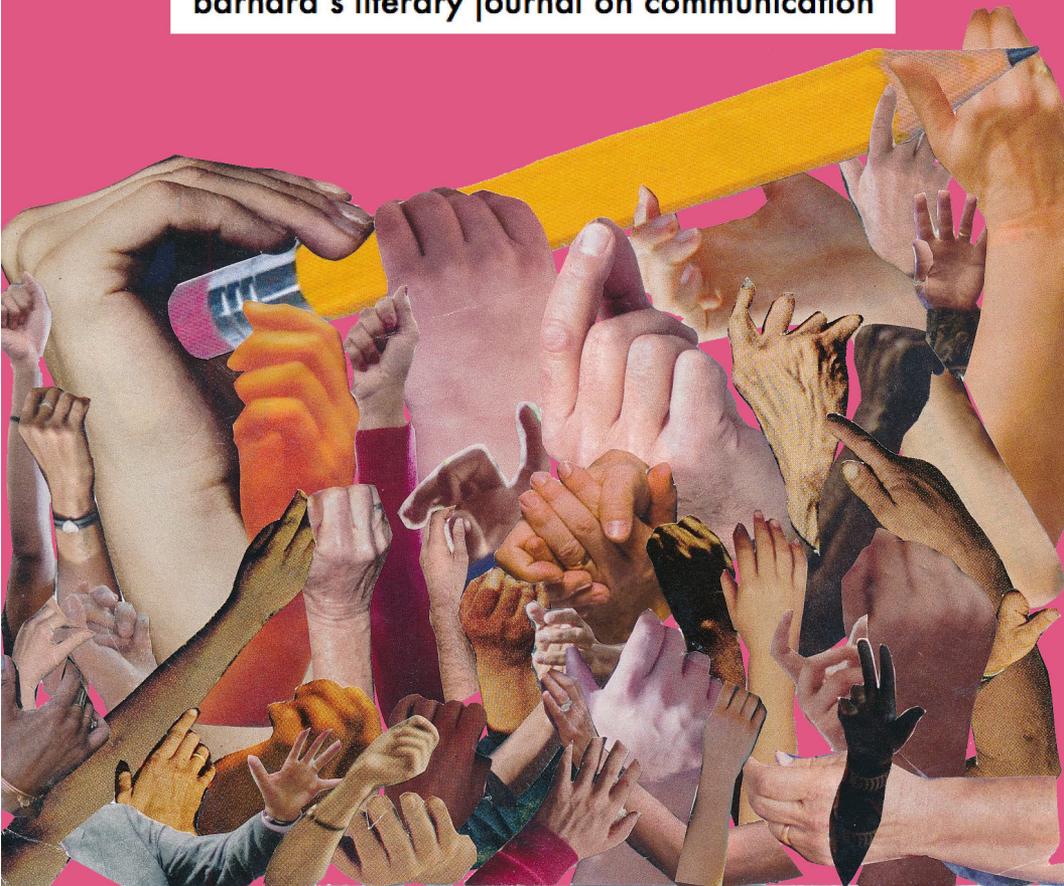




barnard's literary journal on communication



[sic.]

*barnard's literary journal on
communication*

the collective advocacy project

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[sic.] is by the collective advocacy project, a subgroup of the speaking and writing programs of barnard college.

*infinite and uncommunicatable thanks to
pam cobrin and katy lasell*

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A LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

DEAR READER,

Four years ago, a group of Writing and Speaking Fellows created a theory group engaged in questions of communication and social justice. The Collective Advocacy Project (CAP) was born at one of these theory meetings, in which the group read Jennifer S. Simpson's "Communication Activism Pedagogy." Simpson describes CAPedagogy as "an outgrowth of, and corresponding pedagogy for, a communication approach to social justice." It is, in essence, the radical potentials of communication, both in and out of the classroom. As Speaking and Writing Fellows, members of CAP are trained to engage in critical discourse. Our job in the Centers is to listen thoughtfully, question specifically, and to think collectively with our peers. CAP has, from its inception, committed itself to extending this mission outside of academia, in order to support student voices throughout campus and to foster critical and engaged communication at Barnard as a whole.

Possible methods of communication are incredibly diverse, and in theory, limitless. Yet, as an institution, we seem to value only two as legitimate: speaking and writing. The valuing of these two forms excludes all other forms of communication, such as non-verbal or visual forms, and prioritizes the expression of people who have education in standard forms. Communication inside of these forms is limited as well: dialects, for example, other than Standard Academic

English are discredited as unintelligent, even though linguistic analysis renders them equally effective. This dual process results in the mutual construction and maintenance of hegemonic communication and white heteropatriarchy. Basically, the myth of "legitimate" forms of communication limits who can speak and who is heard on lines of race, class, and gender.

What is the role of [sic]. in this context? The name itself typically indicates a quote written as it originally was communicated. Yet it also implies a negative connotation; it suggests that the source material did not adhere to traditional communication systems. In this journal, we selected works that begin to unravel and investigate assumptions about communication while, at the same time, provide alternatives to the traditional forms that communication can take. Why are certain forms of communication considered erroneous? What does it mean to transcribe speech? To re-communicate communication? [sic.] attempts to reclaim and subvert the traditional forms of communication to provide space for all voices on campus, and beyond.

In solidarity,

NIA + ALLISON

P	J	V	R	P	G	X	P	Y	I	Q	X	J	C	Y	S	I	H	J	X
S	X	B	Z	X	N	W	W	R	M	F	W	K	S	V	O	E	S	E	R
P	S	Y	S	J	D	C	W	D	E	B	E	I	I	D	T	A	O	C	J
X	K	G	F	Y	Q	U	C	J	E	L	B	K	A	E	P	S	F	N	R
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W	P	Y	R	L	A	A	V	S	P	Y	J	M	U	F	U	A	C	H	X
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F	E	X	S	B	I	G	P	A	T	G	D	H	D	R	L	O	M	I	W
S	W	G	G	N	Y	W	P	D	I	A	L	O	G	U	E	G	J	G	J
U	H	Y	K	R	Z	L	O	Y	C	T	O	A	D	G	L	Y	W	C	E

PEDAGOGY DIALOGUE COLLECTIVE
RADICAL WRITE SPEAK
COMMUNICATION DANCE CREATE
HETEROPATRIARCHY

LENA KOGAN

WORD PUZZLE

Seven across. Fervor, enthusiasm. Eight letters.
 “Истрасть,” my grandmother suggests. “Passion.”
 It’s not a word I would have been able to conjure up from memory, but I understand it. I mouth the word several times as I scribble it into the puzzle so that I can remember it better. There are certain words that are part of my daily vocabulary, but many others that I fail to incorporate into my speech because they do not come naturally.

Translating is different at the hospital. I struggle to find the words in Russian for what the nurse is telling us. Not because I don’t know them, but because my mouth doesn’t want to form the words. Forming the words makes the cancer real, acknowledged. They’re words I can’t take back. Like curses.

When a friend at school taught me how to curse in English, the words would come out hollow at first. They’d remain in the air for a couple seconds. But that was different. There was something exciting and rebellious about saying those words.

There was nothing exciting about discussing white blood cell count in Russian.

My grandmother insisted on checking herself in to the chemotherapy appointments. I don’t know if it was for her or for me -- maybe a little bit of both. She would practice her English with me on the bus on the way to the hospital. She had English phrases meticulously compiled in a small journal, alongside recipes for honey cakes. They were simple

5 phrases, like “my name is Elena Alekseeva” and “I am here for an appointment,” that my grandmother would sound out over and over on the bus. She would ask me to pronounce the phrases, which made me aware of how little thought I give to my pronunciation of words. I never have to worry about the words coming out wrong. I never had to worry about being misunderstood. Even if someone needs an explanation, I know I will be able to provide one.

It’s different for my grandmother. I stand three meters away from the reception desk, acting as though I am distracted by the crossword puzzle, but listening to her interaction with the receptionist. My grandmother’s speech is carefully curated: every sound, every letter, every pause chosen with thought and precision. The words are melodic and deliberate. I understand all of it, of course. My grandmother says the phrase correctly, but the receptionist isn’t paying attention. He asks my grandmother to repeat herself, but she doesn’t understand. Like a house of cards, my grandmother’s English speech falls apart, words that held each other moments ago, are scattered. I feel my cheeks get hot. I’m angry at the receptionist for not comprehending the effort that went in to my grandmother’s introduction. She’s thrown off by the question. She smiles bashfully and looks pleadingly in my direction. I walk over and finish the interaction, as my grandmother rummages in her purse for her insurance card. My forehead feels sweaty even in the less than comfortable level of air conditioning that is characteristic of hospitals – the receptionist should have listened. If he had listened, then the dialogue would have gone as rehearsed, and my grandmother wouldn’t feel embarrassed.

She asks me what she said incorrectly.

“Всё сказала правильно. Это его вина,” I respond. “It’s his fault.”

When I was little, I would cry every single day of preschool. My parents would inquire about the tears and my explanation was, apparently, that I didn’t understand what anyone was saying to me. I was very young then and hardly remember the experience, so I couldn’t relate to my grandmother’s frustration, but I still felt insulted on her behalf. I loudly blamed the receptionist in Russian – it didn’t matter: he wouldn’t understand anyway.

Russian is a language that creates a certain intimacy that is reserved almost exclusively for my family. It is the language in which my grandmother would explain a recipe. It is a language that my dad tells stories in, and a language my mom uses to comfort us. It is a language that my sister and I would diligently study during the summer, chubby fingers carefully drawing out the cursive letters to spell out poetry. It’s a language that hears a difference between “ss” “sh” and “shh” and “ch” and “sch” and “zh.”

It is not a language with which to discuss death.

Nine across. Summer destination. Four letters. “Дача.” I know this one. “Dacha.”

My grandma visited in the summer. We would speak of the beach, or of ice cream, or fruits. Even when we went to the hospital, we treated it like a day trip. My grandmother would wear lipstick and carefully comb her wig. We would take a bus to a different town, and on our way, we would pass stores and restaurants and docks with sailboats. Before the chemotherapy session, we would share a waffle and drink

nectarine juice at a café.

And we would do a crossword puzzle.

I enjoyed translating for my grandmother. It would bring the intimacy I felt at home into the outside world, creating a space, even for a moment, that was occupied by something private. We could speak as loudly as we wanted and the dialogue would still be our own. No unratified participants. The confidentiality worked the other way as well. If my sister and I wanted to discuss something we might be ashamed of, we would say it in English quickly, so my grandmother wouldn't understand. She would listen carefully, piecing out individual words and asking for an explanation.

“Ничего,” we would respond. “It's nothing.”

I wish I could say the same thing at the hospital. It would be easier to say “ничего,” and return to the crossword that only had summer words like “passion,” and “dacha.” Translating what the nurse was saying about my grandmother's white blood cell count felt wrong because I was failing to protect our conversation, failing to keep it intimate and safe.

When I spoke to my grandmother in Russian, the speech was innocent. Discussing death is the farthest thing from innocence. It ruins the illusion kids have that every moment is forever. Adults discuss illness and death in hushed tones so as to preserve that illusion as long as possible, and prevent words like death from entering a child's vocabulary. Even at nineteen years old, Russian was supposed to be an innocent language for me. It was a language that didn't acknowledge that I had grown up and expanded my vocabulary to curse or say words like “death.”

10 down. Instead of sending a telegram. Five letters.

“Почта,” I write down. “Mail.”

Before she passed away, grandmother wrote me a letter. I received it after she was already gone – my mom brought it back to me from Russia. I haven't read it yet. It's folded neatly in a box that stands on my desk filled with birthday cards from years past. I feel guilty when I think about the fact that it's unread. I know that if I read it, I will want to respond, but whether or not I have Russian words readily come to mind, it will not matter. I know that if I read it, that will be like our conversation ending.

MICHELLE XU
I'M GOOD

after eileen myles

I put on my shoes last
 & the setting
 shifted
 a sharp clack
 moved me
 down the long hallway
 out the door. In the
 elevator a friend
 greeted me.
 Her question its own
 upturned answer.
 At that moment
 three images
 burst
 through like a hot slideshow
 in my mind
 I saw yesterday's sunset
 floating pink
 across
 buildings, the hat
 of a lamp
 six windows up,
 & my mom
 sitting high
 in an orange crane
 waving
 at all the people
 in New York. I opened

my mouth
 & good,
 thanks & you
 drove up my throat
 like river water through
 a broken dam.
 She is all smiles. I am all
 smiles. Between us,
 a wet flag
 too big
 to take back.

CHARLOTTE RAUNER

WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE: STUDENT WRITERS AND THE STRUGGLE WITH UTILIZING IDENTITY IN TEXT

an excerpt

To create a piece of writing you need a writer. This writer doesn't need to be distinguished or profound, she doesn't even always need a mastery of the language in which she's writing; all that's required is an idea. On the surface it may seem simple, but for student writers, there is often a distance between the idea and the page. To remedy this disconnect student writers must find ways of transferring their thoughts into written out words and full fledged sentences composed in such a way as to warrant the text readable and understood. This is wrought with pressure and makes the writer's process more inhibited with roadblocks. What if I don't make sense? What if I use this adjective incorrectly? What if I misunderstood something? What if the teacher doesn't agree and I am wrong? These sentiments are not foreign, though, they are not without solutions and or space for the generation of analysis and nuanced writing.

The anxiety that surrounds writing and how a piece of text comes to be is crucial for understanding text. When writing, a student writer is forced – as it seems – to build something from nothing. This creation of life, the part of the writer's process where an idea becomes a text, is something kept private and considered intimate. To write is an exposure, an unmasking or expose of sorts, and the vulnerability is not lost on student writers, especially due to the grading system; submitting written work is akin to metaphorically putting all the cards on the table. Writing comes with critique and critique can often feel like a judgment; to manage this is not always intuitive for student writers. And yet, students are expected to feel comfortable in the role of owners of their text and ideas. This can be seen because as readers, we rely on the mere presence of an author's name to add the emotion, the life, from the process we are not privy to; something in a text is expected to get us to keep reading, or even start reading in the first place. The reason it seems like readers cling to wanting to see the emotion in a text is because otherwise the distance between idea and writer is extended to the reader. The reader craves understanding or at least the room for interpretation.

So, how do student writers create this final product? And how can the student writer, when she is unsure where she fits in the world of discourse, write with a voice, write as a writer? Without question, there is a lot of responsibility here. Writing exists as its own exclusive world, causing academic writing to seem prescribed and at times robotic. To be a writer, to be someone with a cultivated perspective, is not the sole task of a student paper. Yet, at times it can seem as if

it is. No formal invitation is required prior to the writing process or to even reach this status of writer. For an idea to have legs and the ability to influence thinking, an author's year of writing, geographical location, age, gender, etc. are only aids to understanding. And despite how this understanding of the author's identity is not something that needs to be conscious, it is something there. When a paper is turned in, the student's name is most always present atop the page. This name comes with an identity, a language and a story. The addition of identity to a body of work acts as a welcoming force enabling both the writer and the reader to not feel pushed out or not worthy of engaging with ideas and arguments. Here, the disclosure of one's identity is not expected, though, in some sense, it cannot be ignored or forgotten; identity finds its way into writing whether it is a deliberate choice or not.

NIA JUDELSON

MY NANA'S CANNOLI

My mother says that my Nana made cannoli every year on Christmas. Weeks before the holiday, my Nana would roll out dough into almost transparent sheets, wrap them around wooden broom handles, and fry them until browned and blistered. My mother recalled four pasta pots of boiling oil on the stove at once, and dozens and dozens of old pretzel tins full of cannoli shells. This past year, I attempted to make them myself, following Nana's old handwritten recipe. We ate them on Christmas and my mother said that they tasted like her childhood home during the holidays. I felt like I was communicating with my Nana over ricotta and dough. Below is her recipe.

For Filling:

1 1/2 lbs. ricotta
1 1/4 cup sugar
2 tsp vanilla
dash of cinnamon
1/2 cup mini
chocolate chips

Beat everything together with a wooden spoon until smooth.

For Shells:

3 cups flour
1/4 cup sugar
1 tsp cinnamon
1/4 tsp salt
2 tbs shortening
2 eggs, well beaten
2 tbs white vinegar
2 tbs water

Sift dry ingredients together in a large bowl.

Cut in the shortening until it is the size of peas.

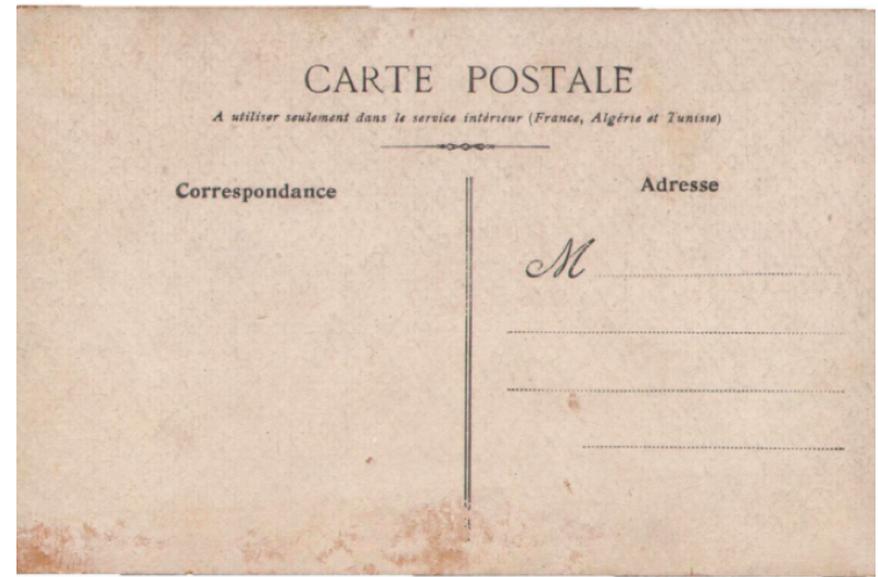
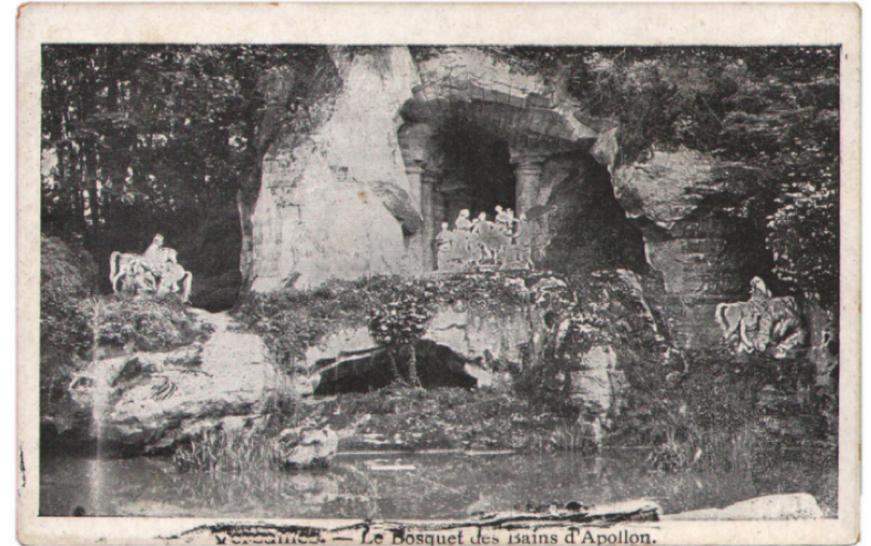
Gradually add in the eggs, and then the vinegar and water. Turn dough out on a floured board and knead for 5-8 minutes. Wrap in wax paper and chill for 30 minutes.

Roll out until very thin and cut ovals that measure 6x4 1/2 inches. Wrap loosely around cannoli tubes. Seal edges with egg white. Fry until brown. Let cool. Right before serving, fill with ricotta mixture and dust with confectioner's sugar.

SOPHIE KOVEL

A UTILISER SEULEMENT

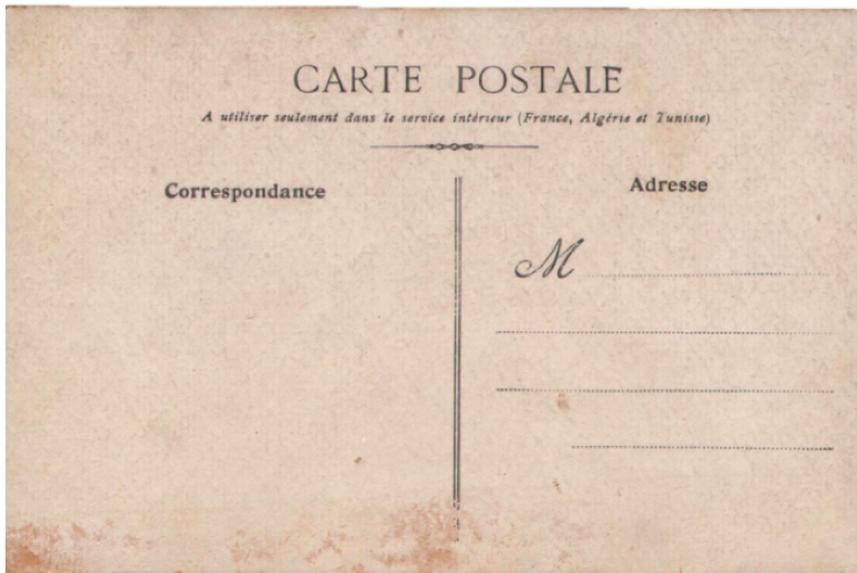
Versailles (Apollo's Bath and the Gallery of Mirrors) epitomizes a French nationalism that is steeped in colonial enterprise. "Interior Service Only" derives its name from "À utiliser seulement dans le service intérieur," which translates to "Use for internal service only." These postcards (read: artifacts) are only to be circulated within France, Algeria, and Tunisia, positing an enduring conception of Algeria and Tunisia as "interior" to France, a result of a French colonial empire and its postcolonial present.



A utiliser seulement dans le service intérieur (France, Algérie et Tunisie), Le Bosquet des Bains d'Apollon, Versailles, 2017



Versailles. — La galerie des Glaces.



A utiliser seulement dans le service intérieur (France, Algérie et Tunisie), La Galerie des Glaces, Versailles, 2016

ELIZA SIEGEL

INCLINATION AND INSTITUTION: EXPLORING THE RADICAL POTENTIAL OF THE WRITING CENTER

Last semester, I had a conference with a student from a First-Year Writing Workshop class, which I was attached to as a Writing Fellow. Her draft explored the simultaneous perpetuation and reversal of gender roles in Euripides's tragedy *The Bacchae*. When she sat down at the table with me, I noticed a slump in her shoulders that hadn't been there during our first conference. I asked her how she was feeling about the paper, and she sighed and said, "It's a mess." She explained that she had just met with her professor about the paper, and had been told that her interpretation of *The Bacchae* was too political. The student felt discouraged and expressed her uncertainty about whether to change the topic of her paper. She asked my opinion on whether she should move forward with her preferred topic, or whether to drop it. I was taken aback by her story and unsure of how to respond to her question, feeling uncomfortable under the weight of authority she seemed to place on my position as a Writing Fellow. I did not feel like I was in the position to grant her

19 permission to pursue her idea, just as I was troubled by the notion of directly contradicting her professor in order to validate her idea.

In the end, I redirected her question by asking a couple of my own: What interests you about this story? What do you really want to write about? She maintained that she wanted to stick with her original idea, yet felt it was somehow illegitimate. In the end, I told her that I thought she should write about what she wanted to—as long as she had plenty of evidence from and analysis of the text to back up her claims. These seemed to be the words she was waiting to hear. It was as if my encouragement had supplanted the validation she had originally sought from her professor. From this moment on, she seemed confident in her ideas and interpretation of the text as I questioned her throughout the conference; her palpable doubt and slumped shoulders had all but disappeared. By the time we finished, she seemed to have a clear idea of where her paper was going to go.

*

In ruminating on this conference, I was reminded of Kurt Spellmeyer's "Foucault and the Freshman Writer: Considering the Self in Discourse." Some of the questions that I had been concerned with while reading this essay a few weeks before returned, typified by the events of the conference: how does one proceed with an idea when it is partially invalidated by someone whose authority seems unquestionable—in this case, a First-Year Writing professor? How do I construct my role as a Writing Fellow in ways that aid students in achieving institutional success—good grades, professorial validation—while also creating a space where students

feel they can explore the ideas they are passionate about?

In "Foucault and the Freshman Writer," Spellmeyer emphasizes that knowledge is "an activity rather than a body of information," and that pedagogy should reflect this fluidity, rather than stubbornly reinforcing its perception as a static entity (715). He also states that the construction of the self in language ("the speaking 'I'") occurs when the writer breaks the rules "designed to contain it." This transgression, a direct contradiction of the static, monolithic rules of writing, cannot be taught. Additionally, the "speaking 'I'" must compete against two forces that Foucault calls "Inclination" and "Institution." "Inclination" strives for ultimate freedom in language and therefore in knowledge, a total break from all conventions in favor of passionate self-expression, while "Institution" serves as a reminder that there is safety in those conventions of language, in the "established order of things" (716).

These terms, Inclination and Institution, were useful in my attempts to process the conference with the first-year student. For instance, the student, who wanted to pursue her idea about gender roles in ancient Greece, can be seen to represent Inclination, while her professor, who discouraged her from this "too-political" reading of the text, could represent Institution. I locate myself somewhere in the interplay between the two; as a Writing Fellow, I am technically an agent of the Institution, yet I used this Institutional power to encourage her to follow her Inclination.

I would be remiss in oversimplifying the nature of the relationship between Inclination and Institution as entirely separate and antagonistic opposites, however. It is more ac-

curate to describe Inclination and Institution as two essential and inseparable halves of one whole. Indeed, the boundary separating them is not as clear-cut as I first thought. Even within my conference, the first-year student found herself caught between wishing to pursue Inclination while also desiring Institutional success: a good grade and the validation of her professor. And within the whole of Barnard, students constantly balance the Inclination of pursuing their ideas with the very fact that they exist within an academic Institution, and therefore write and learn within the dominant conventions and framework of that Institution.

Recognizing Inclination and Institution as inextricably entangled entities has also helped me to identify the role of the Writing Center, and myself as a Writing Fellow, within the greater Barnard community. As a space within the Institution, but also as a space where radical ideas are exchanged and developed, the Writing Center represents the overlap between Inclination and Institution. I have come to see the Writing Center as a place where students are equipped with the Institutional tools with which they might follow their Inclinations. While Writing Fellows certainly help their peers develop ideas, conferences are about more than what students are writing, but how they are writing about their ideas. In the case of my conference, it became a matter of shifting the student's—as well as my own—mindset of Inclination and Institution as diametrically opposed to one another. Instead, I focused on the ways in which the two were aligned. By talking with the student about pursuing her ideas while also incorporating textual evidence and analysis, Inclination and Institution became two equally important factors in her

paper. Simple Inclination, without Institution to ground it in a legible form, would likely result in an idea, such as the reversal of gender roles, appearing unsubstantiated and perhaps unintelligible. Likewise, Institution, without the radical progressiveness of Inclination, would likely stagnate, unable to move forward. By working with students to make their radical ideas more comprehensible—in other words, framing Inclination within the framework of Institution—the Writing Center becomes a locus of empowerment.

Considering all this, however, I was still preoccupied with hypothetical questions: what if the student from my conference had decided to forgo her idea in favor of one deemed by her professor to be more Institutionally appropriate? And how many important, radical ideas are cast aside or invalidated if they do not conform to an authority's interpretation of the Institution? Spellmeyer touches on what it means to be outside of an Institution, and the opportunities for resistance that can emerge from unfamiliarity with that Institution's discourse. He states on page 722:

We postpone discourse in the name of discourse when we silence those exterior voices our students bring to class without knowing it, voices from the home and from the past, nearly forgotten, which our alien words might reanimate. Because discourse is fundamentally transgressive, the more we attempt to simplify and regulate language by reducing it to an “academic” univocality, the less occasion students have to make eventful use of their own language and experience. For Foucault's speaker in the “Discourse,” it is not membership but marginality that enables him to challenge the prevailing configuration of knowledge, and so to refashion self and knowledge together.

In terms of academia, it is safe to say most first-year students start out, to a certain extent, in the marginalia. They are ex-

periencing the discourse of the Institution for the first time, and are not yet conditioned to think within the dominant structures of that Institution. In this sense, they are, according to Spellmeyer, situated in an optimal space for challenging “the prevailing configuration of knowledge” (722). And while it is certainly true that Inclination often originates outside of the Institution, stemming from each student’s lived experience, I believe that this Inclination does not simply disappear upon initiation into the Institution. In fact, it is this very initiation that provides the opportunity for Inclination to shape and change the Institution itself, and to drive it forward. Like the student from my conference, who persisted in her reading of *The Bacchae*, students who use the knowledge and curiosity afforded them by their diverse backgrounds to “open [their] text to ‘chance, materiality, and discontinuity’” inherently and continuously redefine the boundaries of the Institution (Spellmeyer 723). In other words, when students introduce radical ideas from outside the Institution into it, the essence of the Institution itself is altered.

In revising my own way of conceptualizing Inclination and Institution, I feel as though I am better equipped as both a Writing Fellow and a student to understand and negotiate the ways in which knowledge is produced and exchanged at Barnard. Understanding the workings of Institution, however flawed that Institution may be, is integral to producing change within it. I have come to see Institution as representative of the world we live in now, and Inclination as the world as it could be. As a Writing Fellow, I hope to help my peers negotiate and narrow the gap between the two.

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TINA SHAN

AN INTERVIEW WITH MABEL TAYLOR

TS: When was the last time you saw your brother?

MT: The last time I saw my brother was a few weeks ago and I won't see him for another month. This is an unusually long time apart for us. Normally we see each other a few times a week. Right now, he's escorting our grandma around England and the Netherlands. She's British and a horticultural historian and she is seeing friends and family and doing some work. But also she's been on this monomaniacal journey of discovery regarding her family history and it has culminated in this visit to Amsterdam to see Xaviera Hollander, also known as the Happy Hooker, who became famous for a memoir she wrote in the early 1970s about her sex work in New York. In the 1980s and '90s Xaviera was the caretaker to my grandmother's cousin Eli in Ibiza and ended up with a large collection of Eli's artwork.

TS: What were the first words between you and your brother, Virgil, after the election results came out?

MT: I didn't remember but then I looked at our WhatsApp chat from that time. I was in England so I was five hours ahead. On election day, around 11pm in England I asked him if I should go to bed or stay up for the results, and he told me to go to bed. When I woke up and found out that Trump had won, he was asleep, but he had sent me a bunch of heart emojis and said "Just wanted to make sure you had a good notification tomorrow." I am still moved by that. Finding out

5. America, the Beautiful

This is a worth Addition to our patriotic songs. The author is professor of English in Wellesly College. The Music, which is the well-known hymn tune "Materna." Was composed by an American, who died in 1903. This hymn to America should be sang with fervor and devotion, the refrain, "America, America," being especially marked.

Katharine Lee Bates

Samuel A. Ward

O beau for sh or ber nesses of grain, For

pur - ple moun - tain mes - ses - the plain. A - mer - i ca! A -

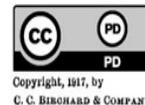
mer - i ca! s His thee, And crown thy good with

bro - ther - hood om sea sh ing sea.

2. O beautiful for pilgrim feet
Whose stern impassioned stress
A thoroughfare for freedom beat
Across the wilderness.
America! America!
God mend thine ev'ry flaw,
Confirm thy soul in self-control,
Thy liberty in law.

3. O beautiful for glorious tale
Of liberating strife,
When valiantly for man's avail
Men lavish precious life.
America! America!
May God thy gold refine
Till all success be nobleness
And ev'ry man divine.

4. O beautiful for patriot's dream
That sees beyond the years
Thine alabaster cities gleam
Undimmed by human tears.
America! America!
God shed His grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea.



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Source: Dylemsa, Peter, Will Earhart, Osborne McConathy, and Hellis Damm. *I Hear America Singing*: 55
Songs and Choruses for Community Singing. Boston, C. C. Birchard & Company, 1917.

that Trump was president via a New York Times push notification was one of the worst experiences of my life. I had one of those vivid, semi-conscious dreams that Hillary had won and when I woke up and saw my phone, I was convinced that I was still dreaming. That back and forth, between dream and reality, was really unsettling and horrible. I remember that I tried to call him a few times and he didn't answer. When he eventually did wake up on November 9, he told me that he had woken up with a bloody nose and we both thought that was very telling. That day we sent each other memes and said that we loved each other. I also apparently texted him: "can you give me a general brief explanation of what fascism is lol."

TS: Did you (and your brother) keep in communication while the voting was in process?

MT: Sort of. One of the defining exchanges we kept having was about his decision not to vote. He was very public throughout the election that he was not going to vote and didn't believe in it. A few times people asked me to explain why he didn't believe in voting. I have always had an aversion to explaining Virgil and his ideas to other people—I hate the position it puts me in, so I usually tell people to just talk to him instead. But he and I talked about it a lot. For me it can be summed up in this work he did with the New Inquiry during the election. I think the campaign was called something like "no matter who wins, we all lose" and Virgil designed these great buttons that said "KILL MAIM DRONE VOTE." We talked about our ambivalence towards the people running for office. We talked a lot about how voting in the



United States is indelibly rooted in white supremacy—whether enfranchisement is withheld entirely or severely limited, there is no such thing as a democratic vote. We thought about the emphasis on voting as analogous to the emphasis on gay marriage in public discourse around queer activism—both institutions struck as deeply assimilationist. We also talked a lot about how our opinions on this issue were only possible because of the various privileges buoying us as white, upper middle class, well-educated idiots. I did vote in the election, but with the understanding that my vote for Hillary Clinton in either New York or California was essentially moot. I am not as cynical as Virgil about voting and I think that I will probably vote in every election available to me in the future, but I resonate deeply with his criticisms.

TS: How did you two communicate while making these images?

MT: Part of what we were interested in was how we might integrate image-making into our daily news-consuming routines. We wanted the website to feel sort of spontaneous and sporadic. When you're living in a time of political chaos, you are constantly feeling this huge range of emotions. Sometimes you are angry, sometimes you're wistful, sometimes you're horrified, sometimes you're ambivalent, sometimes you're scared. We wanted to manifest that spectrum of feeling through our choice of image and design. We didn't plan what we were going to post or coordinate our themes or anything like that. Part of what I was interested in was the difference in our responses. We're siblings, we share parents and friends and experiences, plus we are very aesthetically

aligned. Yet we responded to this open-ended prompt (which I would summarize now as “make what you think and see” and “live the apocalypse.life”) in vastly differing ways. We even engaged with similar sources for our images—we are both digital-archive enthusiasts—but what we created looked so different, but then was also so similar at other times. We wanted to create this little microcosm of response. It was a way of healing too. This is all to say that we communicated how we normally do when we were working on the website, and this just provided another platform and another language to express how we were feeling.

TS: Do you remember your immediate reactions to some of the images he made?

MT: Probably jealousy.

AUGUSTA CHAPMAN

SLUG HILL

March 16 - More fresh snow on the ground this morning. I took my stick out into the meadow to measure and ran into a crow eating a rabbit caracas. At first I thought it was the one from last Sunday because it also had silver spots on its head and throat, but when I got a good look I realized it was really young. There goes my hypothesis that the spots were from aging. Still not sure what to make of that, but it seemed totally normal and healthy otherwise, and we vocalized a little back and forth, just for someone to talk to. Feels like weeks since I had a good conversation. Once it finished eating I got to measuring, and there were four (!!!!!!!) new inches of snow, so on top of what we already had that's seven. Last March 16th there were two, and the year before that there were none.

March 17 - This house can't handle the cold, and no matter how hard I try, I can't seem to fix the issues as fast as they happen. What's the opposite of putting out fires? The pipes aren't frozen, thank god, but the snow is so heavy, and it's weighing down this poor roof that was built for rain and not much else. I took the bike into town for groceries and as I was pulling back up to the house I realized that the gutters were physically sagging, like ropy sugar bars that bend to gravity as you unwrap them. If I don't get up on the roof tomorrow morning and shovel the snow I'm afraid the ceiling is going to collapse and I'll have to sleep in one of the dog

houses. The paint looks bad too. We need to fix this up when warm days come.

March 17 / 18 - Up in the middle of the night because of weird sounds. It sounds like the flat part of the roof is groaning. I moved to the plant bedroom because it was most recently renovated and somehow I feel like that makes it safer, but now I'm laying here wrapped in my duvet under the skylight and I can't see the stars because of all the snow. So cold and humid in here. The air is wet and thick as sludge and it passes through glass windows like they're nothing. Is sleeping in this room stupid? Maybe? Maybe I should actually go sleep in one of the dog houses but I think it would make me too sad. Being here without them is hard enough as it is. I'm excited for Kiko to come home and fill the house with singing and her school friends. So annoying that she has a different break from me BUT I will see her soon, so I'm just being patient. I think tomorrow I'm gonna make a big stew with these leeks and potatoes I got at the market today (yesterday? It's past midnight so I guess yesterday).

March 19 - Soooooo. Woke up to another cloudy winter day with a crazy headache, which is unusual for me, but it's really cold and there's pollen under the snow so I thought maybe it was that. I had my tea, collected my readings, and went outside to get started on my gutters despite my head pain. But when I got outside the gutters were all already cleaned up, snow all dug out, the whole thing. The roof is also mysteriously clear of snow. Freaked me out a lot but I thought maybe it rained in the night and washed it away (and left shovel

imprints? I guess?), but when I started walking around the house for clues I noticed many prints from size 12 boot and many places where the person in those boots slipped and fell. I am the only clumsy size 12 in this area I know of so I assumed it had to be me, but there was significant silvery fluid and blood in some of the tracks, and I don't have any cuts or injuries besides a headache. After looking for a bit I got freaked out and went outside and noticed that it's a day later than I thought. I guess I must have cleaned the gutters yesterday and somehow lost the whole day in my memory. A fall? Going to drink more tea and wait... maybe it will come back.

March 20 - x x x x x x x x x x

March 21 - Hot, buttery sun dripping through the window this morning, and almost all the snow has melted already, leaving the dirt soaked but intact. I walked around a bit to get my bearings back and noticed- there are spring onions in the greenhouse! I really didn't believe it would work but I was so wrong! They are GORGEOUS so thin and delicate with that smell that's sharp and almost sweet.

I don't know why Kiko isn't home yet. I want to show her the spring onions! The snow hasn't all melted, I guess, and the ferries are only kind of running. She said yesterday or today so I guess she has till this evening, and she's sixteen, so she really has until tomorrow. Still I'm worried about her.

The crows are celebrating the warmth in the gutters and on the roof of the greenhouse. They're playful enough. One of them brings me torn pieces of plastic from the beaches, while

another one drops sparkly stones by the front door. Most of them seem to have the silver streaks on them, so maybe it is some kind of fungus changing the color because it infects the skin under the wing. Is that possible? Is that likely? I'm not the animal biologist in the family, more of a caretaker, really. We share this huge loaf of bread I baked last week, already stale with only one girl here to eat it. I have my tea and practice the simple sounds the crows taught me- a short cluster of three loud caws is enemy, a longer, more melodic caw is friend, and on and on. I am terrible at it and they laugh at me relentlessly. The one with the silver face nips my fingers playfully.

There's still a little pain in my head. I should make that soup I was excited about.

March 22nd - No Kiko when I woke up this morning. I thought she'd slip in in the night. I hope she's okay. Sweet girl. I wish I could call her. I wish I could call anyone. Growing up mom talked a lot about talking on the phone and what a pleasure it was to hear someone's voice when they were far away. I could use that right now.

It's so hot again today; the outside thermometer says almost 90 degrees. There's no snow left anywhere, like it was never there to begin with, and the few types of flowers that can live through repeated cold snaps are finally having their moment, poking out bright yellow faces and stretching new buds. I put on my hiking shorts and got binoculars and water from the well and then took the bike to the base of Slug Hill. If Kiko's on the island I figured I'd be able to see her from the lookout trees.

The climb was so nice. The evergreens are so dense they make a thick underworld, perfect for those of us bound to the land. The rivers are glutted with snow melt which easily cuts new tracks through the soil, and I have to skip over huge rushing patches to follow the trail. I slipped twice but didn't fall. My legs are muddy, my backpack is safe.

I'm writing this from the base of one of the lookout trees as we speak. I just paused to eat my rice and fish balls and drink my water. I feel better, less like the heat will eat me. Gonna climb this tree and look for my sister before she comes looking for me.

March 22nd - No Kiko. I scanned everywhere with the binoculars. Not in town, not on a ferry, not burning a fire, not on any of the sentient farms. You can see everything from here, way out past the other islands, past the Sound, to the sea, black and glittering. There are eagles in the distance, whirling between mountain tops, coasting over invisible drafts of freshly heated air. I watch the eagles and the crows all gather around me, perched on the tops of the trees. In turn, they watch me cry, softly speaking worry with their voices and their touch.

The one with the silver face comes to me first. She rests on my shoulder, so much lighter than I thought she would be. Hardly a body under those feathers I guess. She smells so familiar, so sweet, pollen and rotten meat collecting just out of reach. I kiss her beak and cry onto it a little, feeding her the rice left in my pack. I ask if she knows where the others have gone, Kiko and the rest. She gives me the short call for 'friend'. I wonder if she knows why she is such good compa-

ny. I hope someday we can trade places and I can watch myself outside my body, clumsy and hopeless, kind to a world that hates me because I don't know how else to live. Kiko taught me that.

The crow with the silver face is Kiko, I think. It's a nice thought. A less nice thought: It is hard to bring back things that are gone. So much easier to let the dead stay ashes. If I am reborn, I hope it's in the future, when the water doesn't rise quite so fast. I hope I can be a creature that has no hand in its own demise, if that's possible. Or maybe just something that can swim.

ALLISON EMMET

I CAN'T REMEMBER MY DREAMS (2018)



Dreams are an automatic subconscious form of self-communication: your brain creates content for itself. What does it mean that I can't remember any of mine?

SHREYA SUDERRAM

COUNTERING STEREOTYPE THREAT: BARNARD AND BEYOND

an excerpt

In a women's college such as Barnard, how does one address stereotype theory and prevent its effects? What is the role of a speaking fellow in addressing negative stereotypes, especially those concerning female speech? And finally, is it possible to ever rid society of the "threat in the air?"

Barnard College promotes the notion of a liberal arts education that creates strong scientists, doctors, philosophers, lawyers, artists, all while promoting equality, social justice, and feminism. Yet in the process of creating scientists and strong women leaders, it must combat common stereotypes: "in math, for example, a woman might have to buck the low expectations of teachers, family, and societal gender roles in which math is seen as unfeminine as well as anticipate spending her entire professional life in a male-dominated world."¹ It is not as though women at Barnard are not confident, or believe that women in math are naturally worse off. Sadly, "their susceptibility to this threat derives not from internal doubts about their ability (e.g., their internalization of the stereotype) but from their identi-

39 fication with the domain and the resulting concern they have about being stereotyped in it.”¹ So, if Barnard is concerned with how to deal with stereotype threat, (while it should still focus on raising confident women convinced of their own ability) they must also counter the perception that being a woman will prevent success in such fields. This is many ways more difficult than creating confidence. Barnard’s feminist personality not only attracts confident women naturally; it also surrounds them with women unafraid to speak their mind and challenge stereotypes that help build confidence through strong female relationships. There are “culturally rooted expectations” that demand women focus on domestic work, or “softer” sciences.¹ Similarly, society expects that female speech involves softer projection, a kinder tone, higher pitched voices.

We have a unique problem in first determining if there is such thing as female speech, and then either supporting it, or negating it. For example, “up talk” is considered almost universally to be a poor speech habit. It is also a habit that is mostly associated with female speech, even though it is not scientifically proven to affect women more than men. So, when teaching that up talk is bad, are we inadvertently teaching that female speech is bad? Are we also putting into effect the “threat in the air” theory, where they imply that because women use up talk, they will not be taken seriously and should therefore reject a female identity? This phenomenon is known as “disidentification, a re-conceptualization of the self and of one’s values so as to remove the domain as a self-identity, as a basis of self-evaluation.”¹ It occurs predominantly when one believes that their self-identity is a

natural hindrance to their success.

However, this concept of dis-identification when it comes to female speech is reliant on the assumption that there is such thing as female speech. I would reject this premise entirely—as up talk is equally common to both genders, as is vocal fry, and qualifiers, I would say that female speech doesn’t exist. Rather, these speech flaws are indications of insecurity, and any assumption that they impact women more is both pure stereotyping, as well as threat in the air stereotyping, where women go in to presentations and classrooms with the expectation that because they are women, what they say will not be received with the same value as that of a man’s speech, and therefore they must qualify it, or make it seem less threatening.

Thus the role of the speaking fellow is twofold—reject the notion of female speech, and instead inspire confidence and detail the importance of speaking as a female, and emphasize that the removal of vocal fry, up talk, and qualifiers are universal problems that both men and women face. This second point is crucial in preserving the role of the speaking fellow as an unbiased aid, there simply to help an individual find their voice, not to create one for them. It must be emphasized that the removal of up talk is simply clearing weeds in garden, not creating an entirely new garden as a result of deficiency (in this garden analogy perhaps locusts). As a speaking fellow specifically, we must fight the implications of stereotype threat while supporting strong, clear speech—and denouncing the false notion of female speech. Finally, in order for widespread societal change, there needs to be justice reform and education reform to ensure an equal

41 playing field for all, so that there is absolutely not substance behind external stereotypes. Ultimately, my conclusion is that stereotype threat and its dangers are pervasive in every aspect of society. It is unfortunately not enough to educate others on the success of minorities, but there must be tangible evidence. As society currently stands, minorities are runners with cuffs around their feet, burdened by forces they cannot control. If we equalize the playing field, stereotypes will naturally dissolve, and thus this must not only be the goal of any justice minded person, the speaking program, or Barnard College, but society as a whole.

LENA RUBIN
CEPHALOPOD DESERT
STAR

It was a young voice
Who led me to the edge
Of the sandy expanse.
Her parting words were,
“Don’t work for free.”
Behind me the pink hills sat,
Cross-legged & crowned

With agave and salt.
Before the shining city,
I saw a golden octopus,
Made of the hot swimming air
And no memory of ocean.

The young voice turned and ran
Back through the valley.
Desert-stars fell and burst,
Behind her, in the dust.

I could not decide
Which arm to follow,
So I stared paralyzed at
My octopus guide, ‘til my
Mouth dried and my limbs
Weakened under her glinting body.

Just before my eyes closed,
The young voice flower’d over the valley.

“This world makes us terrified
Of our own freedom,” she sang.
Cephalopod Desert Star

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Who led me to the edge
Of the sandy expanse.
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