

SUMMER WRITING INSTITUTE

S U M M E R 2 0 2 1 A N T H O L O G Y

M A N I T O B A W R I T I N G P R O J E C T



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Introduction

This anthology is a tribute to the power of writing and the agency of being writers. From portfolios of writing produced over the two weeks of our Summer Writing Institute, each writer selected one piece to be published in this anthology. The pieces were then curated by the eight writing groups, which collaboratively organized the sections of the anthology by identifying a theme resonating across their collective work and writing an introduction to their section. Thus, this anthology invites us to explore “Connections”, “Eco-Tensions”, “New Perspectives” and “Roots that bind us.” Writers “Dare [us] to listen”, and engage us in “Exploring places we belong”, challenging us in “Writing to Disrupt” and reminding us that we “Write: to know thyself.” With grace, humour, irony, love, humility, anger, courage, and compassion, these writers are evoking the power of writing—through telling their stories, trusting their own voices (again), and finding their way home (Heard, 1995).

Writing takes us on a journey, and these pieces are traces of where we’ve been and what we’ve discovered along the way in this Summer Writing Institute:

- writing generated through walking, wonder, and developing our sense of place (Judson, 2018);
- writing found living inside us, in what we know and carry in our hearts (Heard, 1995);
- writing that reminds us of the pleasure, purpose, and potential of being writers and being part of a writing community (Ross & Ferguson, 2021);
- writing strengthened through morning pages, workshops, and demonstrations—through writing rituals, conferencing, and focus on craft (Cameron, 2002; Chavez, 2021);
- writing emerging from messiness, mobility, and vulnerability (Chavez, 2021);
- writing nurtured through the engagement, mindfulness, and generosity of one another (Chavez, 2021);
- writing that has opened space for us to “find out who we are and why we are here, and by extension, what we’re supposed to be writing” (Chavez, 2021, p. 77).

Once again, we emerge from this Summer Writing Institute changed. Our readings, our writing, and our inquiries into teaching writing have challenged and encouraged us, invited and inspired us to take risks, to wander and wonder into new territories. The writing in this anthology is both a response and invitation: to critical questions and to critically questioning, to truth-telling and truth-listening, to walking with one another in openness and humility, to learning and teaching as anti-oppressive and justice-oriented. Woven through the poetry, tributes, reflections, photo essays, six-word memoirs, soil art, letters, and other forms of multimodal writing in this anthology are powerful lessons about what place can teach us when we go outside, when we attune ourselves to listening differently, when we look closely and again with new lenses and critical perspectives, when we slow down and unplug and realize new forms of connectedness, and when we write—open to knowing and becoming and new possibility.

Thus, we are grateful—to each and every writer, to all we have learned with, and from one another, to the technologies and commitment that brought us together each day, and that created a community of teachers and leaders in Manitoba and beyond.

Read, be inspired, walk, and write.

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How does reflecting on the past help us understand our present to better the future?

For us, participating in this writing community was about connection—reconnecting to our memories, forming new connections with each other and disconnecting from that little voice in our heads telling us we weren't good enough.

I regularly travel between two of my favourite places: my home and my cabin. They are connected by roads, signs and land that tell a story.

- Corinne

My piece is a tribute to my grandmother who taught me many things. Over the past two weeks I felt vulnerable, I pushed my limits and I was inspired and supported by my writing community to rediscover my voice— it was thinking of her and reconnecting to my memories that inspired me to keep going when I didn't know that I could.

- Kaitlyn



Indigenous people
marginalized
mistreated
ignored injustice



Pieces of you

Some memories I don't want to mess with.
Can I be close to you?

I chase the rain because the smell reminds me of
you. I'm frugal with my soap and shampoo and
use lightbulbs to mend my socks, just like you.

I smell peppermint and it's the Vicks on
your nightstand I see. As I hold my warm
cup of tea, the memories flood all around
me.

The hummingbird that visits,
I think of you.
She lingers a little longer than most hummingbirds do this
might seem crazy, but I think she is you.

Those days are easy, the
pieces of you find me.
But some days—just a few, I
must search for pieces of you.

You left us with a hole.
You were the glue that held us tight.
We've tried to go back to how we were before that night, but
the pieces never seem to stick quite right.

At night before bed when I try to be close to you
I wear your nightgown and pretend.
I feel your fingers in mine, the feelings transcend tears
try to escape to no end.

When I need to be strong,
I think of you.
And when I'm not and I feel
weak, I take your scarf and hold it
tight

And look for more
ways to try to be close to
you.

Dare to Listen



Soil Art By Lezlie Halket

Dialogue can move us forward if we are willing to listen to the unheard voices among us.

By Sarah Roche, Brittany Fraser, Niki Ashton

(De)CENTRAL(ize) myself

It's not about you(ME)

Move over

Listen

What?

Listen closer

Make space

(Hold Space)

Don't retreat, no I didn't say that. You don't need to disappear. You still have a voice you can use.

It's just not about
You (ME).

Walk with me (You)

Listen...

- Sarah Roche

Fences

Fences have many uses.

Critters eating your garden? Put up a fence:

Keep out. This is mine, not yours. You are not welcome here.

Neighbour's dog pooping on your lawn? Put up a fence:

Keep out. This is mine, not yours. You are not welcome here.

Need more privacy in your backyard? Put up a fence:

Keep out. This is mine, not yours. You are not welcome here.

Pedestrians cutting across your property? Put up a fence:

Keep out. This is mine, not yours. You are not welcome here.

Non-paying customers detracting from your business? Put up a fence:

Keep out. This is mine, not yours. You are not welcome here.

(Un)homely sights inconveniencing your venture downtown? Put up a fence:

Keep out. This is mine, not yours. You are not welcome here.

A society of fences, fences to protect and comfort the privileged, fences on stolen land

Separating Dividing)Excluding(marginalizing the Other on the other side.

Fences may have many uses. But none of them say:

Come in. This is yours, not mine.

- Brittany Fraser

Gold Diggers

We stood on the top of the mountain.

I, a guest of those resisting the project.

Where? I asked them.

Right here. They said.

Why? I asked them.

Because they are greedy. They said.

How? I asked them.

Against our will. They said.

Who? I asked them.

A company from your country. They said.

I'm ashamed our government supports this. I told them.

We hear you. They said.

People in Canada would be horrified to hear of this. I told them.

They should be. They said.

This cannot stand. I told them.

This cannot go ahead. They said.

This land is precious. I told them.

This land is who we are. They said.

Your opposition must be heard. I told them.

You are listening. They said.

I will stand with you. I told them.

We will stand together. They said.

We will stand together. I told them.

We will fight back. They said.

We will win. I told them.

We will win. We said.

- Niki Ashton

Eco-Tensions

In this chapter of the anthology, you will be confronted with writing pieces that attempt to capture some growing tensions in our city, between humans and the natural world. True to the Anthropocene age, our writing emerged from a summer of smokey, grey skies and parched, brown grasses. However, our little writing community united, and found inspiration in a shared love of writing, nature walks, and improving our teaching craft. We persisted through thunderstorms, power-outages, writer's block, and Zoom's infamous "mute" button, and are probably better for it. We hope you enjoy our various perspectives on the state of our ever-changing community through poetry, prose, and picture.



Watch out for geese!

Emily Kipe

Andrew Cranford

Noah Cain

Elana Spence

Geese Tales

Written By: Emily Kipe Brodeur

I am an animal person, but I hate geese! They are the car alarm of nature. They are annoying, they are jerks, and they are terrifying! They have the nerve to come across my path and then hiss aggressively at me?! With their long craning necks and their beady eyes, they look at you like you are intruding on THEIR territory. Their shit is strewn about everywhere. It sneaks up on you and squishes under your shoes. It squeaks as you continue to walk. It stinks when you discover it stuck to the crevices of your shoe tracks. Anyway, I don't know what it is with geese and me, but I feel like they lie in readiness to eye me up and get in my way. They must smell my vulnerability.

One day I was walking on a trail near our house minding my own business. What do I see right in the middle of the walkway? A gang of geese taking up the whole path. The goose gang leader was glaring at me. His stern body language telling me, "You shall not pass." I noticed a scar under his right eye and one odd feather askew on his back. This gang of gross, googling geese stood in my way and would not budge. I panicked! I started stomping, shimmying and shouting. I observed barely a dawdling waddle. I looked around for something to rattle. Nothing. I remembered I had my phone. I racked my brain to think of where I would find a loud noise. I opened the app that has ringer tones for my phone. I started playing a symphony of sounds one at a time. A bell? Too soft. A chime? Too soothing. I continued down the list. The geese seemed only mildly amused. They continued to slowly waddle forward. I was praying that none of them would turn around and attack me. My fear imagined the leader hissing and flapping its wings at me. What would I do? Would I freeze? Turn around and run the other way? The latter was probably the best solution. I settled on a horn noise. (Why was that one at the very end of the list?) The geese started to speed up a bit. Maybe this was working? What's this? The geese veered off to the left. Yes, they were going into the long grasses towards the river. The sweet, satisfactory, saving sounds of the swish, swish, thump through the grasses was music to my ears. And a float spa for my anxiety. I said sayonara to the gaggle of geese and continued on my walk.

I was on a walk with my Auntie Emily at the Forks in Winnipeg. She loves nature too so I often talk to her about it. She loves nature but she doesn't love it as much as I do. I make videos about animal facts. I mean, I am not a YouTube star or anything but all my friends and family definitely tell me how much they love them. I think I have 50 subscribers or so. No, maybe it is 40? Okay it is 34, but you know, I was just rounding up, keeping my goals in mind. I am only 12 years old, but maybe one day, I can get really popular. Actually, probably not. Am I talking too much? My dad tells me that he likes the room to be silent sometimes. That is the way that he politely hints to me that I need to stop talking. Auntie Emily

just says to me, “Jude, you know that thing you do when you are taking about the same thing over and over? You are doing that now.”

So Auntie Emily and I were walking and I couldn’t believe my ears but she said that she hates geese. What? How can anyone hate geese? They are so cute! They look like little dinosaurs when they walk. They look so beautiful when they swim. I love the way they call to each other. I can mimic them pretty good. Oh, no I think that’s loons. Nevermind. Auntie Emily says that she is worried about me getting too close to them. She is afraid of them hissing and says they are too aggressive. I am not afraid. I love geese. I want to see how close I can get to them. I might regret it but I am okay to take that chance. She gets especially worried when I lean too close to the river. I mean, I am an A plus swimmer. She doesn’t need to worry. Once I crept close to one. He had a scratch under his eye and one feather popped out on his back. I think he must have been in a fight with another goose. They do that sometimes. I wasn’t afraid of him, but I decided to leave him alone.

Also, she hates their poop. I find it super interesting. I might be a naturalist when I grow up. Their poop gives scientists information to track animals or learn about their habits. It would be really cool to discover something new about animals and become an influencer. Auntie Emily and I keep walking down the river, oh man there are just so many geese here, every time I see a goose I just have to tease my aunt. I say, “Auntie Emily aren’t they just so cute? Wouldn’t you like to take one home as a pet?”

Then she says (you guessed it), “Jude you know that thing you do when you are talking about the same thing over and over again?”

“I know,” I say, “I am doing it again.” It’s just too fun to tease her; I can’t help myself.

I am the patriarch of geese in these parts. I know my way around. I have lived here for 20 years. I know where to find the best food, tall grasses for hiding and water for swimming. I help look after the little ones and make sure they learn all the best tips and tricks for flying in a V. I give the other fellows advice on mating calls. I have flown a good number of miles in my day. I keep my eyes out for foxes, coyotes and raccoons. Those bros are dangerous to us because they would just love to feast on my family for dinner. They don’t cross me anymore, no siree. I got in a fight once with a furtive, fallacious fox. He thought he had the upper paw. I made my moves: diving, deflecting, dinting. When the dust settled, I came away with one permanently skewed feather and a scratch under my eye. That ol’ fox was limping and whimpering but now he knew who was boss.

Humans, on the other hand, they are confusing at worst and annoying at best. At best, they have created these luxury oases of comfort for us. They supply water for swimming, a buffet of grass and plants, wide open spaces free of predators and plenty of space for when nature calls. All free of charge. At worst, they swear at us, honk their big flashing metal boxes at us or put tall impassive animals in our way. Their metal boxes smell funny, the solid plants don't taste good and our nests are always being inspected. But usually, like I said, they are at worst annoying. For instance, the other day. This lady comes walking down the path and she is rushing us along. I am just looking at her like, "Chill lady, we are just out for our morning exercise. We will get around to moving when we feel like it." Next, she starts making strange noises. They didn't sound very threatening. I thought maybe she was trying to call to one of her other human friends. Whatever the hell it is that they talk about beats the organic fertilizer out of me. Finally, she starts this honking noise. I am not sure if she was trying to make her own version of a birdcall? I concede; I tell the troops that it is time to move on over into the tall grasses. There is some good grub there and the water is fine today.



We bristle on over through the grasses for a swim. Until next, time lady. I got my eye on you.



Arctic Memory

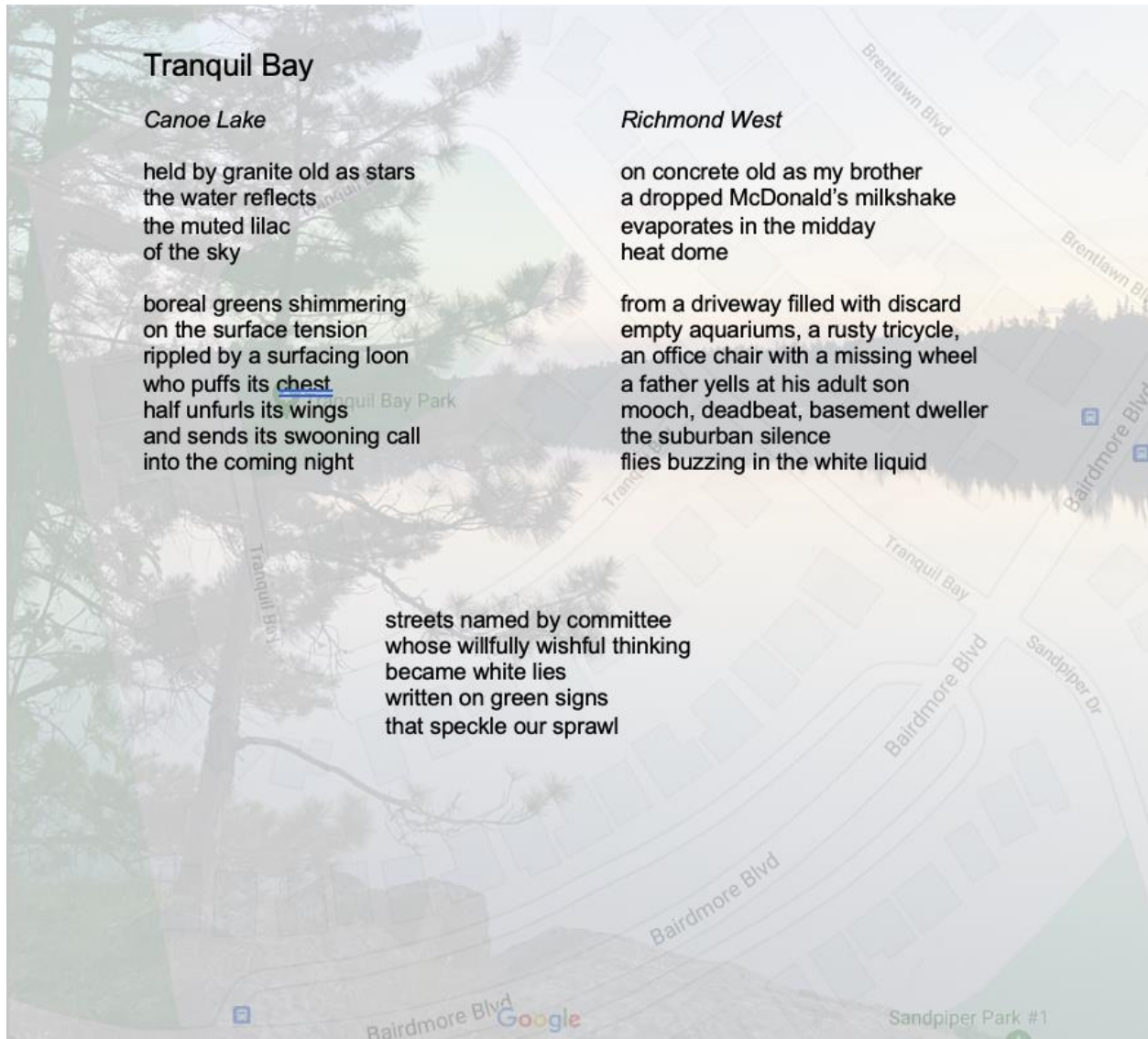
You sit with calm austerity, unweathered, still, and white;
indifferent to our present age, sentinel by day and night.
What ancient wisdom do you keep, all bound in blood and fur;
you, who roamed your frozen kingdom, to which I'm ever lured.

The little cubs clamber and burrow, perpetually at play;
will they hunt 'ore a sea of fish or a wasteland of pale decay?
Tramp stoically underneath the green and purple lights;
catch a seal, swim a channel, and climb the treeless heights?

This the uneasy monument to our myths and wonder;
the north to you a homeland, to us a ground of plunder.
The curve of line, the etch of jaw, portends a beast for hunting;
but I, for one, prefer to stay and write homage of your cunning.

You with knowing eyes left shut, and noble brow set forward;
would a single word from you bless those who venture northward?
Boundless symbol of courage, now rendered smooth and still,
you evoke the Arctic dream, our fate to preserve or kill.

Andrew Crawford



Tranquil Bay

Canoe Lake

held by granite old as stars
the water reflects
the muted lilac
of the sky

boreal greens shimmering
on the surface tension
rippled by a surfacing loon
who puffs its chest
half unfurls its wings
and sends its swooning call
into the coming night

Richmond West

on concrete old as my brother
a dropped McDonald's milkshake
evaporates in the midday
heat dome

from a driveway filled with discard
empty aquariums, a rusty tricycle,
an office chair with a missing wheel
a father yells at his adult son
mooch, deadbeat, basement dweller
the suburban silence
flies buzzing in the white liquid

streets named by committee
whose willfully wishful thinking
became white lies
written on green signs
that speckle our sprawl

Noah Cain

SIX STOPS – SIX PHOTOS - SIX WORDS

By: Elana Spence

Western Poison Ivy
Itchy Oozing Wound



Painful evidence
Nation filled with shame

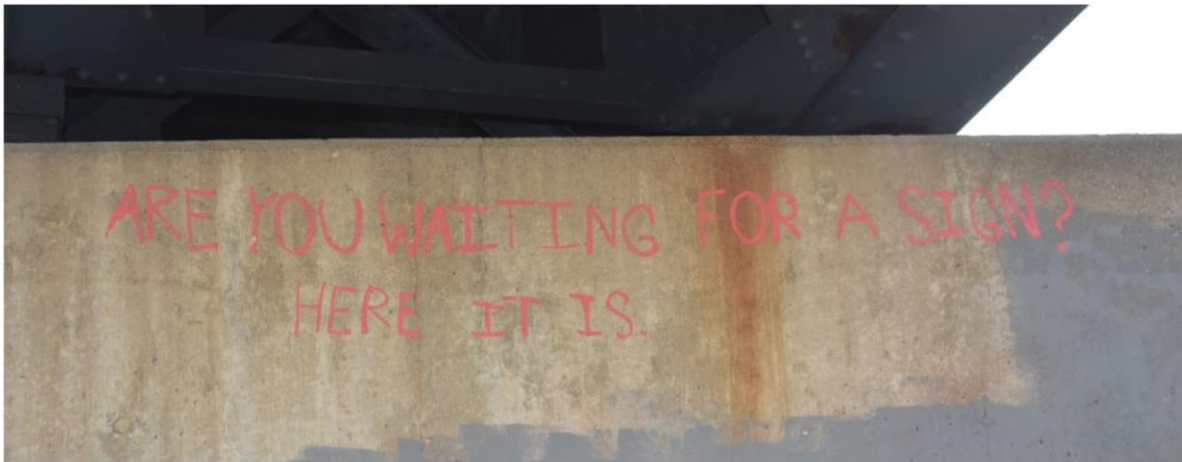


Purple Pop Against the Green Expanse

Human Waste
Receptacle
Percolates
Summer
Stench



Unburden your soul
One quick stop



Just what I was looking for |

Exploring Places we Belong

Katie Martin, Salmah Quadri & Kristine Moss



Introduction

This found poem was created collaboratively using lines from the writing included in our anthology.

a relationship a
gift

I want to hear puddles of profundity sound sophisticated
and impress Jen and Michelle

appreciate the walking curriculum self-reflection, self-understanding, and
overly self-indulgent writing fine tune into different shapes
sucking away all form of liquid that i possess I've
been stripped scatter your seeds for future
generations

welcome others you
belong here I'm long
gone

Bittersweet Way

by Katie Martin

A relationship with this land

The beginning of time

A gift from the Creator

Spiritual connection

To this nation

Sharing the land

Treaty No.1

The first of many

Sustain their Nationhood

Extinguish First Nations

Immigration, settlement and agriculture

Dividing the Land

The arrival

River lots

Defined the future

Battle for Land

Birthplace

Heart of the Metis Nation

Act of defiance

Forcibly halted

Urbanizing the land

Modern conveniences

Clashes

River lot farmers

Newly arriving developers

Growth

St. Vital

City of Winnipeg

*You are standing on River Lot 47
This land was occupied
They arrived
They remained*

Author's Note:

This found poem was created using text from a series of plaques on Bishop Grandin Greenway (pictured in photo). Each stanza of the poem was created using a single plaque. They are presented in the poem in the same order they appear at the site.

Tree

By Salmah Quadri

My name is Tree, and this is my story. Twenty-nine years ago, I was carried by my mother, with care and all the love that I needed; I knew I was safe. Gradually, I started to grow, taking it one step at a time; there was no need to rush.

When I was born, I could hear my whole family jubilate. The celebration was great and exotic. I felt so special, like a queen in all my rights. I was shielded and covered by the adults so I won't get hurt. Their large green leaves and huge branches guarded me so I won't be trampled upon by animals. To me, this was life and I was living it to the fullest. My mother sieved my food before I ate them. The heavy rain lands on her with force, while I enjoyed the soft landing of water on the soil, which I absorb through my root veins. She also tastes the sun, before finally opening her leaves for me to have my own fair share. Life was easy and sweet.

I'm now twenty, I could hear the sound of leaves rustling, my brothers and sisters all cheering. It was another morning, a great morning to witness. Amidst the merry, there was a strange sound. I couldn't quite place my twig on where it was coming from. By the minute, the sound came closer. Then, I saw something a yellow thing that moves. Not in the way trees move; its movement was different. Before I knew what was going on, my uncle fell to the ground after being attacked by this alien. Next was my older brother, then my grandma. We were all confused and hurt. We didn't know what to do. Amidst all cries, I felt something in my trunk. It was sharp, painful and continuous. I felt really strange after which I passed out.

When I woke, I had no leaves; my head was out in the open. My branches were long gone. I tried to look down to see my roots but I was in a lying position, which is happening for the first time. Later that day, I was carried to a room where I was debarked. Everything was over, I was long gone, I felt it in my cambium and in my pith. I missed my family, my mum; oh! my mum. All the memories I had of my home came to me in a flash and at that moment, I knew I would never see my home again.

I spent another two years in the storage room, where I met others like me. One after the other, carpenters would come to check us out and select from us. Like being in the storage room wasn't torture enough, the carpenters used series of engines to fine tune us into different shapes. As for me, I was made into pieces of rectangular shapes. Lastly, I was made into a step.

Now, I've been kept outside this door for over 7 years. Sunlight that was useful to me before is now very harsh, sucking away all form of liquid that I possess. The rain hits me differently without my roots to absorb it. I've been stripped naked, I'm vulnerable. I can't even remember where I'm from or what my name is. All I know now, is that I'm long gone.

Gifts in the Garden

By Kristine Moss



Bright and cheery
You proudly decorate manicured lawns
Bees enjoy your tasty pollen
You scatter your seeds for future generations

you are The Dandelion
You belong here



Short and cute
Your leaves smell of sweet pineapple
And your stout yellow flowers resemble the fruit You confidently
grow in the tiniest of cracks

you are The Pineapple Weed
You belong here



Broad and green
You are completely edible
You can survive without much water
You came from afar

you are the Plantain You belong here



Soft and gentle
Swaying shades of green, yellow and pink Closely
knit with your family members your spikey
defences are well hidden

you are Foxtail Barley You belong
here



Tall and proud
Your beautiful purple crown attracts butterflies
Your roots connect you to others Your prickly
exterior keeps danger away

you are the Manitoba Thistle
You belong here



Thin and competitive
You fill in the gaps
You disguise yourself well
Your roots are longer than your green grassy blades

you are Quack Grass
You belong here



Vibrant and sneaky
You spread by both root and seed
Your pretty purple flowers hang proudly The deer decline
your bitter taste

you are Creeping Bell Flower
You belong here

Lush and full
You feed me daily with ripe vegetables
You provide me with comfort and joy You
welcome others to plant their roots here

you are my garden
I belong here



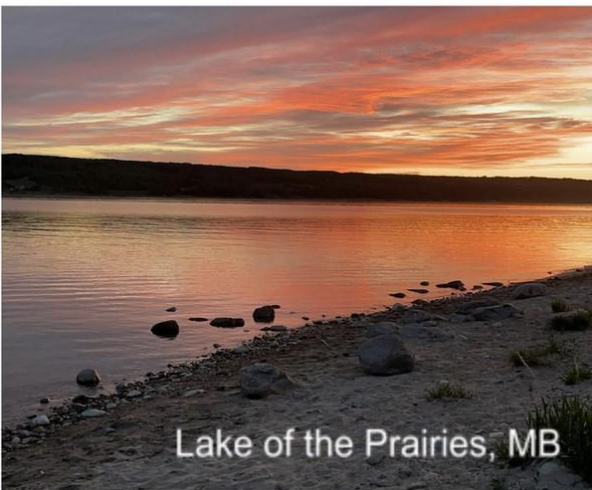


Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA



Selkirk, MB

New Perspectives



Lake of the Prairies, MB



La Salle, MB

Something we write together here.

One paragraph.

Four perspectives.

Where do we begin?

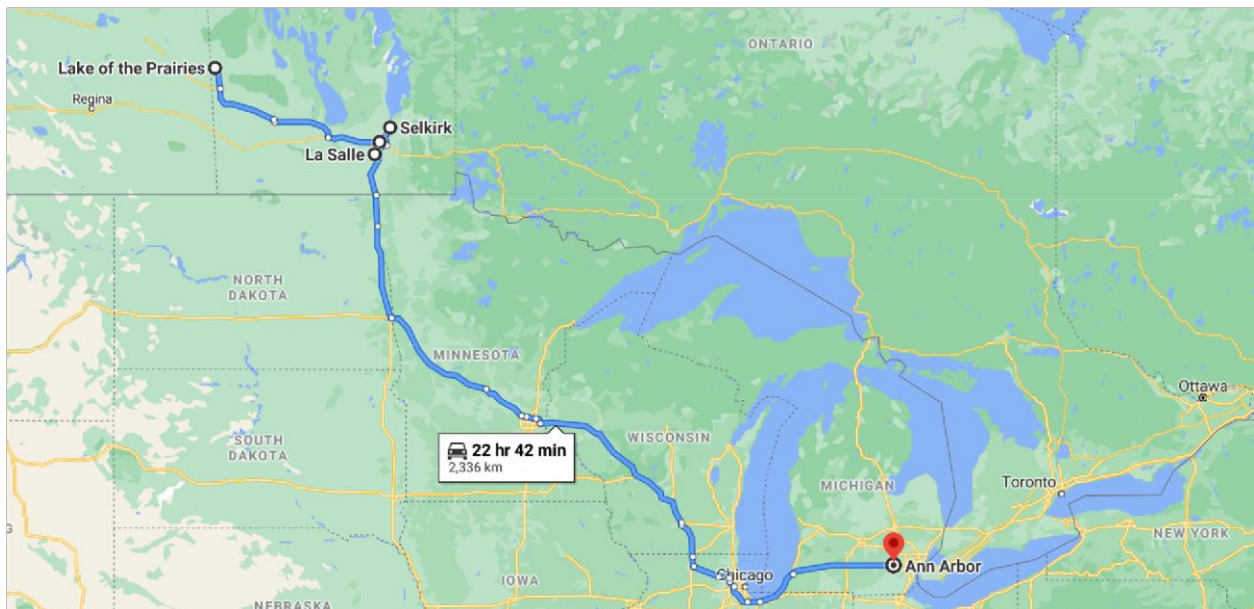
Writing from four locations, while taking on these two weeks of intensive study and juggling our busy but disparate lives, we have learned to see the world through new perspectives, as reflected in our writing.

We have written on the road and at our parents' homes, with kids, cats, dogs, and babies screaming for attention, interrupted by goat retrievals and dogs stepping into murky water.

Through our differences and similarities, we have come together--over Zoom--to be here, to form a community of writers vulnerably sharing our lives, insights, and advice across 2,336 kilometers (1,389 miles).

Here is a collection of our four pieces, written as individuals and strengthened as a group.

- Charlotte Moore, Ali Kampen, Wendy Wirth, and Joel Matheson



Thank Them All

by Charlotte Moore

I was sitting in the back of my stepmother's minivan when my father told me I was ungrateful.

A tornado whirled to life in my stomach with words I could not then speak to express the emotion that fills my chest with every kind act, something far deeper than two words. Instead of saying anything, I gritted my teeth and promised to say "Thank you" more often, though I did not change my perspective.

With time and reflection, the hurt of those words—"you're ungrateful"—has dissipated, and though I still believe that gratitude means more than speaking one small phrase, I also believe our culture keeps us from truly embodying gratitude.

When I feel the sun upon my skin, whether in the heat of summer or the coldness of winter, I do not say, "Thank you, sun, for keeping me warm, lighting my life, and photosynthesizing my food sources."

When that great ball of light has passed the horizon, though I appreciate the colors painted in the sky, I do not say, "Thank you, stars, for twinkling," or "Thank you, moon, for bringing light to the night and orchestrating the tides."

When I tend to my garden, removing disease and dying leaves or picking ripe vegetables, I do not say, "Thank you, plants, for feeding and sustaining me, for keeping my insides healthy."

When I lie beneath the shade of a maple, pine, or American tulip tree, I do not say, "Thank you, tree, for the reprieve from the sun and for converting carbon dioxide to oxygen so I can breathe."

When a squirrel or chipmunk runs across my path or tightrope walks across electric wires, though I smile at their bravery, ingenuity, and cuteness, I do not say, "Thank you, squirrel, for regenerating our forests, helping truffles thrive, and feeding the owls, coyotes, and snakes."

When insects buzz around me, sometimes predatory, sometimes not, I worry about my personal wellbeing and do not say, "Thank you, insect, for pollinating the flowers and food and feeding the bats and possums."

When the wind blows cool against my skin, carrying with it scents and sounds, I do not say, "Thank you, wind, for helping me breathe, helping plants multiply, and spinning turbines to bring us electricity."

When the soil covers my toes after walking outside without any shoes, I hurry to wash off the land and do not say, "Thank you, earth, for providing fertile ground for food, homes to snakes and chipmunks, and continuously holding us up."

When the rain falls, though I know it means one less day I need to water my plants, I do not say, "Thank you, water, for giving me life, hydrating both me and my environment."

Perhaps two small words are not enough to express gratitude, but maybe it's a start.

A Mother's Walk

by Ali Kampen

My little one is fast asleep in my arms.
Michelle gives us the last of our writing prompt instructions,
To focus on the sounds of our natural surroundings.
It's now or never.
Time to transfer him to the walking snugly.
Do **not** make any sudden movements.
Slowly... slowly.
Success. He's in.

Off we go to embark on a new journey outdoors. Birds are flying
overhead, calling to one another as they pass.
I wonder if the baby is hungry?
Focus, Ali.

The sound of my footsteps can be heard on the pavement.
What if the wind is too much for him?
Focus, Ali.

A territorial dog barks as we walk past.
Is he still breathing down there?
Focus, Ali.

A lawnmower's drone in the distance.
More footsteps on the pavement in a rhythmic beat.
Focus, Ali!
But then I hear it.

A faint whimper from the depths of the snugly.
It starts off quiet and the sound begins to build in intensity.
The whimpers begin to sound frantic and lengthen in duration.
He cries and my gentle "shhh-ing" is drowned out by these little lungs.
The only sound I hear is my baby's cry.
Nothing else matters until I can quiet those cries and he's peaceful again,
asleep in my arms.



Erosion and Resurgence

- a found poem based on "Nourishing the Learning Spirit" by M. Battiste (2010)

EROSION

Residential schools...
lost childhood,
forced
assimilation,
disrespected,
abused, scarred,
colonization, and
racism.

Led into systemic poverty,
economically disadvantaged,
worst educational systems,
worst conditions of life,
most unemployment, lowest
incomes, poorest health.

fragmented cultural practices perpetuate notions of Indigenous peoples as
historical and exotic,
half of our living cultural heritage is disappearing in a single generation.

demographics damaging to everyone's estimation of Aboriginal peoples
- but not to the government or the society
itself, which created them.

Third World,
poverty,
isolation,
unemployment, powerlessness, cultural
imperialism, spoken and unspoken messages.

It is not okay to be who they are.

RESURGENCE

Indigenous renaissance **despite**
Canada's educational policies.

resilience, creativity, perseverance, and success,
strength of values, traditions, spirituality,
diversity, inclusivity, and respect, and the
individuals who are building blocks for the future.

We must

- Recognize the vitality of Indigenous knowledge
- Use the contemporary and global knowledge system
- Raise general awareness
- Solve contemporary problems
- Remove the distorting lens of Eurocentrism
- Weave a whole new cloth with threads that
- Create a coherent but diversified pattern
- Recognize the rights of Indigenous peoples
- Support the regeneration of the dignity and cultural integrity of
Indigenous peoples
- Encourage a renaissance among Indigenous scholars, social activists, and
allies.

Change requires our unlearning as well as new
learning respectfully without appropriating our new
knowledge and experience for our own expedient ends.

We each carry one torch in the universe until a
growing mass of them can make one great light.

We are all one, coming from one Creation, learning to learn, to fulfill our
journey, our earth walk, as our Creator and we have agreed upon.

*"We don't think our way into a new kind of
living; we live our way into a new kind of
thinking."*

Wendy Wirth

Acknowledgment. Fear.

Acknowledgement

We wish to acknowledge the Red River and all that it gives for us. It was travelled by First Peoples and the Metis. The Settlers rode over this water and established this land.

The River is life. Its pristine waters flow northward, bringing along with it the fish that we eat, the boats of the fisherman, and the people to our communities.

We have been able to use its bounty to promote this town as a place to welcome visitors. It is a home of plenty, a place of innovation, and a domain for the community.

Standing tall in my hometown is a monument. Chuck the Channel Cat. Welcoming people to the river to try their hand at catching the ugly beautiful catfish, like himself. He stands tall for all time. People will remember him, the fish, memorialized. And people go out on the river and continue the cycle.



Fear

We tremble in fear of the Red River and all the dread it brings upon us. We ignore the First Peoples and the Metis. Colonialism rode over this water and took this land.

The River is death. Its murky waters creep northward, bringing along fish nobody can stomach, the sewage of the city, and bodies abandoned in the current.

We have been able to steal its bounty to scrape fortune from these unsuspecting tourists. It is a home of gloom, a place of destruction, and a potential domain of catastrophe.

Standing tall in my hometown is a reminder. Chuck the Channel Cat. Named for Chuck Norquay, an expert guide for fisherman on the river himself. The River took him and never gave him back. Now we remember him, the man, memorialized. And people go out on the river and repeat the cycle.

Joel Matheson

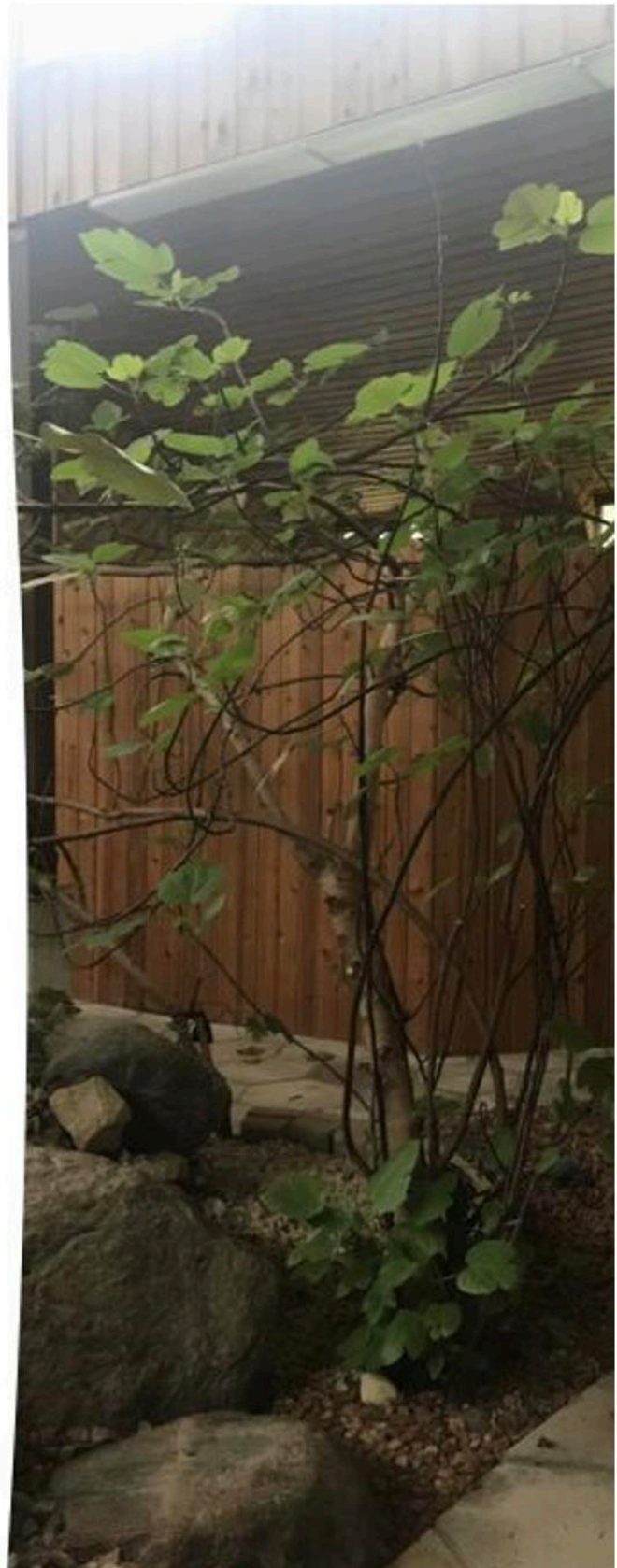
Roots that bind us

Our explorations of self and place have taken us on journeys to different places and times, but ultimately as we gathered in our writing group each day and shared our writing and experiences, we found common ground in our diversity. Our diversity was our strength and vulnerability enabled us to go deeper in our inquiry about the world and our perspectives as writers.

We invite you to engage in the following pieces which are the result of the conversations, teachings and learnings and our growth as a writing community that we had the privilege of experiencing over the transformative two week Institute.

We started as strangers and through our time together... ended up as family.

- Kelly Hiebert, Grace Romund,
Sheila Seafoot, Joshua Enns



“A dandelion for you”

a dandelion for you my friend as
we sit in wait, our futures we both
contemplate

a dandelion for you my brother we
have been "resettled", they say for
a better future? or is this the end?

a dandelion for you my cousin as
our people wait, hesitate, and look
for a way out of Heaven's Gate

a dandelion for you my sister,
a calmness exudes from my
little yellow flower, and for a
moment it gives me strength and
power

a dandelion for you my
father i wish i could rescue
us all from this field of the
Shoah

the yellow flower i give to you as
a reminder of our life and culture

a dandelion for you my mother how
i long for a cuddle, a tussle of the
hair, a kiss, a feeling
of childish bliss

a dandelion for you, the reader of this
poem
Will you remember me? Will you bear
witness to my tragedy?

for like the dandelion, a weed, seen by
most to be exterminated like a mouse
or a roach i once had dreams and just
wanted to be
to live an existence like any other child,
Free...



A World Divorced

What can a tree tell us about social justice?

What can a blooming flower teach us about human rights?

Nothing.

The human world and the natural world are divorced.

Some still slide into her DMs from time to time for the quick nature booty call and some shots for the 'gram but never stop and listen long enough.

During a lifetime living in cities, and most of that time in “the most beautiful place on earth” the West Coast, I never spent enough time outside and not just out of the house or out of a building but in a place where nature has the power. I now lived a 20-minute drive from

Winnipeg’s perimeter for two and a half years and I still am introduced to new facets of nature each day. I’m slowly being introduced to the natural world.

I went camping with friends for the first time since moving to the country this summer and we went to what had been my favourite campground, but now even the campground seems unnatural to me compared to most of my surroundings in the country. I remember, when I used to go camping, I would struggle to fall asleep at night unsettled by foreign nighttime sounds – now those are the sounds of home – and the most beautiful lullaby.

The natural world is too busy saving itself from the next harsh winter, the next predator, the next drought.

*And we are the ones who filed for divorce we moved to our concrete jungles
Eradicated the memory of our ex in those places.
She owes us nothing.*

We must save ourselves and if we’re interested in reconciliation, we should probably get some therapy first: learn to feed our poor, treat our own as our family instead of our foe, tear down the systems that hurt.

Maybe after some deep learning about ourselves deep unlearning about our relationship with the world could we be reunited with nature. And only then social justice and human rights could feel inherently connected to the earth.

I Want to Imagine

I can only imagine
living off a land of grasses
not manicured and neatly cut
but wild and colourful with
hidden life and the promise of escape
beneath the seeded distraction
of flowers on the surface

I can only imagine
living in the wild
open spaces
waves of flora inviting
a game of chase
space to run
space to fly
a catch and release
tag without boundaries

I can only imagine
living in the original orchestration
of the wind's song
harmonized by the birds and the bees
the steady walk of the moose
keeping nature's time
in the bass beat of each step
the crickets joining in
as the sun hits the horizon

I can only imagine
living where the sun
is the keeper of time
of the days short and long
the harsh brutalities of drought and flood
of winter's cold, desolate barrenness
fighting for survival
preserving a memory of sustenance
of longer days ahead

I can only imagine
living in excitement
of settlement and containment
the hard work
rewards celebrated in the dark
for the day spares no time for joy
the progress of taming nature
into provider of resources
and a promise
of a better life

I don't have to imagine
living on this land
hidden by consumption
consumerism at its peak
squeezed out by inhabitants
green space a token
of the past
abused
the evidence of a privileged life
litters what's left behind

What is left to imagine
living has morphed into
products
filters
pretend appreciation
of grassy landscapes
dotted with flowers
of wild open spaces
of nature's song
of seasons changing
all in the name
of progress
population
privilege

I want to imagine
living with the land
but land is disappearing.

Photo taken by author.

How Can I Teach?

How Can I Teach?

How can I teach about the Globe?

When people believe the earth is **FLAT**

How can I teach about the Environment?

When the Earth is **FLOODING**

How can I teach about Democracy?

When politics have become so **TOXIC**

How can I teach about Food?

When there is still **WORLD HUNGER**

How can I teach about Sustainability?

When we cannot breath our own **AIR**

How can I teach about Water?

When not everyone has clean drinking **WATER**

How can I teach about Fair Trade?

When we still use **CHILD LABOUR**

How can I teach about Equality?

When not everyone under the law is treated **EQUAL**

How can I teach about Immigration?

When children are locked in **CAGES**

How can I teach about Global Issues?

When we do not help to **SOLVE IT**

How can I Teach?


These are the reasons I teach

How can't I teach?


Decolonising Zoom Room

Turn on Original Sound

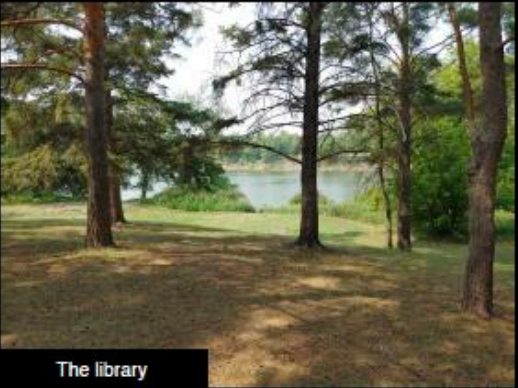
View




The sun room



The Passage, Winnipeg



The library



Bell Island, Newfoundland

MuteStop VideoParticipants4ChatShare ScreenRecordAsk for HelpReactionsLeave Room

Chat

WRITE:
to know
thysel
syn. Right

To: EveryoneFileType message here...

39

Leave Room

From Vindra Jain to Everyone:

Leave room for....Curiosity,
for panic, for love,

From Me to Everyone:

for self confidence, for
reflection, for respectful
ranting....or not.

From Britt Kosowan to Everyone:

for fear, for laughter, for
courage

From Jennifer Tesoro to Everyone:

for criticism, for cake

a bathroom break

From Vindra Jain to Everyone:

for Me.

From Me to Everyone:

for Me.

From Britt Kosowan to Everyone:

for Me.

From Jennifer Tesoro to Everyone:

for Me.

The Silence of Women

How often have I held my tongue?

Thought to myself, how dare he!

But only given a polite smile in return?

So many mixed messages growing up.

Stand up for yourself but don't stir the pot,

Don't cause a scene. Listen and ignore.

Don't be rude. Keep a pleasant smile on your face,
even when you are uncomfortable

God forbid, someone else might feel uncomfortable.

How many times have I been told to take it easy,
it was only a joke? To not cause a fuss.

How often have I listened in silence to jokes made at my expense?

How often have I ignored an accidental brush?

Or endured a, we're just goofing around, touch?

I wish I could say not ever.

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I wish I could say not ever.

There's this song.

*I don't remember the first time I ever heard it. Dad would call it a folk song.
He'd laugh, and say it was tacky. And yet,
he knew all the words.*

Inside

*the blood quivers, skittish to the simple symphonic call of
a forgotten land...*

This is for you, child,
robbed of your native tongue
imagining your innocent ignorance
mourning your painless loss;
but this is for me, too,
Child,
who no longer feels these songs
numbed by colonial promise
haggard by imperialistic bondage

May this reminder help
consume our pain
inhale our voice

kapwa

emotional swaddled:
insulated being
incubated adoration

then every solstice
stir from your slumber
kiss your daughter
and your daughter's daughter
and the daughters of the daughters after them
to feel-remember *pinangako*

Pinangako: to make a promise
say the word a million times over
rarely is it whispered here
but I - I have felt it before:
feels like every imprinted moment
wrapped up into one tight
tug at the chest

pinangako

breathlessly recalled and transported
from memory to the very spot you stand on
an emotional emblem stamped onto your heart
a magnetic pull coded in the blood of your veins,
pulling you toward
home.

*Now, imagine that favourite tune – feel every word – every. single. word. –
immerse into replicated intensity*

*that is the power of
a people's song.*

-- Jennifer Tesoro

Diaspora

*I am one of the scattered bits (seeds)
Or maybe a weed
 since I sprouted here and was not
Intentionally planted.
I blew in on a trade wind and
 Hibernated through the Sharad Ritu for Hemant Ritu
End of dry season harvest.*

*My mother, swollen and blooming through
 Summer heat and then cooled as the leaves changed
 Colours to fall...Fall.
The world, dormant as I grew
 Within her.
 My premature arrival came with snow and bitter cold, but
~~Just in time for Christmas break~~*

*A shaky and uncertain start
 I took root
 in this new land
 securing my family
 to this new nation – Canada.
Their Trini boughs were to be
Tethered to this place for their lifetime.
No going 'home' ... they were already here.*

*I am the 'little one', born away and not part of
'Back home'.
 Do I sound like I'm complaining?
 Really, I'm not.*

*Indian seasons are divided into six seasons – two months for each: Sharad Ritu (Autumn), Hemant Ritu (Pre-Winter). Trinidad has the dry season (June to December) and the wet season (January to May).

By, ~~Vindra~~ Jain

June 2019.

2 am,

Drifting in and out of consciousness, but never sleeping
Day 3.

You have not opened you eyes or acknowledged anyone since I told you she was on her way.

Suddenly the room is filled with ~~with~~tension, a sense of panic.

Jumping to my feet, I come to your right side, my hand on your chest the quiet sobs overtake me...

"He's like the ocean, like the waves ~ in and out..."

My eyes sealed shut, I hope you hear me, "It's ok, you can go, I promise I will take care of everyone for you."

Ten minutes of sobs and silent begging then footsteps at the door.

In stunned silence and exhaustion, we move to the darkened waiting room.

Was that you that just walked past?
That swirling, glittering light, like diamonds and ~~colours~~ dancing on fresh fallen snow?
What is happening?

Why is it flying around the room?
A comet of illuminated ~~colours~~; why is it flying toward me?

The air is cold as the sparkling light hits my face.

"Oh! You want me to carry you with me? I can do that," and in one gulp I swallow the light and the space becomes still.

We return to the room and for the first time in days we all sleep.
2 hrs.

Then, more coffee.

It isn't long until your body follows your spirit, and we have to say our final goodbyes.

Kb

Writing to Disrupt

Writing is listening. Through our different processes of writing, we each returned to similar questions. Who is marginalized? How does that marginalization occur? How does language play a role in constructing that marginalization? How can we be better listeners in order to be better writers? How can the messages in our writing be a means of disrupting marginalization?

There are many reasons to write, but writing to disrupt may be today's most imperative reason. Through these pieces, we explore the questions above but with a singular purpose: to un-marginalize the marginalized--to uninvite the imposed. Just as writing might play a role in constructing that marginalization, we—as people, as teachers—must seek ways to use language to bring the unheard voices and perspectives to the forefront.

Our disruptors: Devin King, Sam Adamson

July 15th: Shopping Carts of the World Unite

Devin King

Every place has a certain sanctity to it.

Dr. Brian Rice



the hermit crab to glory be
the world's fortune is what it sees
the land is full of potential
finding trash, cart, rock, or shell
temporary fleeting chance
conversation, word, and dance
point toward a brighter light
craft the world through which we write
the meaning of these disparate things
relations, Bills, songs we sing
the story of our World, you see
is the story of the World to Be
heed the advice of hermit crabs
make the choice to pay Our tab
a cart's a cart and so much more
we'll find the world if we explore

beautiful

is not the word.
the word is something
that is empathetic
recognizes the tragedy
honours lived experiences
demonstrates a willingness to learn
invites conversation
reveals curiosities
is not romantic
but always kind.

the word does
what we ought to do.
beautiful
is not the word.
but every day
Every Day
trying to find that word.



*Learn to love me, assemble the ways
Now, today, tomorrow and always.*

Morrissey, Shoplifters of the World Unite



I think most people see shopping carts as impediments or eyesores, but I've started thinking of them different. If they are like text on a page, what do they tell us?

I hope for myself to always be curious. To encounter the world critically, yes, with my own bias, yes, but to remain open even in the face of what appears obvious. I hope that my criticality doesn't make me stone; criticality as reason as coldness. I hope for warm criticality. I hope that my criticality finds the goodness rather than fights to prove something's worthlessness.



A heartless hand on my shoulder, a push and it's over.

Morrissey, Shoplifters of the World Unite



I wonder what makes people most concerned about these carts in places they're not "supposed to be." Is it a matter of properness? That somehow they're not following the rules? "Those are for me, not for you to take and use as you please!"

Or are they a reminder? If the land is like one big store (it's not, bear with me), what would We, the Settlers, see as the product? Everything, I suppose. Everything for us. Maybe the carts represent how land was stolen and how one day it could return so we must always maintain order – or else.

Shoplifters of the world
Unite and take over
Shoplifters of the world
Hand it over, hand it over, hand it over.
 Morrissey, *Shoplifters of the World Unite*



hidden in plain sight
memento mori
 or so they say

the story of the world
 we forgot
 or heard and ignored

sorry to call attention
 I know, the river's beautiful
 and, man, these butterflies

but that's not the whole story
 not the only story

whose story?
 Children at the play structure?
 Elderly playing lawn bowling?
 The homeless in tents?
 The local MLA?
 The dead, who rest not far from
 here?

all and more and none.

read me

as you walk, you will create a
 story too.

But

memento mori



Adamson v. General Men of Canada [2021]

By Sam Adamson

The following is recollection of a true event from Spring 2018, dramatized into a court case script.

Case Summary: Defendant has been charged with 2 counts of blatant misogyny, 1 count of delivering unwanted opinions and 1 count of direct passive aggressive behaviour towards a female.

KEY:	CA: CROWN ATTORNEY	SA: SAM ADAMSON, VICTIM
	Def: DEFENDANT	JUD: JUDGE

[Excerpt of a Victim Testimony]

CA: Ms. Adamson, do you recognize the defendant?

SA: I do.

CA: Could you state from where?

SA: We were in the Faculty of Education together from 2014-2015. We also had a class together for computer science educators, there was about 5 of us in that class.

Def: *It was actually 6.*

CA: Could you describe your relationship with the defendant?

SA: We had no relationship beyond being classmates. He was unremarkable in university and-

Def: *Unremarkable! Has she looked in a mirror?*

SA: And I only recognized him because our class was so small.

CA: Have you had any other interactions with him outside of university?

SA: Yes. In 2018, I saw him at the University of Manitoba High School Computer Science fair. We spoke for a few minutes about our current teaching positions.

CA: And how would you describe that conversation?

SA: Confrontational and dismissive.

Def: *Objection! I was not dismissive! Her memory is wrong!*

JUD: *Overruled and unnecessary. [To CA] Please continue.*

CA: Could you elaborate on that description?

SA: He approached us – me and my education assistant – while we were talking at the side of the main room. He pretended he did not recognize me and addressed the male EA that was with me as if he were the teacher. He was generally

disrespectful throughout our entire exchange; he kept questioning my teaching history and computer science experience. He was disappointed to learn that I had recently received the teaching position he wanted and he focused the conversation on that.

CA: Is it true that the defendant dismissed your attainment of the position as a “diversity hire”?

SA: Yes.

CA: Could you elaborate on what he said?

SA: When he realized where I taught, he asked if the recent job posting was the position I had next year. I said yes and responded that he had applied for it as well. He said that he was more qualified for that job than I was. He said that he expected to receive the position after his interview and could not understand why he did not, at least not until our conversation. He said that the position was “made for him,” so the only thing that makes any sense is that he would lose the position to an underqualified female because the division needed more diversity.

CA: Did the defendant state what his qualifications for the position were?

SA: Yes. He said his teachable subjects were the same as the ones posted for my position: English and Computer Science. He said that he had completed his practicum at that school and that one of his references was a teacher who currently taught at that school.

CA: Ms. Adamson, would you mind stating your qualifications to provide a comparison?

Def: [indistinguishable]

SA: Sure. I have been teaching at the school for a year, in which time I have doubled the computer science program. My teachable subjects are also English and Computer Science. I also completed my practicum at this school, and my references are also teachers who currently teach there.

CA: Aside from your current year of experience in the school, it would seem your qualifications are quite evenly matched. Would you agree?

SA: Yes. We seem to have many of the same qualifications.

CA: You said the defendant called you “underqualified.” Did he ask about your qualifications?

SA: Yes. He was adamant that he deserved the position and wanted me to explain why I was chosen over him-

Def: *Which she couldn't even properly do! She doesn't even understand why she got the job!*

JUD: *Defendant, stop interrupting. This is not your time to speak.*

Def: *But you don't understand, your Honour! She's getting it all wrong!*

JUD: *This is your first official warning. [Gestures to CA to carry on]*

CA: Ms. Adamson, please continue.

SA: Right. Even after explaining to him that I was qualified for this position as both subjects are my teachable areas and that they created the position specifically to hire me full time, he barely even paid attention and ignored my qualifications completely. He continued to say he deserved this job more than anyone, even me, because he is the only person who is uniquely trained in English and Computer Science. He said, "I just know I deserved this position and it was made for me, and it is unfair that you got it."

CA: How did this exchange make you feel?

SA: Uncomfortable. I kept searching the fair tables to check up on my students and he would move in front of my gaze so that I had to turn my attention back to him. He tried to follow each time I made a move to walk away. At one point, I said I needed to go see my students and that it was nice to see him again, but he walked alongside me and continued his narrative.

CA: His narrative being that he deserved your position more than you?

SA: Correct.

CA: Was the defendant ever aggressive towards you?

SA: Mostly just passively. He used his body to corner me and force my attention on him, but no physical contact was ever made.

Def: Thank you! See, I didn't even touch her! She admits I did no wrong!

JUD: Counsel, control your client or he will be removed.

CA: Ms. Adamson, did you, at any point, ask for this man's opinion?

SA: I did not.

CA: Thank you, Ms. Adamson. I have no further questions.