aware and actively trying to improve themselves, to get better at being a teacher and not just being an “expert in their field”? (And to belabor a point, what does “expert in a field” really mean, anyway? It’s often another excuse for valuing one’s own references and opinions to the exclusion of other, less-represented but also valid references and opinions. Especially if you’re coming from a corporate background.)

5) I also want to point out that “we’re toughening them up for the real world” is not a valid logic but I hear it all the time. Professionals have some space to make choices about who they engage with, and how to engage with them. Students have much less choice—in many cases, no choice.

The second action against white-supremacist values and pedagogy was officially “service,” so, segway! Please see the next page.

FACULTY SHOWCASE PARTS 1&2

“The Faculty Showcase is a series where we explore ideas and works in progress for online teaching and learning with different faculty partners. This is a great chance to hear from peers and colleagues from across the college as they showcase an aspect of pedagogy they are actively exploring. Dig in with other faculty members as we discuss ideas and emerging practices around shared challenges and new opportunities.”

[Recording of part 1](#) | [Slides from part 1](#)

[Recording of part 2](#) | [Slides from part 2](#)

Week 12, Thursday (12/3/20), **Flipping and Zooming, Part 2, with Allison Dalton from Humanities and Sciences**. Allison has laced several platforms together to prompt student engagement with the text and each other, and has gotten some amazing results. For Part 2, she is going deeper behind the scenes of the first 5 weeks into the 'how to', using platforms like Perusall for annotation, Mural for project space, and DotED for content and reference material. The [PDF Slide Deck from Part 2 is also available here](#) for download.

Week 9, Thursday (11/12/20), **Flipping and Zooming – Building Community and Student Engagement, with Allison Dalton from Humanities and Sciences**. Allison shared how she developed her approach to ‘flipping the classroom’ in ways that allow students to build community and knowledge ‘outside’ of class through prompts, schedule, and structure that is initiated ‘inside’ the online environment. Some of the software/platforms introduced or discussed included DotED, the Google Suite, Perusall, and Mural. The [PDF Slide Deck is also available here](#) for download.

first thing

The following brilliant humans’ knowledges and/or efforts are central to this course design:

Simone Fujita Bibliographer, African American Art, Getty Research Institute
 Elaine Lopez Associate Professor of Graphic Design, AICAD Fellow, MICA
 Armando Zúñiga, Ed.D. Faculty Director, ELL; Director, Writing Center, Assistant Professor H&S
 Rocío Carlos Faculty H&S, Antiracist Classroom faculty advocate
 Erika G. Bertling Intercultural Educator and Consultant, Intercultural Awareness in Teaching and Learning workshop
 Sumun Pendakur, Ed.D. Faculty, USC Race and Equity Center, Pedagogy & Practice workshop

organizing principle

Handmade books, zines, and publications have always been a way for artists to work outward and share outward, to distribute their practice broadly. And they have always been a mode of working across practices, generating interdisciplinary collaborative circles, a ripple effect.

written with ACCD librarian Simone Fujita as wall text for the “reading room” corner of TOMES, last year in the Williamson Gallery

learning outcomes

- Revise and expand our understanding of writing: Its forms, rules, possibilities, applications in art and design
- Strengthen writing and communication skills, emphasizing the value of student knowledge, research, and languages
- Learn reading, writing, and organizational practices that are generative and support thinking and making process
- Engage with assigned readings as a writer does, deconstructing and making meaning by attending carefully to the author/artist’s choices
- Acquire a toolbox for thoughtfully engaging with a community through writing, image, systems of dissemination
- Develop both community and individual agency by investing in and expressing our identities, experiences, and ethics; and making space that invites others to do the same

spring and summer taught me

In a remote classroom, “discussion” is a talking head. There’s no room for “reading the room.”

Students have anxieties around education (not to mention everything else). They don’t get to sit next to someone during class who knows how they feel.

Students are always still learning how to convey their grasp of concepts through discussion, critique, response to assignments. And all of these activities are decentralized/disorienting and harder to do when remote.

Not all students enjoy or benefit from computers as an interface for all academic tasks. They’re already learning—from their bedrooms—norms, expectations, skills and ideas for five or six classes. Sprinkle multiple platforms on top.

so, -my- goals

The class includes and engages everyone

- Design for flexibility of student approach, skills, response, and comfort with platforms
- Students feel that we're all co-learners
- Students are doing stuff for most of every class

Texts are important. Texts are made by students

- Share contemporary, accessible examples in engaging ways
- Challenging and varied in idea, concept, platform, form
- Made by people like them
- Aspiration, inspiration, AND we could totally make that

Students use writing in authentic and meaningful ways

- Change the perceived and the actual audience and the stakes for "turning it in"
- Process, conversation, making
- In combination with their other skills

Students make things that matter

- Frame with ethics, frame with imperatives
- Make space for students to try, to choose, to invest

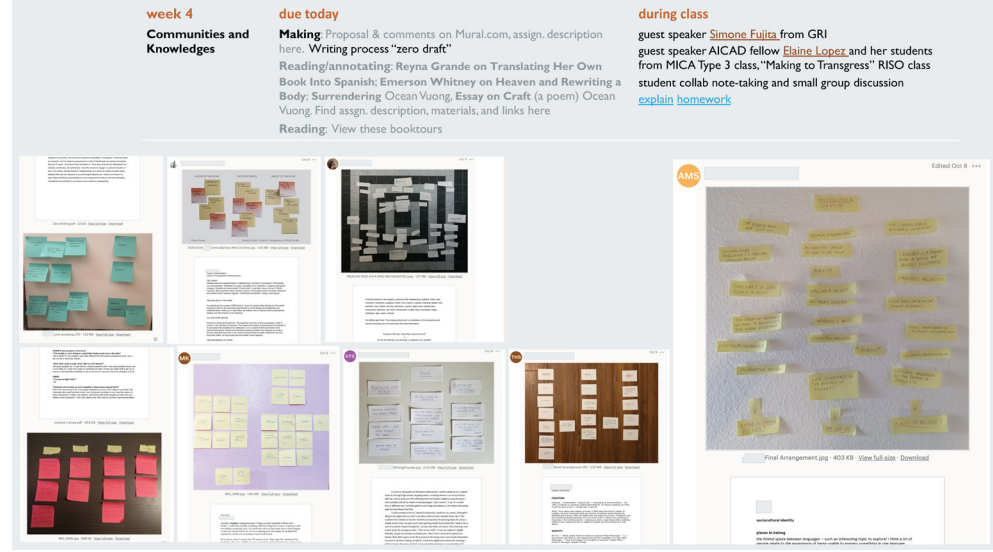
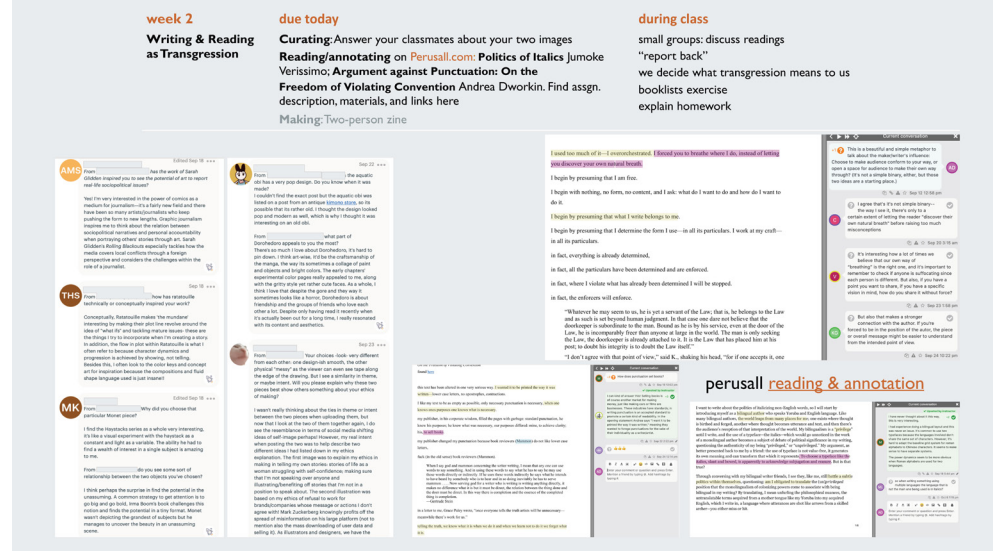
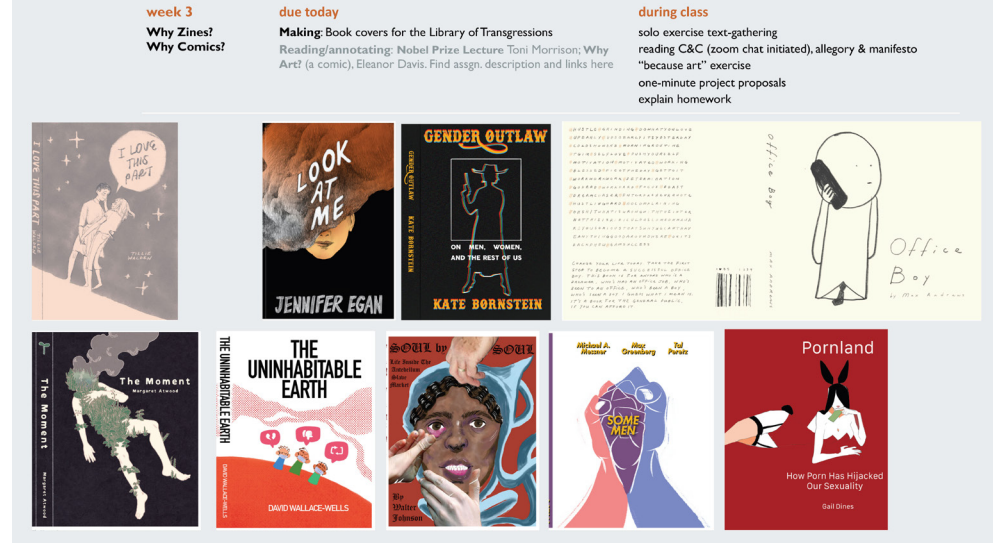
We build, practice, enjoy, benefit, benefit from, and value community

Comics & Zines

Majors & minors enrolled: Illustration Design, Motion, and Entertainment Arts; Entertainment Animation and Game Design; Fine Art; Graphics; Transportation; DM minor

Languages spoken: Korean, Spanish, Mandarin, Bahasa Indonesia, Cantonese, Taiwanese, French, Russian, Vietnamese, Japanese, English

Time zones: Aside from ArtCenter time, at least four



Committee work

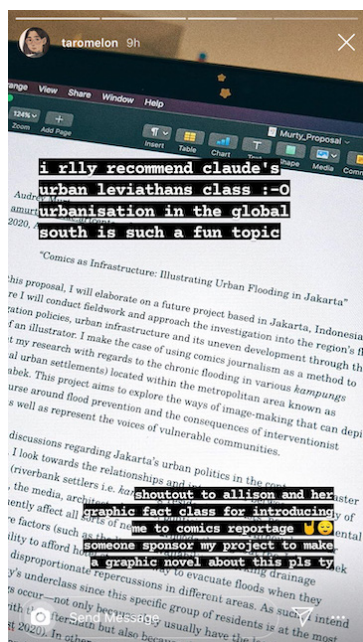
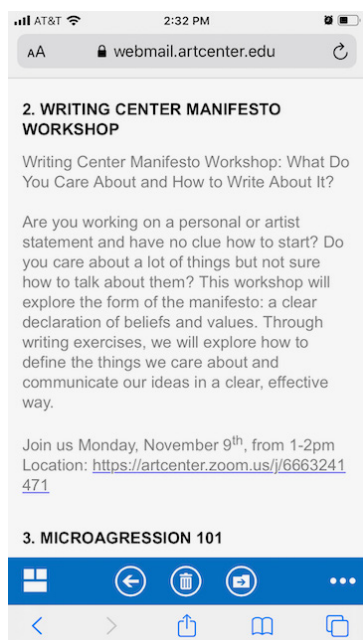
IDEA year committee
EMS optimization committee
SLED decision committee
H&S offsites

Additional planning & leadership

Chairs' Council meetings, COVID planning
Eight hours of "schedule workgroup meeting" with Rollin and Greg to manage the madness of fall 2020 class scheduling and campus access
Web Advisor/faculty self-service beta test group
Key contact for Heller Consulting while they conducted a Scheduling and Facilities Management review plus Change Management workshops

Culture & community

Co-curated TOMES show "reading room"/zine library, with Simone Fujita, also wrote wall text
New Student Orientation, faculty panel every term
Teach Artist Statement Workshop to prep Illustration students for scholarship and portfolio review every term
Gave artist's talk in Joshua Holzmann's Fine Art Collage class
Attended final critique for Carrie Hansen's new surface design class
Faculty advisor for Stitchuationists student club and Alter student club
Attended student complaint meeting with male admin as faculty ally
Read Teju Cole at the first annual Creative Writing Minor faculty reading
Interviewed by IxD students for "Teacher Experience in Remote Art and Design Education."
Support individual faculty pedagogy: Rob Clayton, Materials Workshop class development; Richard Keyes, Entertainment Arts Project Studio class development; Shenho Hseih, sourced texts for Illustrative Storytelling, Maura Bendett and Arden Stern, online teaching platform walkthroughs; Carrie Hansen, prep for first-term teaching



Not sure how to categorize what is captured in the two screenshots to the left but whatever it is, I liked seeing it

Amelia Yessayantz, now one of the Writing Center managers, was in my first *Beautiful Argument* class last spring. A manifesto-writing exercise I assigned (after we read Claudia Rankine's *Citizen* and Eleanor Davis's *Why Art?*) inspired her to develop and teach a school-wide manifesto-writing workshop.

And *Graphic Fact* got a shout-out in another brilliant student's post about Claude Willey's Urban Leviathans class.

Recent mentorships

Sofia Fernandez-Salvador, Creative Writing minor capstone
Tomo Qi, Grad Graphics, thesis writing/development
Kati Teague, thesis project, feminist Bluebeard graphic novel
Abbie Smith, TA for Comics + Zines, considering a career as a teacher

Co-teaching relationships

Lisa Wagner in Type + Authorship
Yoko Iida in TAMA Writing Studio
Armando Zúñiga in Beautiful Argument

Promoting/ making space for under-represented expertise and perspectives

Guest [Elaine Lopez](#) in Comics + Zines: AICAD fellow at MICA, graphic designer (web address), teaching RISO class
Recommended Carrie Hansen to teach in Illustration Surface track (she's the most qualified Surface Track instructor they've had)
Recommended former student/ACx faculty [Rachel Rogov](#) for ILL foundation classes
Recommended former student/ACx faculty [Carly Chubak](#) to teach fiber arts skills grounded in academic practice in Illustration Surface Track
Guest speaker Arden Stern in Graphic Fact: True Comics to discuss the history of image-making for social justice
Guest speaker [Erin Williams](#) in Graphic Fact: True Comics to discuss responsible comic-making grounded in research and informed consent of interviewees
Guest [AJ Dungo](#) (alum, was my student in Graphic Novel years ago) to discuss his graphic memoir *In Waves*
Guest speaker Simone Fujita in Comics + Zines to discuss her work as Bibliographer for the African American Art History Initiative at the GRI, present "Art Libraries, Zines, and You! Self-Publishing and Self-Representation in Library Spaces"

intermission

Centering our students' experiences

I am nervous that I will fail.

I am nervous I won't be as smart as others and will be at the bottom of the pack.

I am worried I won't socially fit in.

I am worried that if I do poorly academically, it will in some way be reflected back onto my gender and enable others to pass judgment.

I worry my male peers will not take me seriously.

I worry it will be too hard for me to cope and I won't have time to dance.

↳ Dawn Kasal Finley ♥ Retweeted



Shana V. White
@ShanaVWhite

Good morning educators. As we will still be teaching during a pandemic, please remember to humanize our schools as much as possible this fall.

Choose:

Compassion over Compliance

Patience over Policing

Community over Content

Praise over Punishment

Empathy over Enforcement

3:49 AM · 8/12/20 · Twitter for Android

- Value, name, and allow students to demonstrate a broader range of competencies.
- Affirm Ss' accomplishments. Praise tenacity and effort.
- Be more aware of your interactions. "Would I talk/react/behave in this way if it was a different student and why?"
- Apologize when you mess up.
- Intervene as an ally when you observe or are made aware of an overt incident or a microaggression – in person or in the virtual environment.

"Transparency means teaching students about more than just the course subject matter. It means telling students about your rationale for how and why you've chosen to shape their learning experiences."
– Mary-Ann Winkelmes

Strive for intellectual humility. Be willing to grapple with challenging ideas.

Differentiate between opinion – which everyone has – and informed knowledge, which comes from sustained experience, study, and practice. Hold your opinions lightly and with humility.

Recognize how your own social positionality (race, class, gender, etc.) informs your perspectives, reactions, and work.

Notice your own defensive reactions and attempt to use these reactions as entry points for gaining deeper self-knowledge, rather than as a rationale for closing off.

Identify where your learning edge is and push it. For example whenever you think, *I already know this*, ask yourself, *How can I take this deeper?* Or, *How am I applying in practice what I already know?*

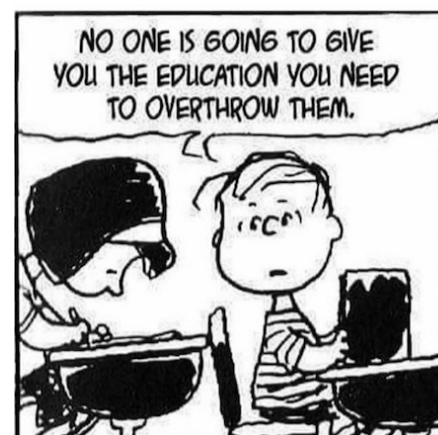
the four slides above from Dr. Sumun Pendakur's The Art & Science of Inclusive Teaching workshop, Oct 19 2020



Car Omholl and the Snacks
@caromholland

university: think critically!

also university: but not about us!



Rest assured that no matter how you respond, it won't matter whatsoever. We'll come up with a plan in consultation with an anonymous team of stakeholders, three renowned local astrologists, a haphazard compendium of tweets, and a seance that will be held over Zoom (please find the login and password on page 576 of the town bylaws). We will also hold a listening session in ten minutes, if anyone's around. Expect a link to be emailed shortly; please check your spam.

We welcome your feedback! Stay well!

from McSweeney's Internet Tendency, September-ish 2020

student work

Telling other people's stories is tough: a collection of thoughts

I absolutely love hearing other people talk about themselves. I think it's such a great way of connecting and relating, being vulnerable, having an opportunity to share something close to yourself with someone else. The best part is that it allows me to deflect the conversation from *me*. I get the (relative?) luxury of only having to think about how to deliver the story and keep the narrative from being muddled with my own personal opinions/views/biases (this can be dangerous, of course, if I let apathy become an opaque layer, obscuring the point of sharing someone's story). Throw language in the mix and it becomes a challenge. Growing up in that liminal space between identities/languages/cultures means knowing storytelling techniques that don't always fit into neat, conventional boxes. My first tangible struggle with this challenge was for a short comic I created in my illustrated journalism class. My attempt at talking formally to an older person in my native tongue was a terribly awkward experience and rewatching the recording had me wincing at how stilted I sounded. She was kind enough to mix some English words into her answers—that's how I was able to generate the text for the comic—but I wonder how different its tone would've been if I had only worked from Bahasa Indonesia.

That's sort of how public writing works (to me): allowing something I'm writing to expose a part of myself that I'd rather keep hidden under the obscurity of images because I don't have to put it into words in order to explain my story. I'm aware that images can be a 'safe way out' because they allow people to be more subjective with their interpretations. Words feel more permanent, somehow. They're a little harder to explain (that's why I'm a little more afraid of how people will read my writing). It is just now occurring to me: this fear stems from the possibility that my voice will get lost.

On the other hand, my fondness for oral histories stems from listening to people's voices and secrets. Supernatural/folk stories have a special place in my heart. I grew up surrounded by people with a sixth sense, who are especially attuned to spirits and the like. I'm sure everyone back home has had a personal experience or has heard a story from someone else. You could argue that it's all hearsay and that none of it is real, but what's so intriguing about Indonesia is that the culture is so deeply entwined with folk stories they have become accepted as a 'truth.'



(Some related anecdotes I love sharing:

1. One of my best friends used to have a sixth sense before her family closed it off. The first time I visited her, I was in the bathroom and she, from right outside the door, told me there used to be a ghost in the shower. She also said there was a girl ghost at the top of the staircase to her bedroom.
2. I've moved schools 4 times and collected various ghost stories from each place. I've grown fond of supernatural urban legends.
3. My mother grew up on the island of Belitung, an old place and thus imbued with a lot of supernatural energy. The last time we visited, she told me of this lion statue that people can't move: it would suddenly increase in weight or crush whoever tried.
4. A family friend can still see ghosts. She works as an animator now. For her thesis project, she illustrated all the demons/ghosts/spirits she's ever seen. I've never seen this work. Once, she talked to something incorporeal near my parents' bedroom and after she left, my parents kept finding weird dead bugs near their bedroom window.
5. My tante can see ghosts too. One time we stayed in an old hotel together and she saw a doppelgänger spirit that took my form.
6. A friend got his hands on a book about black magic and tried a spell but ended up with disturbed sleep for a good few months. He hopes one day I'll visit haunted places with him. I hope that day never comes.)

These stories are a good reminder that everyone has their own personal 'truths.' When I'm telling another's story, it's a careful balancing act between allowing the other person to retain their agency, but also transforming the story in a way that grows with the insertion of my 'self.' I'm aware that it's not just a matter of clearly articulating your ideas to the reader. It should be an exercise of inviting a multitude of voices and multifaceted narratives to interact with one another, continuously building on an existing story (the power of generative storytelling, as Toni Morrison says).



This is a product of intuition art. I have collected my own fragments of thoughts and words from random writings in class, and developed a more completed concept from them. In fact, the perception is exactly the same as when I create artwork. When I first started drawing, my art mentor taught me to first list a bunch of things I am interested in. It could be anything: music, objects, colors, characters, films. So I would list all my favorite things on a piece of paper, then use them to start an improvisation drawing however I want. This series of behaviors, including writing and improvisation, all indicate the importance of using intuition for artistic creation. And in intuition art, it actually magnifies the importance of “intuition” in the process talked about above.

However, some people have a prejudice against intuition art. They feel it does not have a defined content, but rather dumps out useless garbage fragments from their brains. What I want to say is: “garbage is resource but put in the wrong place.” Some people likes intuition art, but only by maestro. They believe that practice makes perfect, and more practice can achieve improvisational output of your favorite content. In this regard, there is an example that shows a completely different aspect—children’s art. The younger the children are, the better their art. They can express whatever themes they want to without any restriction. Older children, after learning some skills, cannot express such rich content as freely as the young kids do.

Intuition art can be divided into two branches. Intuitive conception and intuitive action. The so-called intuitive conception, is to find your own preferences through your subconscious mind. And intuitive action is to discover things that people don’t usually pay much attention to.

I am a park lover, and I like to go quite often. Japanese manga artists have a great influence on me: Jiro Taniguchi, Miyazaki and so on. There is a faction of manga artists who are keen to draw story lines without strong emotions, just what they see and feel in daily life when they take a walk. They have perfectly combined the two branches: intuitive conception and intuitive action. A dragonfly stops on a flower for a few seconds and then flew away. If the artist sees that few seconds, it would appear in their manga. This kind of creation has actually become their lifestyle. The manga master, Hayao Miyazaki, likes to hold a cup of coffee and count buses on the street while walking outside every morning. If he could count to certain number he expected in his mind, he would be very happy and it represents that he will do good work on that day. A very cute and nonsensical lifestyle. This is another aspect of what I mean by intuitive art—use intuition to observe the world.

There are a lot of the authors’ personalities hidden in their intuitively made story. Through some trivial things in their artwork, it reflects the author as a person and what the most important thing is to them. This also relates to what suffers me when I draw. Whenever I sit at a table and rack my brain to think about topics that I am interested in, the topics I don’t like that much always come to my mind. In this situation, I would spend a lot of time try to perfect my work. But at the end even if it is complete enough, I still don’t like it enough.

This method of working might sounds strange to some people. But it does exist, and it did work for several well-known artists. Therefore people like me, who suffer from coming up with topics, should try their best to find ways to turn weakness into gift. And I think intuition art is one of them.

As Zhuangzi wrote in *Autumn Floods*: “You cannot speak of ocean to a well-frog, which is limited by his abode. You cannot speak of ice to a summer insect, which is limited by his short life...” The first time I heard of Mr. Zhuangzi’s wisdom was during a dispute with my friend about whether tomatoes were fruits or vegetables. “Tomatoes are fruits because they have a lot of juice, just like oranges!” I roared with anger. “Tomatoes are vegetables, you idiot! You are a well-frog, I can’t explain to you what ocean is like!” he said. From then on I hated the phrase, not because I felt insulted, but because I didn’t know what it meant then, so I couldn’t catch up with him and lost my momentum. As we all know, quarrels do not need careful logic, just to quickly overwhelm your enemy in the momentum, so he is too late to think about what you say is right or wrong.

The child in my memory who argued with his friend whether tomatoes were vegetables or fruits is slowly changing. His skin gradually turns green and smooth, with flippers growing between the fingers, all of a sudden he jumps into a well and disappears. I no longer hate this phrase, because I realize that I am still a green frog, I looked up as I’m writing this, the sky is round. In other words, under the ideology of any era, any idea formed is limited in a sense.

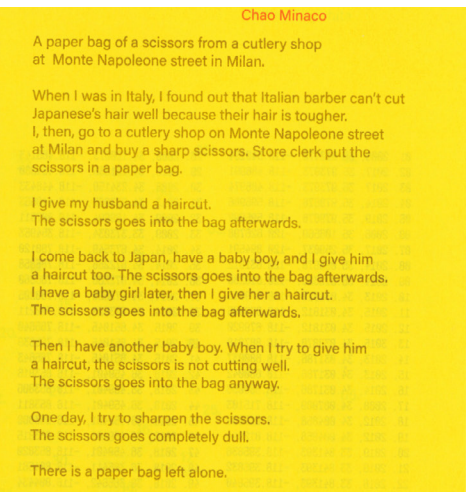
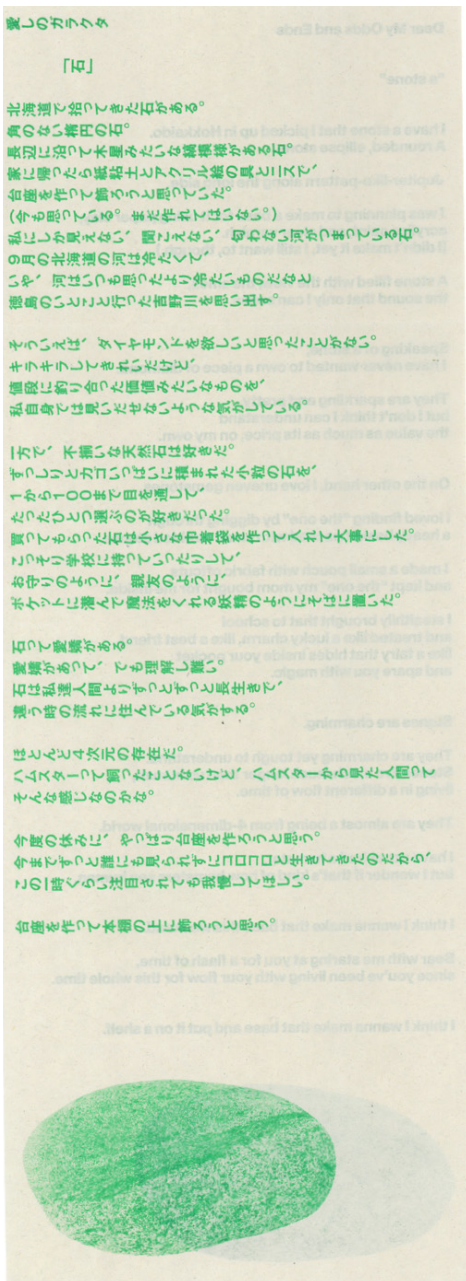
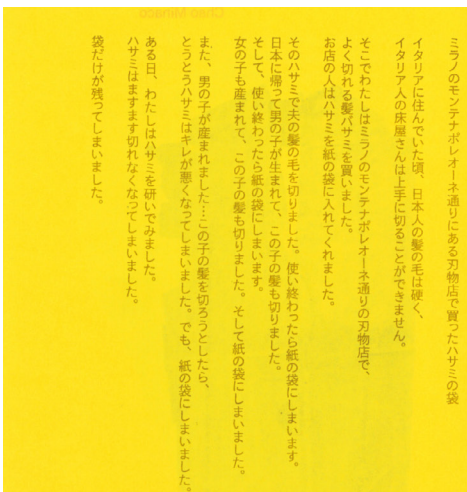
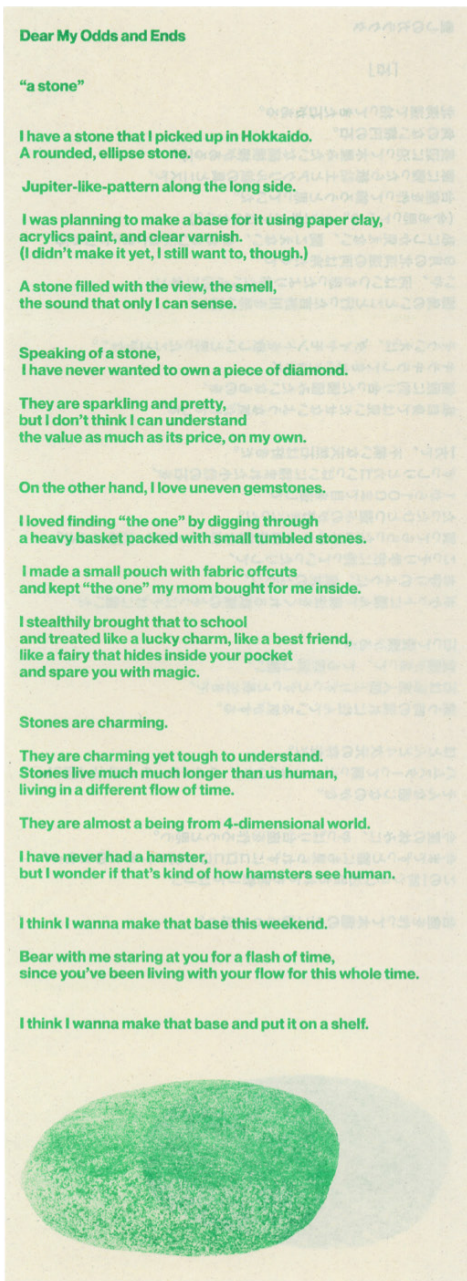
As I collect cognition fragments, I put them together. I realized that as the shape of my collection grew, the more fragments I needed. When I have very few fragments, I long to collect all the fragments in the world. As my collection grew, I gave up this absurd dream. If I had known that the dispute was only a grain of sand in the river of ones life, would the younger me still be so angry that he punched his friend in its stomach after he went speechless?

Although I often state that I am generally an optimist, my pessimism is everywhere

in my daily life. Like the younger me, if I had been optimistic, there would have been no quarrel at all. I had no idea if the tomato was a vegetable or a fruit, nor do I care, I only knew that it would be embarrassing if I lose. This is typical academic pessimism. If pessimism is about finding problems and become despair, optimism, on the other hand, must be finding problems with full of hope. As the Greek Sage said: “Uphills and downhills are actually the same road.” No one can be with full of hope for finding something that can’t be solved, it has to be because optimists have found a “solution” in this “unsolvable problem”. It doesn’t have to be the key to a lock, or maybe It’s “I’m going to have a delicious steak dinner and at the same time call the lock-opener, and when I’m done with the dinner, the lock is opened.”

Different from locks, many problems are keyless, then you can pick up an axe and smash the lock, but you won’t sit at the door thinking in despair that you may never be able to open the door for the rest of your life. Our society is very good now, it can tolerate a lot of desperate people sitting at the door and provide them with food for their survival, but this is not the case back in the old days.

For example, food shortages throughout society after a major drought have led to many people starving to death. If you want to eat a juicy steak at that time, you won’t rack your brains to figure out how to find it, or sit at the door and realize in despair how unrealistic it is to have a steak. What you’re going to do is you will look for everything you can eat (except steak) and make sure you don’t starve to death. In a live or die problem, people can only be optimistic if they want to live. In a relatively stable society in modern times, pessimism has become more important, because even though it is difficult to find the key, but it is easier to sit at the door and grieve.



In response: a selection of annotations

Create a community on this planet where instead of lying to survive, we can tell the truth and flourish.

I'm not understanding how the absence of punctuation can create truth, unless it means the truthfulness of the text being presented in its barest form (without unnecessary punctuation)? Or how one decides to perceive said text? Does this mean if a piece of text with proper punctuation is not understood by a reader, then said reader does not have access to the truth? I suppose this also creates discourse on what is the truth-- multiple interpretations, or a single correct answer.

Freedom to imagine new structures.

I suppose it depends on what form the text is? Some poetry tends not to reveal a narrative in favour of introducing new concepts (and sometimes it's indecipherable bc... mystery? lol idk).

Italics are therefore an assertion of selfhood, made self-evident in my creative writing.

Not linguistically related but similar to what Allison said about "othering": some stories do not say a character's race unless they are BIPOC. This is "white as a default" and "white assumption."

"What kind of Mexican writer are you?" The kind that can't write in Spanish.

As a Chinese-Indonesian who doesn't speak a lick of Mandarin, Hokkien, nor Cantonese (which my relatives speak) and is barely decent in Bahasa, cultural identity has never been my mode of expression.

For me, as an ESL student, [reading] was akin to standing in quicksand,

your loved ones corralled at its safe edges, their arms folded in suspicion and doubt as you sink.

I'm slightly confused how "suspicion" is used in this context. Genuine question: What would they be suspicious about? :thinking:

"No, where is the poem you plagiarized? How did you even write something like this?

And to use "plagiarize" specifically, a word that holds a lot of negative connotations. :head_bandage:

I gave it hands / despite knowing / that to stretch the clay slab / into five blades of light / I would go / too far.

TH: At first I thought fingers, but now I am unsure what he means by blades of light. Can anyone explain?

CT: The previous line says the material of the craft is clay. Considering the following line "dipped my fingers back into the fire," I think there's creative license in "five blades of light," maybe meaning exposure to high heat (I'm not sure what clay looks like inside a kiln), like the way our fingers turn red under a source of light.

Until every leaf shook silver / with that god / -awful scream

TH: Like a baby's first cry!

CT: I never thought of that (probably because I was sidetracked by "until every leaf shook silver")! After all, this essay/poem has been phrased like the creation and birth of a living being.

But a text doesn't exist without its author or without the time, place, and circumstances... in which it needed to be created. Which is why workshops are always, always personal, no matter how often we're told not to take it personally.

The irony.

Quotes 1 & 2
from "Andrea Dworkin's Argument Against Punctuation: On the Freedom of Violating Convention"

Quote 3
from "On the Politics of Italics," Jumokey Verissimo

Quote 4
from "Reyna Grande on Translating Her Own Book into Spanish"

Quotes 5 & 6
from "Surrendering," Ocean Vuong

Quote 7 & 8
from Essay on Craft, Ocean Vuong

Quote 9
from "Unsilencing the Writing Workshop," Beth Nguyen

Reyna Grande on Translating Her Own Book into Spanish (lithub.com, October 2019)

Two students didn't read, two read but didn't comment, 20 read and annotated

Thirty-seven minutes average reading time

Languages students mention they speak: Korean, Spanish, Mandarin, Bahasa, Cantonese, Taiwanese, Spanish, French, Russian, Vietnamese, Japanese

“Why don’t you write in your mother tongue? What kind of Mexican writer are you?”

SO: Being a part of the Korean Diaspora, I relate. I feel a kind of shame when confronted by my Korean relatives for not being fluent in the language. A shame for not being able to write in my ‘mother tongue’. Yet also my parents, both immigrants, also face a similar problem in America by native English speakers. They’ve faced a lot of racism and bigotry for not being fluent in English. “You come to America, you should know English by now,” they’ve been told. Being in a diaspora forces a lot of people to exist in this weird state between two countries :^(Almost this damning feeling of having to choose one over the other.

KGR: This is something that sometimes I even question myself but with art instead of writing. I have friends that reference Mexican culture in their work pretty often and I don’t do it much. It doesn’t come naturally to me as it does to some other people. In a way its like I feel the same judgement for not doing so because I’m Mexican.

MK: I feel I understand the shame involved in not “staying true to your roots”, or some sort of obligation in representing your culture, or taking ownership of it. I don’t know what’s the best approach. You need to know your context, in art or language. There’s a certain arrogance in saying, this is my culture, deal with it; I’ve also seen people really proudly embrace other cultures. Like Japanese manga culture has widely influenced artists, I’ve seen many non-Japanese artists adopting the visual style. It’s like, Japanese printmaking inspired the impressionists, and Western art also influenced Japanese Art in the Meiji period, and so on. So it’s also really hard to draw a line and say, this is my culture and only I can do this. Or to say to someone, this is your culture and you should only do that.

“The kind that can’t write in Spanish”

CT: As a Chinese-Indonesian who doesn’t speak a lick of Mandarin, Hokkien, nor Cantonese (which my relatives speak) and is barely decent in Bahasa, cultural identity has never been my mode of expression. Do any of you express race/ethnicity through your art?

“traumatized by my experiences with learning English”

WH: This definitely coincides with the idea language that we talked about - even if this oppression isn’t intentional. As a first generation immigrant Chinese in America. Cantonese was the first language I learned and spoke in my home, and my parents had me take Mandarin language classes as well. As I continued through high school and into college, my opportunities to speak in Chinese was superseded by the necessity for communicating in English in nearly all other settings. Today, I am barely fluent in my “mother tongue,” let alone able to write in it.

“The program was not intended to make me bilingual or biliterate”

VT: I never thought about it this way. I have younger relatives who moved to the US before they could properly learn their mother tongue. And now, even though we try to teach them and we always speak Russian at home, they think in English, speak English more fluently and have troubles expressing themselves in Russian. If the ESL programs were structured differently, maybe they wouldn’t have those problems.

KGR: How about families where the parents who do not know English have a kid that attends school and is only taught English and discouraged from their families’ tongue. I’ve seen it happen where parents and their children can barely communicate between each other.

BF: It’s unfortunate that being bilingual is not appreciated in American schools.

“little by little, my Spanish was supplanted by English.”

JS: I have many second and third generation immigrant friends that lost touch with our native language, and I’ve witnessed a language barrier that prevents them from being fully united with our mother culture. In many cases this leads to an everlasting struggle to find their identity and position in both the mother culture and adopted culture.

ADLT: ultimately you end up having to unlearn a lot of ESL/western propaganda as an adult and weasel back to ur genius bilingual/trilingual brain. this exact thing happened, set up to eventually pursue English in order to succeed in school, foggy in both spanish (mother tongue) and french by middle/ high school.

“subtractive bilingualism, the removal of my mother tongue, the psychological violence of tearing out a piece of my being.”

NR: I never knew there was a term for this-- the author describes it so violently and viscerally. It upsets me that so many people have to go through traumatic language-learning experiences. Different languages should be supported and celebrated.

SO: This idea of subtractive bilingualism reminds me back to a podcast I listened to from NPR’s This American Life: Umbrella’s Up: covering the stories about the Hong Kong protests. A Hong Kong citizen/student speaks up about how China is transforming Hong Kong to make it more like the mainland by changing the public school curriculum to force the students to speak Mandarin. (In Hong Kong, people mostly speak Cantonese and English. In China, Mandarin.)The student goes on to talk about how Cantonese feels like an identity to her. “It’s part of what makes Hong Kong, Hong Kong,” she said. But now her nephews are coming home speaking Mandarin better than English. A sort of removal of their identity through language.

“el patio”

TH: In relation to our first week reading, I find it interesting that she does not feel the need to italicize this term even though it is in Spanish. Instead, in the paragraph above she italicizes an entire sentence as a means of further highlighting how damaging the system can be psychologically.

“Sandra mentioned that a friend of hers in Mexico had read my translation of my memoir and was annoyed. “Your Spanish version has some typos or errors.”

J: This is mean. Even professional native speaker writers have typos and errors, that’s why proofread exist.

“Did it get proofed by a Spanish speaker?”

TH: This has to be one of the worst feelings you can get. The shame and humility you must feel for not being able to bring justice to your own native language. It hits a little too close to home

AM: yes to both the response and the cat meme TT

VT: I understand the point, but also, why wouldn’t the writer get it proofed? Everybody makes mistakes, even in a language they know perfectly, typos and errors do not make you a lesser writer.

“I knew my translation was not perfect, but it was mine. It was my attempt at reclaiming my Spanish by using it in my writing. It allowed me to look at my book and feel proud to only see my name on the book cover, not a stranger’s”

HS: I relate to this heavily, there’s something about my use of broken Japanese that makes it more personal to me. While my use of the Japanese language may not make sense to a native Japanese speaker, it’s a broken language that I grew up with and took time piecing together. In a roundabout way, this also makes me think of art and the ethics of making. Feeling pride from knowing that a piece of mine came from my hands alone feels personal (a part of my ethics of making) and I’m relieved I’m not the only one who feels this way.

JM: The fact that she’s trying to be true to her mother tongue in her own way shows her struggle and determination to reclaim even a tiny bit of it so she can ease the guilt of English overtaking her identity

“except it no longer felt as if it belonged to me.”

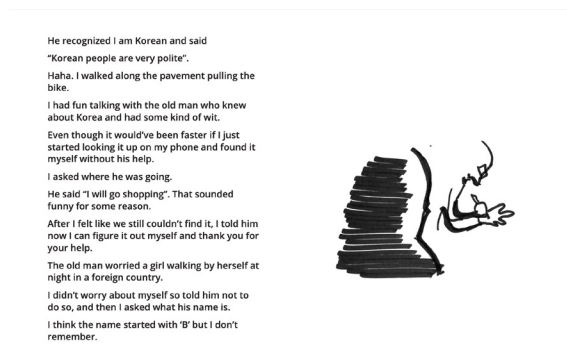
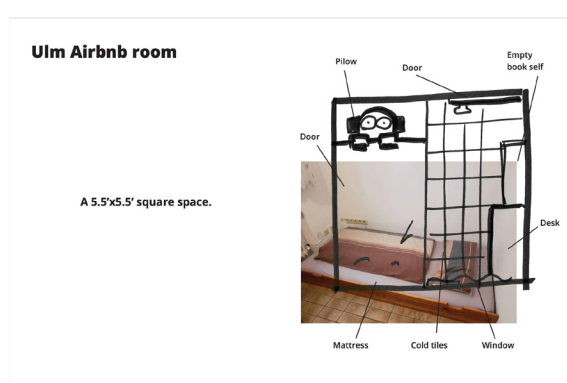
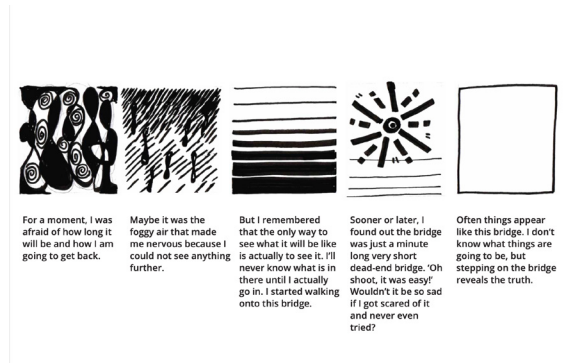
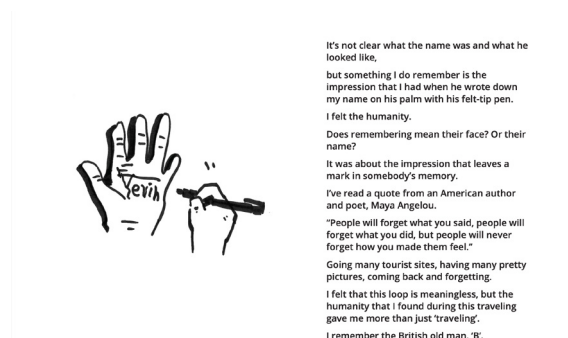
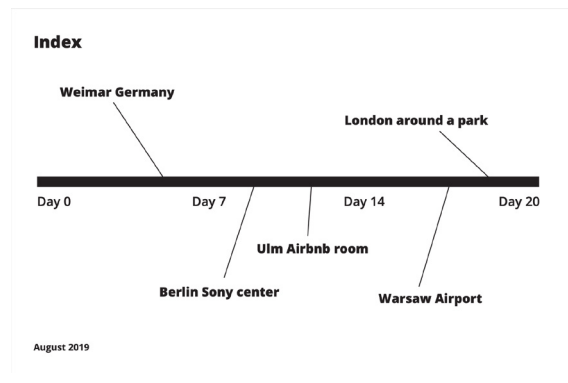
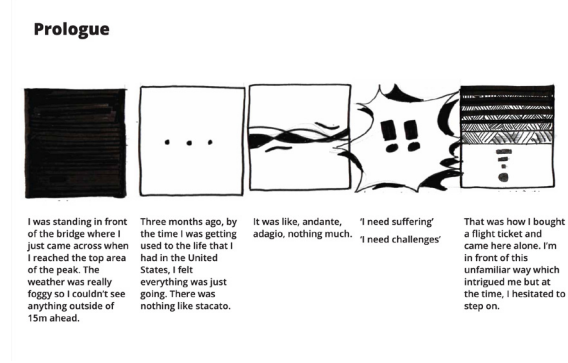
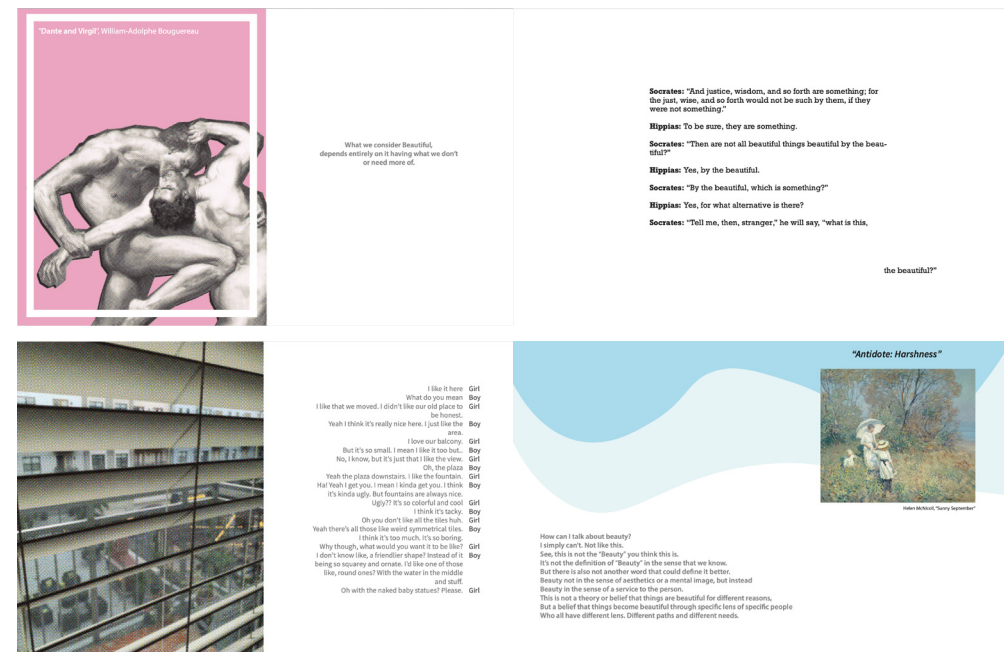
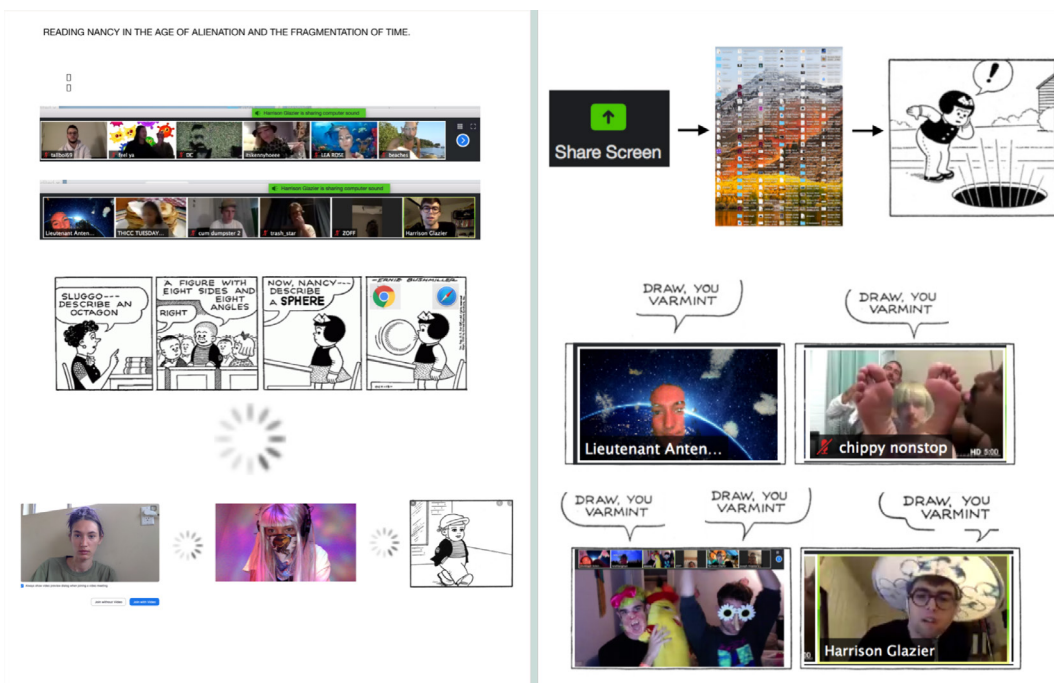
TH: I think that as an artist, this is something that is very frightening- sacrificing your own voice and identity for the sake of public approval

MO: There are words and phases that exist in one language and does not exist in other languages too. They are also very hard to translate since there is literally no words to alter. I also think that those exclusive words are often the ones connected to the original culture, deeply.

What I cannot live with is not trying to reclaim what I once lost—my first language, my first love.”

ML: so so nice. she acknowledges her advantages of immigrating to the US, but more importantly, accepts that accurate doesn’t mean perfect and recognizes her own self power within her voice and literary being

NR Yes, agreed! This conclusion gives me similar vibes to “Argument against Punctuation” in that a work is not invalid just because it does not follow perfect conventions or rules, even the rules of a language. In the end, it is still the author’s voice.



top: weekly homework submission by graphic design major Luisa Cameron-Coats in the first days of April 2020, in response to a reading assignment in [How To Read Nancy](#) and our first two long weeks of remote life
other: pages from Pete Zaraganas' and Yerin Cho's—both English language learners—final projects



Xinran Zhang, she

Nov 11, 2020 ●●●

In the "unflattening" or Scott's "understanding comics," they both mentioned a relationship between language and image. In the "understanding comics," Scott talked about the evolution from realistic style to cartoon style. The simplified realistic style leads to be also understood. Because the information in the realistic style is not discarded by simplification, in the "unflattening," language is a way of transmitting it. Each mode will selectively transmit a type of information. For example, a thermometer will tell you the temperature, and the map will tell you the location information. We extract useful information from it. Images are another system, and words cannot replace the information conveyed by images. The image can accurately represent the content, but the text can only explain roughly, and the text is usually written after the describer's own thinking.

But the comics combine text and images very well. The composition in the comics mixes visual images and text. From reading to viewing, and then from viewing to reading, this kind of information exchange can express more in-depth content. In addition to text and images, some symbols and signs are fused. Therefore, the composition of comics has been carefully designed. Comics should allow various information to maintain their own independence but still have to serve the entire comic. Breaking through a single observation mode is also an advantage of comics over pure text. Comics have both continuity and fragmentation.

I want to adapt Soobin Kim's midterm comic. How can we adjust from our lost emotions quickly? What other examples can live a life reminiscent of us? Just as the fire is gradually extinguishing in camping, I can cite some similar points to describe the pressure of life. Wouldn't it be more vivid to tell the whole story in a memoir way? I can learn from the story style in "fun home" and use it to recall interspersed memories to increase the story's depth.



Leslie Kwan, she

Oct 13, 2020 ●●●

being "poetic," is influenced by the storyteller. The upshot of this view is that history always has narrators, and narrators have subjective perceptions that influence how historical "truth" is presented. Some individuals have transferred White's basic idea from historical to autobiographical writing. Eakin writes that "autobiography is nothing if not a referential art; it is also and always a kind of fiction" (1990: 131); even more directly, comic book creator Jason Lutes writes that "imposing retrospective order on the messy unfolding of experience may be unavoidable in autobiography" (24).

Illustrating moments that were not originally experienced in the comic artist's perspective seems to be quite a common characteristic, particularly in "Fun Home" and "In Waves." That would, in a sense, make those particular sections fiction, as the comic artists themselves have not experienced those moments, or at least not absolute truth. There is a quote from Eakin in "Comic Books vs. Memoir," which says that "autobiography [...] is also and always a kind of fiction," because of the general subjectivity of any memoir that does not convey events in a purely objective manner but also perhaps of depictions like these.



In "Fun Home," there is a page illustrating one of the possibilities of how Bruce passed away. This is literally fiction as the audience and everyone else besides



Sebrina Gao, she

Nov 4, 2020 ●●●

Comics as Journalism's benefits in being a "slow medium." Comics Journalism as "slow journalism" has many benefits. It allows the authors to spend more time with subject and research thoroughly, allows authors to draw meticulously and consider the best way to represent the drawing, and visualize history in a broader context with critical awareness to time.

The longer time spent with a topic will allow the author to digest the information and think about the way in which they want to convey their images. For instance, in "Arts in Society, Comic Books as Documentary Form," the article we read for in class discussion on week 6, Art Spiegelman had to "compiling the massive amount of documentary material—written, visual, and oral—that he used to research and write Maus" (page 6). Furthermore, in the Mark Frauenfelder's slide lecture, Spiegelman stated in the interview that

- "Part of what I was doing with Maus was trying to work out my personal issues, which involved understanding the places where world history had smashed up against my family's history. Another part was trying to find out what was under the hood of the underground comic. What were they as a formal medium?"

By spending a longer time with a subject, comic journalists avoid flash news and have to consider the effects of the subject matter beyond the immediate. Doing more research can lead to a more accurate truth.

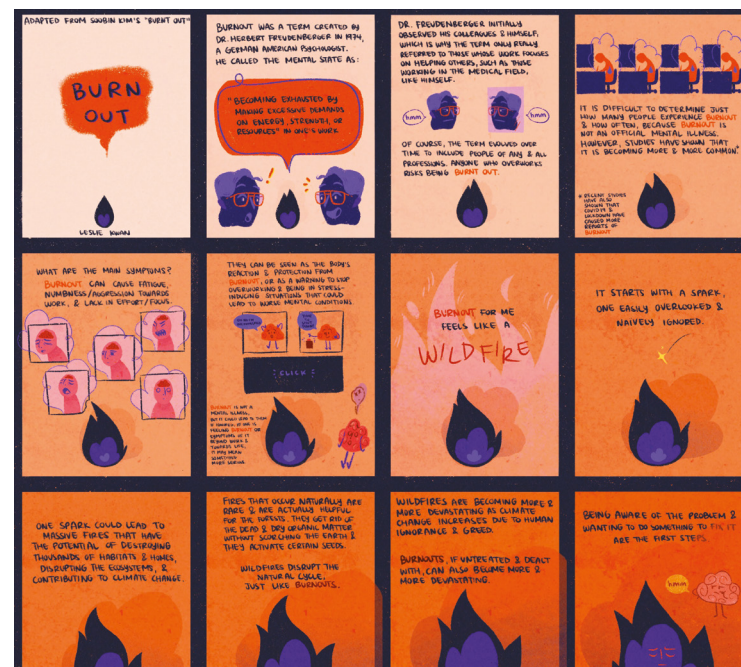
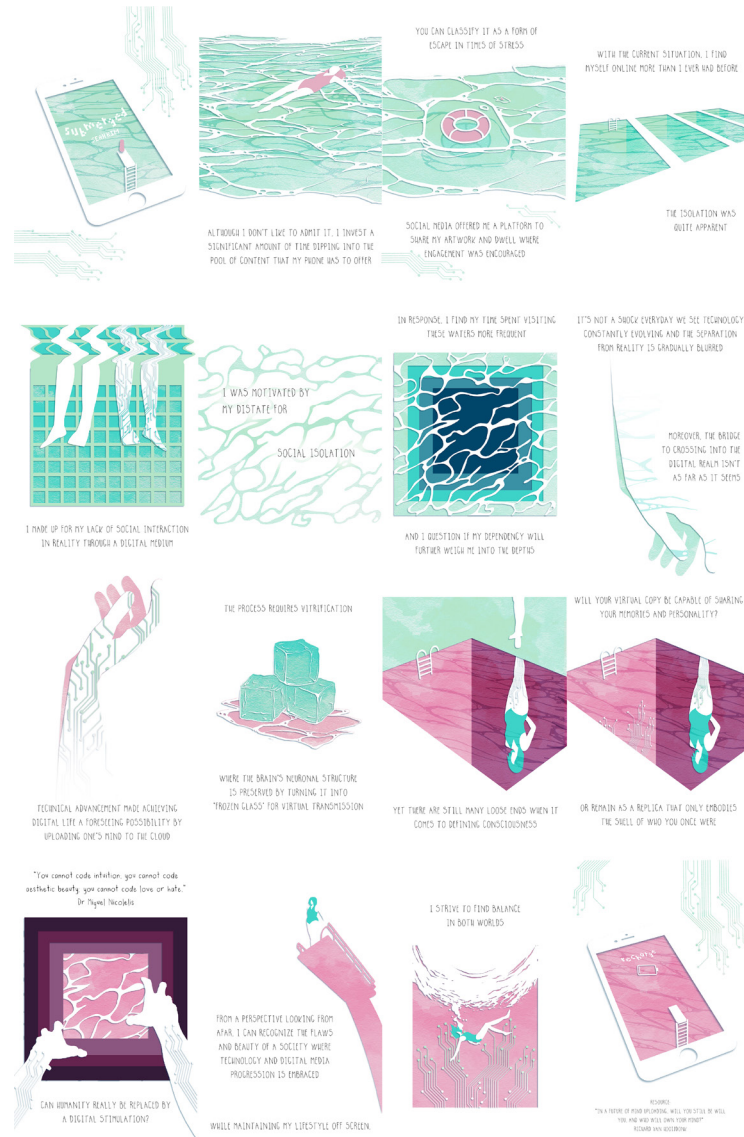
Additionally, comics as journalism is a laborious hand drawn process that can act both as "materializing history" and create detail that allows the reader to understand the meaning clearly. It creates images that sensationalize history to force readers to reckon the impact of such truth.



For instance, the amount of hand drawn detail in the comics by Sacco in Paying the Land force readers to consider an additional layer of meaning. This page where the speech bubbles are broken up into pieces can emphasize the story the woman is telling, which is of her behaving like a wild animal. Also, the repetition of the crying girl creates an imagery that reinforces this, and it is something that cannot be captured by photos or words. The fact that these images exist simulations on a single page is something unique to comics, and this type of journalism creates a materialization of history. As Sarah Gilden states through Mark Fauenfelder's lecture, "Sometimes people feel desensitized to these stories about war and hardship... and hand painted images might make someone take a second look." Comics as journalism delivers a stronger impact with the addition of images.



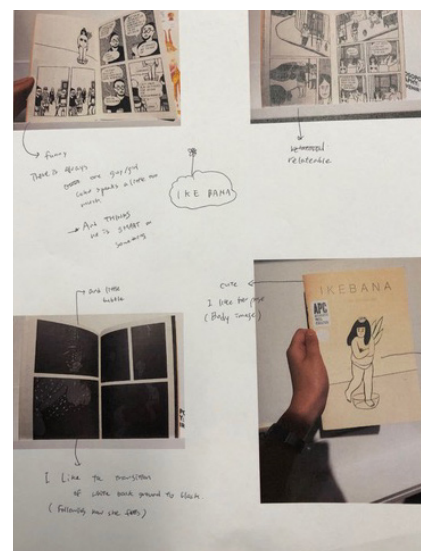
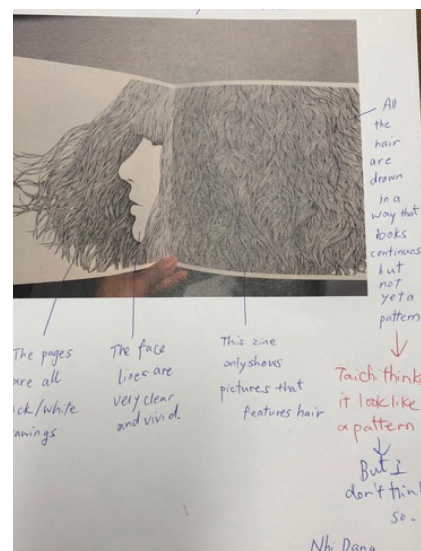
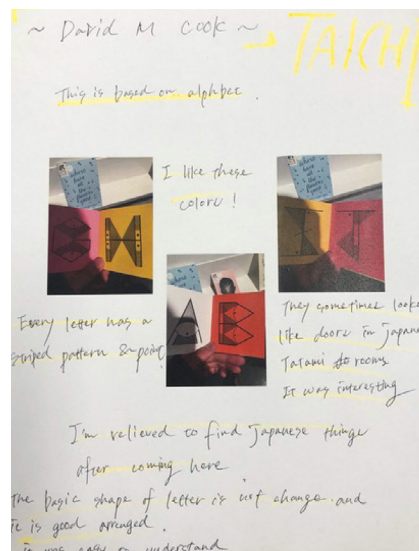
Finally, comics as slow journalism can allow history to be seen in a broader context. Awareness of time was emphasized in both of my independent comic readings through visuals. In "Are we Doomed? Five Cartoonists on Living through Climate Change," Author Maki Naro used images to display the contrast between the 90s and the present day. By adding detail in relation to Captain planet and the signage, additional meaning is given to the comic so that the passage of time is



final projects

above: Chloe Tang
top left: Seah Kim
bottom left: Leslie Kwan

also: on your phone, read
Keiji Ishida's project at
internationalnational.myporfolio.com



On the first day, we discussed zines as process books, and the two zine projects they'd be completing as part of our class. I then walked them over to the TOMES show at the Williamson and gave them an assignment: Choose a zine from the reading room, or a book project from the galleries, and use photos to record your impressions of the object. Their homework was to arrange those photos on a page and hand-annotate to explain their observations and impressions of the object they chose to others. This was a low-stakes use of writing to explain ideas about art, design, books, etc.



El Sereno graffiti tour with Ethan Johnson and his American Graffiti students



Pussyhat Project designer Jayna Zweiman at The Little Knittery



Cache's campus visit. This is totally not new graffiti in the spray booth



For our final, we met in the library and the students read a piece of writing, a "Letter to LA" inspired by an assigned reading, out loud to the group. They decided to surprise Yoko and me with homemade food that also reflected their LA experience... such as cookies decorated with the Rhino software logo (Rhino class was the bane of their term).

RBRB IS A WORK OF UNPARALLELED AUTHORITY AND SCHOLARSHIP.

OUR EDITORS HAVE LONG BEEN DOCUMENTING THE EXPERIENCES OF LIFE THAT POSE special problems of confused or disputed reaction. Thus this work brings to the reader a guide, a reflection, a collection of works (examples of the processes to best do just about everything) researched with the focus of a red hot laser and executed with the glinting edge of absolute precision. Should you wonder how to address letters to a long lost memory from a dry, dry desert, should you seek the recipe for an apocalyptic mantra, should the pop-up ads on your computer stir up the urge to drive on a highway toward the winding possibilities of elsewhere and should the white of a suggested speed limit sign on said highway discourage you, should your innards be so stuffed with cake that buttercream extrudes out your eyes, should the procedure of removing cupid's arrow from your ass make you dizzy, should you find yourself lost in the supermarket, or wishing for your dog to know his name, let this text be the stone that sharpens your smile into something no melon can match.

For those who are alive this is not just a reference book to be picked up only to settle a dispute or solve a practical problem. Here is the real stuff of the day-to-day, the opportunity to experience its vitality through not just good old words from the best writers in the language, but additional clarifying and super-rational diagrams, illustrations, screen-grabs, polaroids made by same.

RBRB belongs on the bookshelf or desk—or perhaps under the passenger seat where one's Thomas Guide once waited at the helpful ready and has in its obsolesced absence left a radiating emptiness—of everyone who is serious about anything. Its wealth of information and careful guidance will amply repay the modest investment of the half-inch of space and glancing occasional distraction it might take up there.

After a thorough skim of this "collected works," we of the Reference Book Review Board (also *Cabal*) have deemed this copy unusable and have only decided to allow it be printed for the sake of example. Let this illustrate how not to write a reference book.

In the words of our experts: "This is about experiences, and if the reader does not find solutions, they will, at least, find company within the pages"; "This is absolute nonsense. Have a good time finding your way around this labyrinth"; "Unexpected and ambiguous. Isn't that how life is?"; "Ridiculous."

Sincerely, and with *exhaustion*,
Your RBRB



ANNOTATIONS
(see *Jelly Donuts*)

- 1) I don't know why I do this. It's sort of a new habit I indulge in every once in a while. I just give into impulses.
- 2) I've stolen three A style barricades. One is in my garage.
- 3) Bavarian Cream was a close second.
- 4) I use it for birthdays.
- 5) I think I gave away the ballerina.
- 6) I'm saving the deer.

ANNOTATIONS
(see *Untitled*)

- 1) You never said them back.
- 2) You never said those back either.
- 3) Were you not in the hours I spent with you?
- 4) Where is here? Were you ever here?
- 5) We always said we would go to the sea one day together. But we never did. You were always at the beach, searching for something different.
- 6) Please breathe.
- 7) It didn't.
- 8) And I was your name.
- 9) Do you ever wonder how lonely it gets being just a name?
- 10) So lonely.
- 11) So very lonely.
- 12) Did you even consider that ever?
- 13) You've always been drifting. Don't place that on me.
- 14) And I was nothing.
- 15) And now I am everything.
- 16) Yes.

ANT FARM
The world is so big. We use reuse and recycle—what else is there to live for? Some do things for others, and others do things for the kin. We work as a whole, or so we should.

BABY TEETH
Back at home, I've got a tub of teeth. They're all mine from over the years. Small, ivory and a bit misshapen. If you look closely, many of them have small holes drilled from being filled at the dentist when I had cavities. And each one holds a specific memory from when or where they fell. This one fell as I tripped on the concrete. And that one was from summer vacation, where I almost ate as it fell off while eating ice cream. I like to show my teeth to my friends when they come over, because I think they are cute. Most people don't feel the same way.

BAKERY
"I can bake." I raised my voice to say this to Tulio. "Yes, young lady. Why don't you try some cake decorating today?" Apparently they baked the cakes in a warehouse that delivered metal lockers packed with cakes. The only in-house baking was for breads and cookies, and that was handled by big-armed men. A petite old man with horrible vision and a bad attitude was in charge of cake decorating—Tulio thought it was a perfect fit.

Every morning I'd get to work in pitch black. I left my purse in a drawer behind the counter, grabbed an apron, and clocked in by six. I made myself Earl Grey with a splash of espresso at the coffee counter to keep my eyes open for the next eight hours. Sometimes I'd say good morning to a small woman with faded orange hair. She had a fuchsia downturned mouth and bored eyes. "Hello Simin."

In the voice of a shrill, sad muppet, "Hello beautiful." I loved to hear her complain.

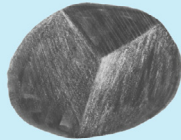
Saying "buenos dias" to the bakers would result in a chorus of good mornings in return, "Buenos dias," "Good morning," nicknames, nods.

A favorite routine: Jaet enters at 1pm. In a harsh, monotone voice she calls "Yello, yello!" Variations on "yello" in response. Miguel, the head baker and possibly the happiest there, lifts his head and purses his lips to make melodic trilling bird calls. (also *Hazelnut Cake*, *Jelly Donuts*, *Sausage*, *Sliced Pear*)

CABAL
(see *Reference Book Review Board*, or *RBRB*)

COCCYTUS
If they can call crying a health benefit, they've never truly lamented. The kind of tears that fall ice cold instead of hot, and freeze you to the spot. Captured—even when you leave you cannot truly leave. Grab a jacket, don't unzip it, the shivering will never stop.

CONSTANT VISITOR, THE
She asked me who I was here to see in her cold broken voice, as if she didn't mean it. As if she too found 20 dollars lying on the ground and gave it back to the person she'd seen drop it regretfully, angrily.



CORNER
Suddenly we are made to realize, through a literal or symbolic corner you turn: This person is a person. Human, though we're not fond of this word, the way it delivers a tender meaning we're a little too knowing to undividedly accept. This story will of course assign a gender, single or compound as needed, because that makes the pronouns much less clunky to apply. But it will not insist, here at the beginning, that such things matter so much that we should peer through only that filter. This person you give us is what they're thinking right now, not what someone else in the story might see if they passed him or her or they while headed in the other direction, registering their appearance for a moment before forgetting them entirely.

If this was a different story, we might leave our person and start following this new one instead.

Here, maybe things get a little frustrating. Our way is lost, briefly. We need to really connect, hunker down, to stop being distracted by the broader scene. We need concrete specifics in order to allow ourselves to feel the weight of the universal. (We don't know why. We may not even recognize that this is so. But we feel it, we feel it when it happens right.) (also *Hunker Down*)

COUPONS
Twenty percent if you buy 3 or more of the same type this weekend only starting the 14th through January all sale whole sale at 50% if you buy mix and match the price for maximum savings minimum amount sales tax applies to entire purchase for 15% back on your purchase of \$50 or more bang for your buck when you buy within the next hour on the hour for full rebate and sale half your check only one per person at checkout to enter only valid through January of this year round sale savings for your family and 5 friends and you'll get \$23 in shipping.

DIRECTIONS
Get on the freeway and we'll be there before you know it. Turn the music up and anxiety down. Headlights in our rear-view mirror are fireflies with 50/50 foresight.

"They say this place is abandoned because..." you're not even listening to me. Baby's lashes but whenever they want. With our egos exasperated, we're burning our old selves to the ground.

Find where we're staying. Check in to check out the evening. Take care of our tradition of turning on the hotel TV. Wanna get fucked up to get fucked up? We can go anywhere. Right your wrongs, start walking on the left foot. Trip over untied laces, fall flat on your face. Chip a tooth, take a shot. Like stars, we're dead yet still sparkling.

We're in Heaven: No pain, strawberries and champagne. You worry too much. Snort a line, everything will be alright. Just me and beautiful boy Lucifer all Saturday night. Hands like fire, but his breath is cold. Piercing emerald eyes get me every single time. What's worse—the drugs or how you make me feel?

We laughed, we ate, we destroyed the garden. My vulnerable skin is poisoned with his kisses. All black, all bruised. Love me to get you lit. Hit you for a temporary high. You and I are good at finding ways to die.

DESTROY THE EAR

SIDE A
SIDE B
DEMO

READER
ART BOOK
CHAPBOOK

SO PLUG IN YOUR HEADPHONES RIGHT NOW AND PRESS PLAY

The Editors

This album is going to change your life. You're going to listen to it on repeat every time you go through a breakup, or move to a new city, or find out yet another hidden truth about your family that your parents couldn't tell a thirteen-year-old. You'll be able to sing along with all the lyrics, except for a rap section in the middle where the guy talks too fast for you to catch. You'll recommend it to all your friends—you'll annoy all your friends. That's okay. You don't need friends. What you need is this album.

Do you know how fucking hard we worked on this album? We had to replace the lead singer halfway through because he kept trying to eat beef jerky in the recording booth. Who does that? And the bassist kept criticizing the lyrics, which are, by the way, fantastic. You're going to be tempted to include a couple in your wedding vows. (Don't. That's tacky.) Anyway, he failed English his sophomore year of high school, so he can just shut up.

I'm telling you, we worked day and night to make this perfect. It took years. At times we were tempted to stop, just because the album was "good enough" and "already [had] too many songs" and "we're getting really worried about you, man; you don't look good. Melly told us you're not sleeping." But we persevered. What you hear before you today is not just a good album: it is the definitive album, it's groundbreaking, genre-bending, and, dare I say it, the culmination of all of musical history. It's the cure for what ails humankind; it'll help you open all the doors in your mind, find yourself, and reach nirvana.

Just listen to it. You'll see the future, hear the human soul, fall in love with the bagpipes, learn several things about birds, meet famous musicians, get swallowed by the sea, attend a funeral, prepare for a soccer game, and, finally, after a lifetime of advertising jingles and bland pop: understand music.

Where you can listen to this album:

- | | |
|----|--|
| 01 | As an edgy tween at a barbeque avoiding your parents' god-awful music. |
| 02 | When you're lying on the floor of your bedroom amidst piles of clothes that you dread putting away. |
| 03 | Driving alone in the car through a neighborhood that you don't know and are also kind of lost in. |
| 04 | At a party, trying to impress people with your super cool taste in music. |
| 05 | At the beach when you forgot sunscreen but don't even care that you're getting burned because the music is so good that you don't want to move. |
| 06 | When you miss literally anyone. |
| 07 | When you feel like an idiot because you said something really dumb and you now need something to distract you. |
| 08 | At full volume when you're home alone and dancing in your underwear. |
| 09 | In the shower. |
| 10 | When you're on the train but you forgot your headphones. No one will even mind that they can hear it because it's so good. In fact, they'll be sad when you get off the train. |
| 11 | When you're testing speakers at Best Buy. |
| 12 | At church because this album is holy. |
| 13 | When you're in an elevator with your headphones in. (This album is being played from your headphones, not from the elevator. This is not elevator music. But you can listen to it in an elevator.) |
| 14 | On the radio right when you need it most. |

INTRO

The Pope's Top Five Workout Songs
The Washroom Review
What Is That?

VERSE

Some Facts about Music
Music Producer Writing an EDM Song
Degenerates
Cruising

CHORUS

At the Boob Joke Emporium
Let Me Man Up
These Events Are in Order
Dear Guy in Rooney,
Accumulated Playlists
Prayer to an Asshole

BRIDGE

2x2
The Sound of Future Music
Friends
Pack Enemal
You Don't Care about Blrds (Sestina Remix)

OUTRO

Goodbye Sour Rice
Parking Lot Piper
Floating
Places I Found Woody Guthrie
S.,
No Woman, No Cry

a chapter, co-written with c++ students

maybe also to you
VT: I was a little confused in the first weeks of class, but when we distinguished project and writing it got better for me

organizational practices
MM: It'd be interesting to look at more methodologies for organization!

thoughtfully engaging with a community
SO: all these annotations and open conversations between readings has been an interesting experience! I've had a lot of fun engaging with and learning new things from classmates. It's been very comforting to know that I was often not alone in my experiences.

Develop both community and individual agency
AM: this class has been a helpful space where we can learn how to look outwards and consider the intent and impact of our work beyond our own selves :o) it's a good tie-in to explore our ethics of making.

Cabinet magazine
MK: I read bits of this in Type+Authorship, and I really enjoyed it. It's hilarious.

Writing as making: a mid-term check-in

To revise and expand our understanding of writing: Its forms, rules, possibilities, applications in art and design

Thank you to all of you, once again, for figuring out this class with me. I just looked back at the course description and the syllabus; even though sometimes it feels (to me, **maybe also to you**) like I haven't given you a clear enough through-line, I think (fingers crossed) we're doing the things we set out to do. The first learning outcome is now the subtitle of this thing I'm writing—this thing that will hopefully help me articulate the organizing principle of our work so far—and here are the others, which should also pop up throughout in different ways:

Strengthen writing and communication skills, emphasizing the value of student knowledge, research, and languages

Learn reading, writing, and **organizational practices** that are generative and support thinking and making process

Engage with assigned readings as a writer does, deconstructing and making meaning by attending carefully to the maker's choices

Acquire a toolbox for **thoughtfully engaging with a community** through writing, image, systems of dissemination

Develop both community and individual agency by investing in and expressing our identities, experiences, and ethics; and making space that invites others to do the same

Right now we have two parallel efforts in motion, project work and writing work. In many of the readings and booktours that are examples and inspiration, “project” and “writing” are the same thing. I'm hoping they resolve themselves into the same thing for you, too, during the last half of our class. (If they don't that's OK! Whatever you don't use, I'll ask if I can make public in my own project.) Week eight we're going to commit to being writers for real and thus have a writing workshop, so hopefully following this train of thought of mine helps us understand ourselves that way.

As examples of how the two threads have come together for other writer-artists, listed just below are a few books I've shared with you in booktour form, but that we haven't yet discussed. Here's a framework for understanding these as a group: They are all made by one or two people who gather their own work, and/or things they have collected driven by their own personal fascinations, into a book-shaped project for which the research and process and text and image are inextricable. They are “project” and “writing” together.

Citizen: An American Lyric by Claudia Rankine, 2014. Book-length poem about race, American culture, and the imagination that reproduces art and images made by other people as part of its rhythm and meaning.

Girls Standing on Lawns by Maira Kalman and Daniel Handler, 2014. Forty vintage photographs from MoMA's collection, plus both original paintings by Kalman and lyrical texts by Handler inspired by them.

Thunder and Lightning: Weather Past, Present, and Future by Lauren Redniss, 2015. Written while Artist-in-Residence at the American Museum of Natural History. She learned an antiquated printmaking technique used for natural history studies, copper plate photogravure etching, to make the images.

A Humament by Tom Phillips, 1966–2016. An altered book, made from a Victorian novel, by layering his own work onto each existing page.

Swimming Studies by Leanne Shapton (non-fiction), 2012. “There seems to be nothing she cannot write or paint about with a precision both surgical and poetic.” A collection of image and text examining the personal disciplines of competitive swimming and making art.

Guest Book: Ghost Stories by Leanne Shapton (fiction), 2019. “Reinvents the way we narrate experience.” Full of images, photos, wrapping paper, competing texts, and meta-meta-fictional fun and games.

Notes on Glaze: 18 Photographic Investigations by Wayne Koestenbaum, 2016. Every three months, the editors of **Cabinet magazine** would give Koestenbaum a single photograph he had never seen before. **He wrote extended “captions” for each.**

OK, to backtrack a bit—writing. So far this term, we've read quite a few writers who write to assert: By deconstructing and reclaiming the mechanics of writing (Jumoke Verissimo's *On the Politics of Italics* and Andrea Dworkin's *Argument against Punctuation: On the Freedom of Violating Convention*); by sermonizing or manifesto-making (the two above plus Toni Morrison's Nobel Prize lecture and Eleanor Davis's shadowbox of a graphic novel, **Why Art?**).

Reyna Grande, Emerson Whitney, and Ocean Vuong tell stories of how they found an **intersection of languages** to express all their own intersections to themselves, and to share outward to the rest of us. We also viewed writing in progress and in performance: Teju Cole drafting *Counter*, a new project, in his Instagram feed while we watched and writers reading their newly-published fiction out loud on IgTV.

Here's something all this writing has in common: **Everyone is writing what matters to them.** This is important. We don't often learn that this is part of writing when it's taught to us. As one of my favorite writers about writing (and there are -very few- because this kind of thing usually just makes me roll my eyes) says, in school

You were taught the perfect insincerity of the writing exercise,

Asked to write pieces in which you didn't and couldn't believe.

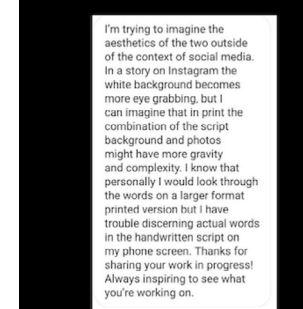
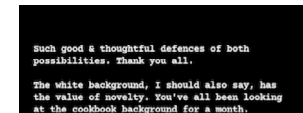
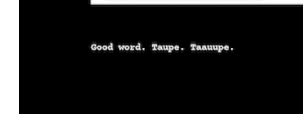
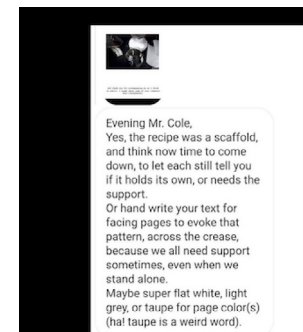
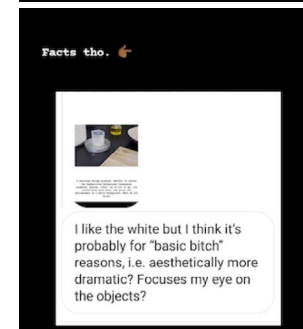
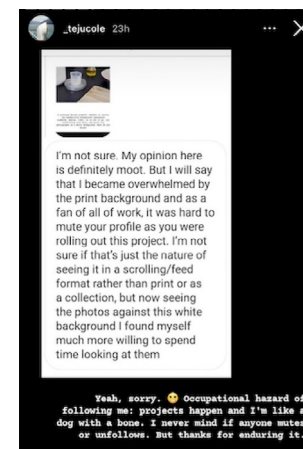
You learned a strange ventriloquism,

Saying things you were implicitly being asked to say,

Knowing that no one was really listening.

You were being taught to write as part of a transaction that had

Almost nothing to do with real communication,



cont. from page 45

He wrote extended
“captions” for each

VT: This sounds like a really
fun thing to do!

BF: Yeah, an interesting way
to prompt creative writing.

intersection of languages

BA: Reading about writers
who speak several languages
and how write was one of the
most interesting parts to me.

You were taught the
perfect insincerity of the
writing exercise

MM: I’m not sure I
understand his perspective
here. I’ve never had a writing
exercise that asked me to
write something without
my voice. Can someone
else clarify?

NR: I’ve had assignments
like this. We were given one
of two stances on a topic of
debate (no choice). He could
also mean having to write
on topics that you don’t care
about or have any personal
connection to (e.g. a book
you hated reading, but had
to write about anyway).

A way of dressing up
your meaning

NR: So relatable. Reminds me
of the plethora of memes I’ve
seen re. “hitting the required
word count.” I’ve definitely
been there.

Authority

HS: Writing has always felt
beyond my control because
I was writing for someone
else and what they deemed
important. This is really cool
and empowering!

“... and animated in
person, except when it is
the other way around.”

—Teju Cole listing the
ways he and Baldwin are
similar, in “Black Body.”

Form is not pre-ordained

MK: Form follows function! lol
Also, I’m so glad we didn’t
have to write in MLA, I find
it so limiting although I know
it’s useful.

Learning to treat the making of sentences as busywork,

A groping for words, an act of drudgery,

A way of dressing up your meaning or your argument with almost no

attention to the character of the words or sentences you were using,

Unless you were trying to imitate

The stiff and impersonal manner of “formal” prose.

—Verlyn Klinkenborg, **Several short sentences about writing**

I hope you see why he’s my favorite. He’s not telling us *how to write*,
which would mean that there’s just one “right” way, and that he has it
but we don’t. Instead, he’s helping us understand that we have authority.
Authority makes it natural and worthwhile for you to write in your own
voice and about what matters to you.

Here’s something else all the writing we’ve read has in common:
**Everyone is writing in different forms, whichever best expresses the
thing that matters to them AND that helps the reader experience
the meaning in the most useful way.** We’ve seen a lot of forms so
far: IG live and captions, comic/PowerPoint presentation, fictional
letter, letter to the editor, poem(s), photo caption, essay-within-an-essay.
The form comes from the message and from the imagined or assumed
audience. **Form is not pre-ordained.**

To illustrate further these ideas of writing as driven by personal
experience and meaning plus also having an elastic form, of writing as
making and as part of making, It’s instructive to look at three separate
texts, all by my writing superhero Teju Cole, next to each other. Each
was composed for a different platform: “Black Body: Rereading James
Baldwin’s ‘Stranger in the Village’” was published as an essay in The New
Yorker in 2014; **Blind Spot** is a book published in English in 2017 that
actually started as a project to document his debut solo photography
exhibition, Punto d’Ombra, shown in Milan in 2016; and *Counter*, a
project-in-progress on his Instagram feed and stories RIGHT NOW
(October 2020). (It’s also quite *pleasant* to look at his work, as his writing is
beautiful no matter where it shows up: Intimate and intelligent, funny and
“cool on the page...” but insistent too, somehow friendly and scholarly at
the same time.)

We can guess that Cole thinks and processes in text and image and
platform just by looking at the kind of studying he’s done and work he
shares: He went to medical school for a while and also studied African
art history in London, and is currently a professor of creative writing
at Harvard. He has written several novels, curated art shows of others’
work, he’s a photographer and was the photography critic for the New
York Times magazine for four years too. **He makes Spotify playlists and
includes them on his website under “recent work.”** You have already seen
two different ways he makes his ideas public in your reading homework,
“Black Body” and *Counter*, and I’m interested in your thoughts about
those two texts—how are they both obviously **what matters to him**, and
how do they come to us in such **different forms**?

I’ll write here about the third, **Blind Spot**, which I read bits of to you
during class. Maybe we can think of it as a bridge between the other two?

Blind Spot is more than 300 pages long. Almost every spread is a block
of text titled with the name of a place on the left page, and a photo on
the right. There are **a few disruptions to that system, design-wise**: the
images sometimes bleed off one or more edges of the page; they are
different sizes and orientations; when the text is too long to fit on one
page it runs to the next, displacing the photo; there is one “centerfold”
image that completely fills a spread.

When we start reading **Blind Spot**, because of its design, we assume
that each piece of text is a caption for the image next to it, and that the
photo was taken in the place named—especially because the title issues a
sort of authority, locating the contents of the pages outside of the spread
they share, outside of the book itself. **And each text is a caption, in a way**,
but also each is not. They surprise and possibly confuse us each time we
start reading one, until we get oriented—I’m using that word purposefully
here. There are placefinding signs, but at first we translate them wrong.
Eventually we learn to read the signs, settle in, pass more easily from page
to page and place to place.

I experience each page of writing as though I am following the
wanderings in Teju Cole’s head as he looks at the image it’s next to.
People’s brains connect from thought to thought depending on what’s
in there for us to access; in **Blind Spot** Teju Cole shares the content and
connections in his brain with me. Someone else’s brain is a confusing
place to be, **but the design of the book helps me, the strange ordinariness
of the images help me, the fact that each text is short helps me.** This
does leave spaces where I have to take the jump with Cole and do a bit of
work to understand how we got from one place/idea to another. But I’m
willing to traverse those spaces (**without feeling alienated and just “going
home”**) because I’m safe otherwise.

I’m not analyzing any specific paragraph or phrase or subject
in **Blind Spot** even though I was a writing/Literature major and am
therefore used to writing about texts that way. I read bits to you last week,
so you know. It’s beautiful, it is clearly his—but more discursive and
poetic than “Black Body,” more formal and finished than *Counter*. I hope
that focusing as I have instead, on the logic of the project as a whole,
is helping to expand ideas about writing that I identified earlier (the
authority of the personal, elastic form), while adding other considerations
to our list. We’re not just talking about writing now. We’re talking about
projects and platforms, art and design.

While working on this essay I discovered that in the back of **Blind
Spot** there’s a literal map that literally pinpoints each location Cole
photographed. I also found that he includes a postscript—**he saves his
direct explanation of what he’s made until we’re done passing through.**
Here’s part of what he says there:

In each place I have traveled, **I have used my camera as an extension
of my memory.** The images are a tourist’s pictures in that sense.

But they also have an inquiring feeling to them and, in some cases,

He makes Spotify
playlists and includes them
on his website under
“recent work.”

MK: This is kinda funny but
maybe it shouldn’t be, it’s
interesting how he publicizes
curatorial and editorial work
through mass media like
Spotify and Instagram.

a few disruptions to that
system, design-wise

TH: I’ve admire authors who
are able to design their pages
to benefit the meaning or
narrative. Though I’m not
really sure how to do that—
having to think 3 steps ahead.
It would be nice if anyone
had any tips for this :0

And each text is a caption,
in a way

VT: What I got out of this
description and the poem
above: You shouldn’t stick
to the usual structure if it
doesn’t work for your
content. It’s okay for a
reader to get lost a little,
then to get oriented later.

design, images, short texts
help me

MK: To think about the act
of reading spatially is really
interesting. Makes it seem
like you can think about the
design and images as
a wayfinding system.

without feeling alienated
and just “going home”

TH: A lot of us should keep
this in mind; writing about
our own personal
experiences but keeping
the audience engaged,
or relating to them. It’s
particularly hard to write
about a unique experience
whilst including your
viewers. If we could go over
how to do this that would be
very helpful!

he saves his direct
explanation of what he’s
made until we’re done
passing through
BF: It’s helpful for him to
let the work speak for itself
but then offer a further
explanation that deepens
our understanding.

cont. from page 47

I have used my camera as an extension of my memory

MM: The concept of tools being used as an extension of our mental processes (chiefly memory) is one of my favorites. If anyone's interested in learning more about this concept, I would recommend David Chalmers' "The Extended Mind."

Grandma Grandpa Cook

AM: I love the idea of collecting the oral histories of many different people and somehow recording them in a way that can be "immortalised" in print (or digital) format.

McSweeney's

SO: These have especially left a strong impression for me, as I remember being really impressed by the many different ways they've designed and formatted their books—almost challenging the idea of what really qualifies something to "be a book"

Unnecessarily Beautiful Spaces

AM: Definitely interested in reading more about this. I think similar concepts about child development have been discussed in Montessori-style education, but overall I want to know how the mainstream pedagogy in primary and secondary education has been largely ineffective.

Threadbare

AM: An impactful work of graphic reportage! It's such a great example of how different voices can come together and present the same 'threads' of a story with different visual/textual methods.

showed me more about the place than I might have seen otherwise. I am intrigued by the continuity of places, by the singing line that connects them all. This singing line I have responded to in this book in the form of a lyric essay that combines photography and text. Human experience varies greatly in its externals, but on the emotional and psychological level, we have a great deal of similarity with each other. Whether I was in the small town of Vals in Switzerland or in a high building overlooking the dwellings of millions of people in São Paulo, my constant thought has been the same: how to keep the line going. This project came about when I began to match words to these interconnected images. The process, I found, was not so different from one of composing a novel: I made use of voices, repetitions (within the text, and from other things I have written), allusions, and quotations.

There's a set of connected ideas that all our readings assert: An equity of attention. The valuing of all sorts of stories and creative work, the valuing of work made by all sorts of people. Accepting each individual authority, being willing to traverse the gaps in order to travel with the person or people we're reading, rather than demanding that they fit themselves into the one "official" authoritative form and syntax and lexicon and language because that's what we're used to or it's what easier and therefore ensures higher profits. Engaging others rather than waiting for them to come to us. That "Human experience varies greatly in its externals, but on the emotional and psychological level, we have a great deal of similarity with each other" (see Mr. Cole directly above).

We've read a lot of people sharing their individual authorities with us through their writing.

But, and, we've also read as many or more people writing and making to amplify others through projects that curate and collect: Quoting others' words, work, images; listening to others' stories and finding ways to make them public; gathering existing work into a structure that helps us outsiders understand each piece in a new way. Or even capturing a process, or archiving an event or events so those of us who could not be there (which is every single one of us, presently, lockdown all. the. time.) get to see and understand.

I'll end with a list of books we've toured that fall into this category.

I Live Here ed. Mia Kirschner et al, 2008.

Grandma Grandpa Cook by Evelyn Liang, Yeung Yang et al, 2010

Black Imagination curated by Natasha Marin, 2020

Making to Transgress: Risograph Printing as the Practice of Freedom (Elaine Lopez's MICA class project.)

McSweeney's issues one through 61, starting in 1994

Unnecessarily Beautiful Spaces for Young Minds On Fire ed. The International Alliance of Youth Writing Centers, 2020

Threadbare: Clothes, Sex & Trafficking by Anne Elizabeth Moore and The Ladydrawers, 2016

It Is Almost That ed. Lisa Pearson, 2011