

3-2013

## Exercises in Style: 21st Century Remix

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### Recommended Citation

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EXERCISES IN STYLE: 21ST CENTURY REMIX

A Thesis

Presented in

Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts

March, 2013

BY

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My gratitude to Craig Sirles, Miles Harvey, Daniel Smith, and my coworkers at Columbia College Chicago: thank you for your continual help and support.

## ABSTRACT

*Exercises in Style: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Remix* is an extension of Raymond Queneau's *Exercises in Style*, first published in French in 1947. In Queneau's book, the same two-paragraph passage (Notation) is written in 99 different ways. In this project, THE GIST serves as "Notation," and 40 variations ensue. The author focuses on styles that have emerged over the last 60 years and styles reflecting course work in DePaul University's Master's in Writing and Publishing (MAWP) program. The collection concludes with an essay on the process of writing the exercises and an appendix containing stylistic analyses for each exercise.

## THE GIST

Commuter train to Chicago, early afternoon. Recurring cell phone dings. A middle-aged businessman plays with his phone. He sits across the aisle from a woman. She makes eye contact with the passenger in front of him—college kid, white undershirt, messy hair, like he slept on a futon. She smiles and rolls her eyes at the kid. A friendly gesture meant to commiserate. The kid shouts “What?” At the next stop, she apologizes and moves to another train car.

Thirty minutes later, the young woman uses the bathroom at Union Station. She notices an older homeless lady by the sink in distress and asks if she needs help. The lady requests that the young woman take the older lady’s pants off. The young woman says no and leaves.

## NOSTALGIC

That was one fine day, March 23, 2012. That was the day I took the train to Chicago. I first spotted him about 1 o'clock, sitting across the aisle from me. He had on a first-rate outfit, really sharp—one of those plaid shirts and tan dress slacks. He had a phone in his hands, and he was just plugging away with his fingers, full of joy. I can picture him smiling now, and the beeps! Back then, the beeps were so abundant and powerful. Next I watched for other passengers who were witnessing this occasion and saw an unpretentious fellow looking towards me. What a head of hair! A golden rat's nest. And his shirt was...white? Yes, bright white. The next thing I remember is him calling out "What." I must have been trying to communicate something to him. It was sure funny. So then I said sorry and moved to another train car for one reason or another.

Later that afternoon, I strolled down to the train station bathroom. You could have eaten popcorn off the toilet seat, it was so pristine! And people were friendly. While I was there, I had a candid conversation with a woman of, let's say, advanced age. She was one of those drifting types—wandering from town to town. She was crying, so I tried to console her and offered to call for help. Then she said—I remember it like it was yesterday—"Will you take them off?" (Her pants, that is). The young fool I was, I just said no and left.

## TEXT MESSAGE

1:12 Ughhh

1:12 This guys phone is so long

1:12 Long?

1:12 Loud

1:13 Sucks

1:15 OMG

1:17 Wut

1:17 Another dude yelled at me

1:17 Y

1:18 I looked at him wrong

1:19 Hold on

1:19 Gonna move

1:20 K, ttyl

1:50 WTF!!!!

2:05 Heysorry

2:05 At work

2:07 Jut walked into

the br at union

and this womans pants

were down

2:07 Did u see  
anything

2:08 She asked me to

take them off!!!!

2:08 Haha

2:08 Wired

2:08 Whores

2:08 DYAC!

2:08 Weird



## MEMOIR

“Will you take them off?”

“Your pants?” I asked.

“Yes.”

It had started with an afternoon train ride to Chicago. Passengers sat interspersed on navy blue leather benches facing the direction of travel, mostly in silence. But then I heard a phone. Across the aisle, a man sat hunched over, fingers drumming his smart phone. He seemed a generic businessman—crisp dress shirt, buzz cut—lost in what I could only assume was a game. I began scanning the area for other disrupted persons: misery loves company.

My eyes met those of a young man in a stark white undershirt, his dirty blond hair disheveled as if he were nursing a hangover. I signaled, as tongue-and-cheekily as I could, my irritation about the phone noises: a smile, an eye roll—

“What?” the young man shouted.

“Sorry,” I mumbled, darting my eyes to the floor. As the train slowed, approaching the next stop, I slipped out the back of the train car to sit elsewhere.

When we reached the station, I exited the train, watching him from yards behind. I would think back upon this moment, months later, wondering which one of us was out of line.

I descended the concrete staircase to the basement of the station where I decided to use the restroom. And there she stood by the sink: wrinkled caramel skin, layers of denim, muttering to

herself. As I sat on the toilet, I considered my curious encounter earlier that day: dare I reach out again? I washed my hands.

“Mam, do you need help? Do you need me to call someone?” I managed. Stranger or not, we were both human.

But she asked me to take off her pants.

Seconds later, I could not stand before her hopeful gaze anymore. “No,” I said and sped away from her, my idealism trickling down the sink.

## KIDS' SHOW

*A group of 5 children between the ages of 5-6 gather around Mr. Conductor in a train vestibule. Mr. Conductor wears a navy blue conductor's cap and uniform and has a thick gray handlebar mustache. He gestures toward puppets, which act out each scenario.*

**Mr. Conductor:** Hi boys and girls! Mr. Conductor here! We're riding the train to Chicago today. Isn't that exciting?

**Children:** Yeah!

**Mr. Conductor:** It's 1 o'clock, and that means it's time to learn about trans-*por*-*ta*-tion! Can you say transportation?

*[TRANSPORTATION appears across the screen in large cartoon letters].*

**Children:** Transportation!

**Mr. Conductor:** Very good! See that girl over there?

**Child #1:** Yeah!

**Mr. Conductor:** Her name is Bethany, and she's mad!

**Child #2:** Why is she mad, Mr. Conductor?

**Mr. Conductor:** The man across from her is being naughty!

**Children:** Oh no!

**Mr. Conductor** *[to the tune of "If you're happy and you know it"]:* If you're playing with your phone, turn it down \*ding ding\*. If you're playing with your phone, turn it down \*ding ding\*. *[Children join]* If you're playing with your phone, and you're sitting all alone, if you're playing with your phone, turn it down \*ding ding\*.

**Mr. Conductor and children:** [Laughter].

**Mr. Conductor:** Now we're going to learn about making friends! Do you have a lot of friends?

**Children:** Yeah!

**Mr. Conductor:** Bethany wants to be friends with that little boy over there with the wavy blond hair. What color is his shirt?

**Children:** White!

**Mr. Conductor:** That's right! Good job!

**Child #2:** Mr. Conductor! She tried to be his friend and he said, "WHAT?"

**Children:** Oh no!

**Mr. Conductor:** What do we do when we meet other boys and girls who don't want to be our friends?

**Child #1:** Say sorry and run away!

**Mr. Conductor:** Very good! Sit tight kids, we'll be right back after these messages!

*Mr. Conductor and the children stand in the sink area of a public bathroom.*

**Mr. Conductor:** Welcome back boys and girls. Now we're in Chicago!

**Children:** Yay!

**Mr. Conductor:** Remember our friend Bethany from the train?

**Children:** Yeah!

**Mr. Conductor:** She needs to use the potty. What do we do after we use the potty?

**Children:** Wash our hands!

**Mr. Conductor:** Wash your hands! Oooooooooouutstanding!

**Child #1:** Why is that grandma crying, Mr. Conductor?

**Mr. Conductor:** She didn't make it to the potty!

**Children:** Oh no!

**Mr. Conductor:** Now she's asking Bethany to help pull her pants down. What should she say?

**Children:** No!

**Mr. Conductor:** Stupendous! Now remember kids, strrrrranger danger! Can you say that?

*[STRANGER DANGER appears across the screen in large black letters; red flashes on and off behind it].*

## SARCASTIC

Suuuuuure it was after 1PM. We were on a fabulous commuter train—you know, the type where a businessman plays on his cell phone so loud everyone can hear it? I absolutely love high-pitched noises repeated constantly. It helps when you're trying to read something. Ha! I *especially* love it when I make harmless eye contact with an “adult” who doesn't adhere to social cues and has that homeless teen look. “What?” is my favorite response to get. When it's delivered in front of a group of strangers, it's even better. Moving to another train car out of embarrassment was awesome—believe me.

The best moment came about 30 minutes later once I got to Union Station. I used the public bathroom and saw this sane and sober elderly woman by the sink mumbling, sniffing, etc., you know, keeping herself composed. I offered to help in some way, so she asked me to take off her pants for her (a perfectly normal and reasonable request). So I did the heroic thing—told her no and bailed. Am I cursed or what?

## POP SONG

“Misunderstood” by The Missed Connections

### *Verse*

1 o'clock, in my usual spot  
Riding the train, but I'm going insane  
Those games he playin' pushing me away and  
Then you came along, your hair so wrong  
your shirt so white, I thought you'd make it right

### *Chorus*

Baby, we locked eyes  
And it ended bad  
You turned against me  
I guess I'm misunderstood, yeah

### *Bridge*

At the station loo ooo ooo  
I only wanted the best for you  
But you asked too much of me  
I had to pass, I had to leave  
Girl, I didn't want to leave you there  
So bare (Oh so bare)

## BLOG

# Journeys

Comings and goings of a Chicagoan suburbanite

March 25, 2012

### Is Friendliness Towards Strangers an Old-fashioned Ideal?

It's Philosophic Friday, here at Journeys, and that means it's time to pick and prod your brain! Today's episode is brought to you by [Metra's Milwaukee District West Line](#).

Earlier this week, I took the train to Chicago and was sitting across from a man playing a game on his phone. It was loud and distracting, so I started looking around to see if anyone else was peeved. I saw a younger guy looking at me, and—assuming we were in the same boat—I made eye contact with him and smiled. Oddly, he shouted, “WHAT?” at me, so I apologized, waited a couple minutes, and moved to a different train car.

Once in Chicago, I had yet another “conversation” with a stranger. I had just used the bathroom and was out in the sink area washing my hands. There was a homeless lady muttering and crying. I asked if she needed help, and she asked if I'd take her pants off for her. I thought about it for about a microsecond and realized that doing such a thing for a complete stranger would be absolutely crazy. So I said no and left.

What interests me most about these interactions, and why I wanted to write this post, was that I initiated both instances, but in one case, I was “rejected,” for lack of a better term, and in one case, I was the “rejector.” I am interested to know your thoughts on the spectrum of human obligation: do we have obligations to be kind to people we don't know, and what limitations should be put on that kindness?



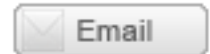
6



2



0



### Comments (5)

By [Notaddinganythingnew](#) March 25, 2012

I totally get what you're saying and I don't really have good answers to your questions. I think you have to deal with it case by case.

By [Miss Bethany](#), March 25, 2012

Thanks, Notaddinganythingnew. Maybe you want to weigh in on this next question. One thing I forgot to mention is I feel like we tend to view other humans as objects that inconvenience us, not *human beings* (i.e. the guy on the train with his phone, someone cutting us off on the highway, etc.). When stuff like this happens, we lose perspective of the fact that human beings are fallible. What is

the line between acknowledging/avenging rude behavior and maintaining a sense of other people's humanness?

By [Unhelpful rant](#) March 26, 2012

Humans weren't designed to make mistakes. This is a misconception propagated by organized religious agendas. You're a passive aggressive idiot, and your post is a self-indulgent piece of trash.

By [Miss Bethany](#), March 27, 2012

Funny, I just wrote about not being mean to strangers...

By [SirSpam-a-lot](#) August 29, 2012

Really nice post here, this really worked wonders for me <http://www.cialis.com/Pages/home.aspx>  
keep ur woman happy ;)



**a TITLE is exactly what THEY would expect (PARANOID)**

THEY followed me on a train going to Chicago. This time it was a GOVERNMENT agent with a PHONE that could read my thoughts. I tried to keep my mind blank but the phone kept BEEPING trying to get me to reveal all I've uncovered about the SECRET ORGANIZATION. There was another one in front of him and he looked at me and started doing MIND CONTROL techniques. When he realized I knew who he was he played dumb. "What?" he said. They can't FOOL ME I ran to the next train car.

They sent another one immediately I'm not EVEN SAFE in the bathroom She had on a FALSE IDENTITY AND tried HYPNOSIS to get me to COME NEAR HER so that she could SPREAD the BIOLOGICAL CONTAGION... I CAME TO IN THE LAST couple of SECONDS but SHE IS AFTER ME HURRY

## PSYCHOTHERAPIST (PROGRESS NOTES)

3/23/12

Dr. R. Queneau

Group therapy session at Metra West Psychiatric Hospital (Commuter group)

Clients appeared to be disengaged in group therapy today. James disturbed the group dynamic by taking out his cell phone and playing a game. This is the first time James has displayed adolescent behavior in the group setting; however, based on comments voiced by James last session, this writer suspects that he is seeking attention that he no longer gets at home.

Staff attempted to begin the session with a relaxation group exercise, but phone noises proved to be distracting for some members of the group. Bethany's affect reflected disgust. She sighed and continued to look at James intermittently throughout the session. When prompted to express her feelings, she looked at Nick. Bethany has shared in past sessions that Nick reminds her of her younger sibling with whom she has a dysfunctional relationship. Nick asked "What?" This response triggered Bethany's fight or flight response. She apologized and rushed out of the room, so she was unable to process her emotions with staff. Staff will continue to address Bethany's self-confidence and transference issues and will monitor James's emerging disruptive behaviors.

3/23/12

Dr. R. Queneau

Couples therapy session with Odessa Jones and Bethany Brownholtz

Odessa presented as anxious and depressed. AOD use is suspected. She shared that she had not made it to the bathroom and had an accident, which brought up feelings of shame and hopelessness around being homeless and aging. Staff affirmed client's ability to self-reflect. Bethany arrived late, and she appeared rushed and uninterested in discussing Odessa's feelings with her; however, Bethany asked what she could do to help her. Odessa requested that Bethany assist her in removing her pants. Bethany became reluctant and stormed off of the premises, complaining to the front desk security officer. Staff will speak to Bethany about cooperating in future sessions and remind her of the couple's goal to improve their relationship.

## INSTANT MESSAGE

ScreeNnAmE: sup?

I\_heart\_Queneau: nothin much, just on the train

ScreeNnAmE: where u goin

I\_heart\_Queneau: chicago

ScreeNnAmE: cool

I\_heart\_Queneau: i guess...

I\_heart\_Queneau: theres kind of an annoying guy on here

I\_heart\_Queneau: playing on his phone for the last 5 min

I\_heart\_Queneau: im thinking about asking him to stop

ScreeNnAmE: why don't u

I\_heart\_Queneau: i dunno, maybe someone else will

ScreeNnAmE: hehe, whatever works

I\_heart\_Queneau: nevermind

ScreeNnAmE: 🙄

I\_heart\_Queneau: i totally thought this younger guy was going to say something to him

I\_heart\_Queneau: i was sort of looking in his direction

I\_heart\_Queneau: instead he says WHAT to me

ScreeNnAmE: LOL

ScreeNnAmE: thats insane

I\_heart\_Queneau: gonna go sit on teh other train car, brb

I\_heart\_Queneau: Ok back

I\_heart\_Queneau: \*sigh\* this day is just getting weirder and weirder

I\_heart\_Queneau: u might want to save this convo in case somethign happens to me

ScreeNnAmE: geez what now

I\_heart\_Queneau: there was a lady in bathroom kinda homeless looking

I\_heart\_Queneau: she seemed upset so I asked if I could help her

I\_heart\_Queneau: and she's like, will you take pants off?

ScreeNAmE: ur pants or hers

I\_heart\_Queneau: sorry hers

ScreeNAmE: why not? jk

## ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Interview with Bethany Brownholtz  
Interviewed via phone on 1/4/2013  
Commuter Stories Project  
Interviewed by Miles Harvey

Bethany Brownholtz – BB  
Miles Harvey – MH

MH: Thanks for agreeing to the follow up interview.

BB: No problem.

MH: Can you to talk a little more about what happened on March 23, 2012?

BB: Um, sure. So I was on my way downtown, and there was this guy playing with his phone. I was starting to get pretty annoyed because it was really loud, you know?

MH: What did he look like?

BB: I don't remember that much about him. He was in a nice button shirt and khaki's, short hair, uh, maybe about 45. I just remember thinking, "This guy seems a little old to be playing Bejeweled at full volume."

MH: [Laughs].

BB: I don't know if it was Bejeweled, but still.

MH: Right. What time was this?

BB: About 1:00 in the afternoon.

MH: Thanks. So then what happened?

BB: So I start looking around to see if anyone else is, like, taking issue with it and end up making eye contact with the kid sitting in front of him [inaudible]—

MH: A little kid?

0.40 BB: No, no, a college kid. So technically an adult [laughs].

MH: Interesting, so why call him a kid?

BB: He seemed a little immature, I guess. He had on a white shirt, like underwear kind, and messy hair. But mostly I say that because he overreacted.

MH: Mm. How so?

BB: We made eye contact, and I kind of rolled my eyes towards the guy with the phone. I was trying to signal to him, like, dude this guy is annoying, right? I'm expecting him to smile or

whatever. But instead, he goes “What?” like loud enough for the entire train to hear.

MH: So what did you do?

BB: I said “sorry” and [laughs].

MH: What?

BB: I moved to another train car. Pathetic, right?

MH: Not necessarily. But why did you move?

BB: I was embarrassed. I mean, I took a risk and was shot down, you know?

MH: I see. So, let’s back track for a second. You said “incidences” last time. Did something else happen?

BB: Oh yeah. So when I finally get to Union Station, I go to the bathroom, and this lady’s standing there sniffing or crying or something. And I’m thinking, she is probably homeless, but I ask her if she needs help or needs me to call someone. And she literally asks me to take her pants off for her.

MH: What?

BB: I know, at first I wasn’t sure I understood her right.

1.43

MH: Wait a second, let’s break it down. So you walk into the bathroom—where is the woman?

BB: Well, I walked in, noticed the woman by the sink. I used the bathroom, and when I walked backed out she was still there, so I asked her if she needed help or whatever. Then she’s like “can you take them off?” and I go “your pants?” and she says “yes.”

MH: So what did you do?

BB: I said “no” and walked out.

MH: You actually said no?

BB: I guess I felt like I at least owed her an answer. I don’t know. It happened so fast I just didn’t have time to think about it.

MH: Ok, I think that does it. Can I call you if I have more questions?

BB: Sure.

MH: Thanks.

BB: No problem. Take care.

2.35

## CHOREOGRAPHER

Ready! First position parallel, grand plié, and—

Danseur noble on-his-phone, and beeps 6, 7, 8, and spot (Eyes up!) ballerino, eye-roll-side, arabesque. He frappe “what” at-ti-tude, contract 6, chaînés turns. And “awkward moment” allongé, and port de bras, 7, 8. Glissade bourrée 3, 4 to B plus hold 7, 8.

Next group! À la seconde! And—

Chassé right, to-the-sink, and tendu toward washed up dancer. “Didn’t make it,” ball change, “Can-I-help-you?” flex, point. Demi-covered derrière, 5, 6, balancé. And “no”, 2, grand jeté, and ballet run 7, 8.

## STONER

Yeah, man, I was on some train, and I think it was daytime 'cause it was really bright. This serious business dude was all about his phone, like, wrecking the serenity with his noise pollution, and I was trying to keep the peace—you know, silent protesting? So I started sizing up the scene, and I saw this pothead in front of the guy looking around too, and I figured we were kindred spirits. He was dressed down, starting some dreads, but then he freaked out. Maybe he was high 'cause he looked paranoid. I just laid low and said my apologies. After that my aura was really disturbed, so I just moved to a different train car.

When I got to Union Station, I started thinking I had taken some bad stuff. This older lady was in the bathroom by the sink. I think she was real—her clothes were like melting off, there were so many layers, and her head became a cupcake, and tears were coming out of her eyes and turning into stars. It made my heart cry, so I was like, “Lady, what can I do to help you? Got a phone?” Then she asked me to help her take her pants off. I was like, nah sorry. Later dude. What a trip, man.



## RAP

Yo, yo, yo! It's the Commuterz. [Lil Queneau uh, uh, uh] 'Bout to kill this shit. [21<sup>st</sup> century REMIX!]

Shorty gone ride this train like it's 2012, trying to kick it  
Playa phone so loud, finna stick it where the sun don't,  
Yeah, we be going to the city, I be looking at a thug,  
Kinda gritty, white shirt, hair like a shag rug  
rolled in the dirt. He be curt like WHAT?  
Getting tough with me, don't fuck with me  
with sorry you get one shot on my block.  
I gone leave, but ya'll ain't seen the last of me.

After the diss, at the station take a piss, old bum wailing  
by the sink, she drink too much juice, denim saggin' loose  
she need help, so I ask, but she crass like asking me  
to pull her jeans down. Hell no, peace out!

## CLEFTS

It was 1:00PM on a commuter train. There were noises coming from the phone of a middle-aged businessman. What he hoped to do was beat the game he was playing. There were two other passengers nearby, a college-age kid and a woman. It was a shame that the kid hadn't brushed his hair and was practically in his pajamas. It was hard for the woman to tolerate the noise. What she wanted was someone to share in her frustration, so she looked over at the kid. There was a moment of eye contact. If she thought she would receive sympathy, she was mistaken. "What" was his surprising response. There were empty seats in the other train car when she snuck away.

It was 30 minutes later when the same woman reached Union Station. There was a bathroom at the station. It was not odd that a homeless woman was standing by the sink there; it was odd that she was whimpering. What the young woman asked her was, "Do you need help? Do you need me to call someone?" There was an answer: "Will you take them off?" It was her pants. There was hesitation and refusal from the woman.

## CRAIG'S LIST PERSONAL AD

### **bored businessman seeks friend 4 TEXTING - m4w - 44** (Western Suburbs)

Date: 2012-3-23, 7:29AM CDT

[Reply to this post](#)

[1nsrc-0123456789@pers.craigslist.org](mailto:1nsrc-0123456789@pers.craigslist.org)

Want someone to text with when I'm on the train. Commute every day and sick of same old. Don't care what you look like but want to talk abt everything and anything without inhibition. Must be able to respond right away. Into playing games on phone a huge plus.

- Location: Chicago
- it's NOT ok to contact this poster with services or other commercial interests

PostingID: 0123456789

---

### **Sick of people...- w4mw - 27** (burbs)

Date: 2012-3-23, 1:15 PM CDT

[Reply to this post](#)

[1nsrc-1123456789@pers.craigslist.org](mailto:1nsrc-1123456789@pers.craigslist.org)

Looking for someone to share in my troubles, no creeps please. Can't stand people now adays always on their phones. If you can relate email me with "phones" in the subject line so I know ur not spam.

- Location: Chicago
- it's NOT ok to contact this poster with services or other commercial interests

PostingID: 1123456789

---

## WHAT - m4w- 18 (Chicago)

Date: 2012-3-23, 1:16 PM CDT

[Reply to this post](#)

[1nsrc-21223456789@pers.craigslist.org](mailto:1nsrc-21223456789@pers.craigslist.org)

U doin tonite?

18 white 130 lbs. Been told Im good looking. Hot girls only. 420 friendly. Not interested in talking.



- Location: Chicago
- it's NOT ok to contact this poster with services or other commercial interests

PostingID: 2123456789 (10 digits matches above)

---

## Bathroom rendezvous? - w4w - 59 (loop)

Date: 2012-3-23, 1:29PM CDT

[Reply to this post](#)

[2nsrc-3312456899@pers.craigslist.org](mailto:2nsrc-3312456899@pers.craigslist.org)

This isn't anything sexual just want someone to take pants off in Union station. Black female average build looking for young open minded white girl. msg me wit a pic. Thx.

- Location: Chicago
- it's NOT ok to contact this poster with services or other commercial interests

PostingID: 3312456899

## **SOCIAL SCIENCES (LITERATURE REVIEW)**

Brownholtz (2012) asserted that the utilization of cellular telephone diversissements at high decibels causes the vexation of surrounding subjects (n=3). Participants of this study, ages 18-45, were observed within a Midwestern public transportation system during low traffic hours. As hypothesized, the evolutionary proclivity of humans to seek nonverbal empathic responses from others resulted in attempted ocular convergence. Aggressive interjections, however, have been known to occur in rare instances (Young-man, 2012). Brownholtz (2012) supported this, explaining that misapprehension of participant #1 by participant #3 triggered vociferation and relocation.

In a non-related study, Baglady (2012) investigated proximate adults and hydro-receptacles (n=2). Presentations of atypical trouserial requests in conjunction with disturbing visual stimuli increased the probability of negative reactions and withdrawal.

## REALITY TV SHOW

**BETHANY** [*Sitting in the confessional room*]: Yeah, so I don't think me and James are gonna get along.

**BETHANY (VOICE OVER)** [*Insert clip of James sitting across the aisle making noises with his phone*]: I wasn't on the train 5 minutes before he started messin' with his phone. I'm sorry, but that's just rude.

**BETHANY** [*Sitting in the confessional room*]: Just 'cause he's got his MBA, he thinks he's better than everyone else.

[*Insert clip of Bethany looking at Nick for support*]

**BETHANY** [*Sitting in the confessional room*]: Nick's just kind of all over the place. He doesn't put a lot of effort in as far as looking presentable at panel.

[*Insert clip of Nick saying "what?" to her*]

**BETHANY** [*Sitting in the confessional room*]: I couldn't believe when Nick yelled at me. I thought we had an alliance.

**NICK** [*Sitting in the confessional room*]: When I said "what"...well...you know, I'm not here to make friends.

[*Insert clip of Bethany apologizing; cut to her leaving the train car*]

**BETHANY** [*Sitting in the confessional room*]: I feel sort of isolated on the train, like I don't really fit in [*Begins crying*].

**HOST (VOICE OVER)** [*Insert montage of clips from outside and inside Union Station*]: After Nick and James were eliminated from the competition, contestants were brought to Union Station.

[*Insert clip of Bethany leaving a bathroom stall and washing her hands*]

**HOST:** For this challenge you will be tested on chivalry. And your time starts now.

[*Insert clip of old homeless woman crying; Bethany asks the woman if she needs help*]

**BETHANY** [*Sitting in the confessional room*]: You know, you see a person crying like that, your heart goes out to them.

[*Insert clip of the woman asking Bethany to remove her pee-soaked pants; Bethany says no and walks away*]

**BETHANY** [*Sitting in the confessional room*]: I shoulda done it. I might be going home now.

## QUERY LETTER

3/23/2012

Fayling Books Agency  
Chicago, IL

Dear Ms. Jackson,

Amidst an epic journey to Chicago, 20-something Bethany loses patience with her older traveling companion; his games have gone on long enough. Just in time, she crosses paths with a bold and rugged younger man. Their tense relationship thrusts her into a shocking investigation involving an accident and an ancient gypsy. Will Bethany do the unthinkable?

A 50,000-word mystery, *Strange Encounters* explores the power of human connection and tests the boundaries of redemption. I chose to submit this novella for your review because of your interest publishing mystery novels and your recent pursuit of edgy fiction.

I am currently earning an MA in Writing and Publishing. My stories have been featured in *Cryptastic* and other journals.

Thank you for taking the time to consider representing my work. I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Kind regards,

Bethany Brownholtz

## NOVEL

### Chapter 1

A train glides under the midday sun. It is March in Chicago; the snow recedes from the tracks as if the grass is pushing it. A passenger, Bethany, sits with a book across her lap, her black hair straddling concave shoulders. She looks across the aisle toward a stranger in a freshly ironed dress shirt, his profile barely distinguishable. He clutches a cell phone; it beeps again, again, again.

Bethany's curious glance shifts to another passenger turning toward her, a young man. His blond tousled hair and translucent undershirt convey cool apathy. She musters a grin while holding his gaze, then rolls her eyes towards the businessman and his phone.

"What?" asks the young man.

"Sorry," she whispers.

As the train trembles to a halt, she gathers her book, ticket, and backpack, creeping out of the back of the train car to the next one. She searches for an empty seat and plops down, mouth ajar.

### Chapter 2

In the train station bathroom, Bethany scrubs her hands, replaying the incident in her mind. *What the hell happened back there? Is something wrong with me?* Over the rushing water, she suddenly hears the whimpers of a woman, who hunches at the other end of the counter.

"Are you okay? Do you need me to call someone?" Bethany manages. She stares into the woman's squinty eyes, noticing her milk chocolate skin and deep wrinkles. Her dirty clothes contrast the delicate flowers leaning in tiny crystal vases.



“Will you take them off?” the woman responds, gesturing towards crumpled jeans.

Bethany hesitates. “No,” she says, walking out of the restroom and wondering why she bothered to respond.

## PISSED OFF

God! I swear, I don't even know if I can ride these public trains anymore. It wasn't even rush hour! You got a grown man playing games on his phone like a goddamn teenage girl. Then you make eye contact with a young son of a bitch (who looks like he ain't bathed in a week), and he acts like you murdered his mother, for Christ's sake. "What?" he says. *Excuse* me? You can't even make eye contact with people anymore? Jesus! I got so ticked I got up and left. A goddamn waste of space, that smug bastard. I shoulda clocked him when I had the chance.

Just when I thought I couldn't meet any more degenerates, I walk into the bathroom to take a leak, and there's an old crazy bag standing there stupefied, howling on and mumbling to herself. I thought, you gotta be shittin' me. Then she's got the nerve to ask me to help her pull her pants off! So I say no, storm out, and tell the first cop I see, "There's a half-naked woman in there, high as a kite."

## PERSPECTIVE SHIFTS

It was just after lunchtime, and I was on the train going downtown to Chicago. I didn't feel like being productive, so I played One Tap Hero the whole time. I think I got a high score. Oh yeah, and I was in a nice new shirt from Jos. A. Bank.

\*\*\*

I was just kinda lookin' around when I saw this lady starin' me down. Maybe like 30, sorta chunky, big nose—I don't know. Anyway, she started makin' weird faces, like she was...mad or somethin'. I didn't know what her deal was, so I was like, "What?" She goes, "Sorry." I think she got off the train after that 'cause when I got off the train in Chicago I didn't see her.

\*\*\*

Then later I was at the Union Station bathroom by the sink. I had an accident. This lady all, "You want help? You need me to call someone?" I'm homeless. Ain't no one gonna come get me. So I answer her. I'm like, "Will you help take my pants off?" She basically leave me there even though she offered. Kind of bitchy if you ask me.

## LOCAL NEWS STORY (ONLINE)

### **Woman Harassed on Metra**

*March 24, 2012*

CHICAGO—Police are looking for three suspects in the West Loop neighborhood.

Early Friday afternoon, a woman was harassed and later experienced sexual assault during a train trip to Chicago on Metra's Milwaukee District West Line, police said. She was subjected to noise torture by a 40- to 50-year-old white man with a medium build.

Immediately following, another man screamed and lunged his face towards the victim. This man is reported to be a 17- to 20-year-old white man, 145 pounds, wearing a white undershirt. The victim ran to safety in an adjoining train car, police said.

Minutes after the incident, the victim was approached again in the Union Station bathroom by an African American female, 55 to 65 years old.

According to one witness, the suspect was disguised as a homeless woman. After luring the victim through crying, she requested that the victim assist in the removal of an article of clothing.

Anyone with information is urged to call the Metra Police Department at (312) 322-2800.

## RECIPE

Makes 2 servings

### Cake

- 1 16oz. can of afternoon commuter train (Chicago-style preferred)
- 1/2 tbs. businessman, shirt very crisp
- Dash of phone beeps
- 2 lbs. Italian woman
- 1 cup adult, still green, coarsely styled (let sit overnight)
- Pinch of tension (can substitute confusion if not available)

### Icing

- 1 Union Station bathroom, rinsed thoroughly
- Zest of Italian woman (reserve from above)
- 1/2 tsp. over-ripe female, slightly alcoholic
- gross question extract to taste

### Instructions

For the cake: Preheat oven to 350°F. Combine first four ingredients and stir vigorously for about 2 minutes. Meanwhile bring Italian woman to a boil and add in young adult. Once “what” and “sorry” emerge, turn down heat immediately and remove from the stovetop to cool.

For the icing: Leave female by the sink. Meanwhile, sprinkle zest into Union Station bathroom. Let rest for about a minute. Blend the first 3 ingredients. As soon as they form a paste, toss in the extract. The zest should disappear from view.

## AUCTIONEER

First up, we have this here iPhone. As the feller to my right is demonstrating, it works like new! We'll start the bidding at 1 gentleman-on-a-train 1,1 on-a-metra-train, 1 gentleman-on-a-train on-his-phone, 1 on-his-phone now, on-his-phone now 5, 5 wouldja-gimme 5, 5 woudja-gimme 10, 10 beeps-ringedy-ding beeps-ringedy-ding 10, 10, 15, 15 beeps lady-lookin-round-the, lady-lookin-round-the train 15, 15 lady-lookin-round-the 20, wouldja-gimme 20, 20 now wouldja-gimme 20, 25 now kid-ina-tee-shirt kid-ina-tee-shirt 25, 25 kid-ina-WHAT, WHAT wouldja-gimme sorry, 25 wouldja-gimme sorry able-da-bid 30, 30 able-da-bid 35, 35 wouldja-gimme half wouldja-gimme half now, move-to-the-other, move to-the-other 35, 35 now move-to-the-other-train-car now SOLD to paddle 79! You got yourself a steal, Mr. Queneau!

And for this lovely antique we'll get it started at 1 biggedy-bum-biddeggy-bum-bum 1, 1 biggedy-bum-biddeggy-bum-bum at-the-sink at-the sink 1, 1 at-the-sink at-the-sink 1,1 I-need-help, wouldja-gimme help, wouldja-gimme help 2, 2 I have 2, 2 I have 2, 2 able-da-bid-2, 2 wouldja-take-em-off, wouldja-take-em-off pants, pants wouldja-take-em-off pants 2, 2 no, wouldja no, no wouldja no and SOLD to the lady rushing out the door!

## **POLITICALLY INCORRECT**

On a yuppy train around 1 o'clock. A flabby DeGo broad, with a big shnoz gets her panties in a twist over some flaming gay pretty boy executive on his shiny new toy. Ring ring ring! I don't get why she's so annoyed, probably on the rag or something. So the chick looks over at this grungy emo hipster, trying to be nice, or maybe trying to get in his pants, I don't know. "Whuuuuu?," he says, like the dumb blond he is. The slut actually begs for forgiveness and moves somewhere else—typical woman.

The same gal goes to use the little ladies room at Union Station and sees this colored hobo in there crying who is, of course, high and homeless. The ditz thinks there's something actually wrong with her and asks if she needs help. White man's burden. Anyway, the bum says, "Will y'all take 'dem off?" Tubby tells her no and leaves the scene yet again, probably to go be emotional.

## **BALANCED**

On a commuter (and non-commuter) train, between morning and evening, a passenger that identifies as female, Mediterranean descent, 27, notices cell phone noises that some would believe to be too loud and too frequent. The noises appear to come from a Caucasian male, wearing clothing often associated with corporate office employment, about 45, playing a game on his phone. He is located, I believe, across the aisle. The woman makes eye contact with a passenger in front of the man. This passenger is a male, of Norwegian origins, about 18, in a Hanes-style t-shirt, hair tousled and dirty (in color) blond. She rolls her eyes, most likely in an attempt to express her confusion at the man's use of the phone. The 18-year-old says "What?" She says "sorry" and moves to an adjacent train car completely equal to the first in terms of outside appearance and amenities.

Approximately a half an hour later, the aforementioned woman uses a restroom at Union Station. A female African American low-income, residence-challenged 60-year-old adult stands by the sink, speaking softly and sniffing. She wears an assortment of denim. The 27-year-old woman offers help to the 60-year-old, including phoning a friend or family member. The 60-year-old prefers that the woman assist in the removal of clothing items that may have come in contact with bodily fluids. The 27-year-old woman seems to decide that doing so would cross personal boundaries; she says "no" and exits the restroom.




## FACEBOOK STATUS UPDATES

**Bethany Brownholtz**

Going to downtown Chicago! <3



[Like](#) · [Comment](#) March 23, 2012




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**Bethany Brownholtz**

Know what sucks about public transportation? The fact that it's PUBLIC. Business dude messing with his phone non-stop. Can't he tell that it's completely silent on here except for him?

[Like](#) · [Comment](#) March 23, 2012




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**Bethany Brownholtz**

Dear scruffy kid across the aisle,  
Next time someone looks at you, try not to scream "what?" at them.  
Love Bethany

[Like](#) · [Comment](#) March 23, 2012




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**Bethany Brownholtz**

“I have never found a companion that was so companionable as solitude.” —Thoreau

[Like](#) · [Comment](#) March 23, 2012




---

**Bethany Brownholtz**

Union station bathrooms aren't half bad...except for being asked to take a random homeless woman's pants off. I can see why people say don't talk to strangers (even if they're crying).

[Like](#) · [Comment](#) March 23, 2012



## MATHEMATICAL (WORD PROBLEMS)

- 1) At 12:22PM, a train departs from Elgin heading toward Chicago going 65 MPH. Passenger A's phone beeps 40 times per minute. If his phone has beeped 2,120 times by the time Passenger B has come aboard, and Passenger C is oblivious, what time did Passenger B board the train?
- 2) The same three passengers sit on a train, forming a right triangle. The distance between Passenger A and Passenger B is 5 ft. The distance between Passenger B and Passenger C is 2 ft. If Passenger A and C look at each other, and Passenger C asks, "what?" the moment their lines of sight form a hypotenuse, what is the length of the hypotenuse in inches?
- 3) One out of every 20,000 women in Chicago is unstable. Unstable people are 20 times more likely to have bathroom accidents. Unstable people are also 5 times more likely to make inappropriate requests of strangers. A woman has just asked Passenger B to remove her pants in the Union Station restroom. What is the probability that she is unstable?

## SCREEN PLAY

FADE IN:

A MOVING TRAIN, CHICAGO SUBURBS — SPRING TIME, DAY

CUT TO:

INT. TWO-STORY TRAIN, FIRST FLOOR — CONTINUOUS

WOMAN (late 20s) sits with a TEXTBOOK cracked open in her lap. PHONE MAN (40s) in business casual attire sits across the aisle from her playing with an iPhone. It BEEPS, high pitched and loud enough to be heard throughout the half-empty train car.

The woman's eyes skim text (C. U.). Her gaze moves towards the phone man with disgust as the BEEPS continue.

WOMAN'S POV

An unkempt COLLEGE KID (about 18) in a WHITE T-SHIRT slouches in front of the phone man. The kid lifts his head and looks straight at her.

BACK TO SCENE

She looks at the kid, smiling and rolling her eyes towards the phone man.

COLLEGE KID  
(Shouting)

What?

WOMAN

Sorry.

She stares out the window stiffly until the train stops.

TRAIN ANNOUNCER (O.S.)  
(Male voice, robotic)  
Now approaching Western Avenue.

CUT TO:

INT. TRAIN CAR, FIRST FLOOR — CONTINUOUS

The woman enters another train car and sits down, laughing to herself or at herself — we're not sure which.

CUT TO:

EXT. UNION TRAIN STATION - 30 MINUTES LATER

The train pulls into the station.

CUT TO:

INT. UNION TRAIN STATION - CONTINUOUS

The woman walks towards a woman's restroom.

CUT TO:

INT. TRAIN STATION RESTROOM - CONTINUOUS

The woman exits a bathroom stall and enters the sink area. She washes her hands. C.U. of an African American BAG WOMAN (60s) standing at the furthest sink crying. Another WOMAN (early 30s) walks into the area and darts out.

BAG WOMAN  
(Trailing off)  
I couldn't make it ah...

WOMAN  
Ma'am, do you need help? You need me  
to call someone?

We see the full-length of the woman; her clothing is loose.

BAG WOMAN  
Will you take them off?

WOMAN  
Your pants?

BAG WOMAN  
Yeah.

WOMAN  
(beat)  
No.

## JUNK MAIL (TRAVEL PACKAGE)

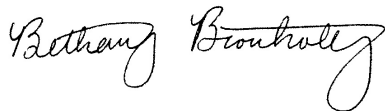
Dear Mr. Smith,

As an American Express customer, you are entitled to 30% off of the NEW exclusive commuter exposure package offered by *Chicago Tours and More!* This includes a ride on the luxurious Milwaukee District West Line any time during the month of March. You will be accompanied by one of our Mobile Operations Specialists and have limitless access to the latest in phone ringtones. Also available, for a modest upgrade, is our Direct Response Administrator who will react to your every glance. Each train car is furnished with stainless steel rear doors for your convenience.

Next, discover the opulence of Chicago's restrooms firsthand at the Union Station *Ladies Room*<sup>™</sup>. Ladies gain complimentary entrance. There, you will enjoy the finest in porcelain amenities and fresh water from Chicago's own Lake Michigan. Our resident Innovative Inquiry Facilitator will ensure that your trip is memorable.

We look forward to serving you. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bethany Brownholtz". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bethany Brownholtz

Regional Marketing Director, Chicago Tours and More

## JOKE

So, a businessman, a college kid, and a writer walk on to a train. The businessman starts shooting spaceships on his phone, loud as could be. The writer looks over, and the dinging is still going on. She looks over again, this time for longer, and he's *still* going at it. So finally she looks over, and notices the college kid staring at her. Just when she thinks he's going to lean over his shoulder and tell the guy to turn it down, he yells, "What!"

Get it? Okay, so the same woman walks into a train station bathroom 30 minutes later. She takes care of business, washes her hands, and all of a sudden, she hears a bag lady cryin' in the corner. So she goes over to the lady and says, "You ok, ma'am? You want me to call someone?" And the bum says, "No, I need you to take off my pants."

## RÉSUMÉ

### **Work Experience**

*Milwaukee District West Line*, Chicago, IL

March 2012

- Tolerated manager operating his phone over the volume limit
- Checked the emotional states of other employees
- Encouraged open questions in the work place
- Attempted conflict resolution with a younger coworker
- Transferred quietly to a different department

### **Volunteer Experience**

*Union Station (Bathroom Division)*, Chicago, IL

March 2012

- Utilized two types of receptacles
- Showed compassion toward the less fortunate
- Inspected garments
- Participated in assertiveness training



## YAHOO! ANSWERS

### Open Question

**Would you ride to Chicago on the train about 1 PM?**

*6 months ago*

### Answers (0)

Be the first to answer this question.

---

### Open Question

**Why are people always using there phones on the train? Its so rude!!!! If your gonna play a game than turn it on vibrate. If you were me would you say something? He's like twice my age...**

*6 months ago*

### Answers (1)



[N0t\\_Ur\\_Fri3nD](#)

What?

*6 months ago*

---

### Open Question

**a young dude I didn't know yelled what at me on the train and i moved to a different train car does this make me a pussy?**

*6 months ago*

### Answers (0)

Be the first to answer this question.

---

### Open Question

**If a homeless lady was crying and asked you to take her pants off for her, would you? I'm at the bathroom in Union station (chicago).**

*6 months ago*

**Answers (2)**

Best Answer - Chosen By Voters



[Bethany](#)

No  
*6 months ago*



[Anonymous](#)

Is she hot?  
*2 months ago*

## **LEGAL**

### **ARTICE 1. PARTIES AND MEETING**

#### **SECTION 1. PARTIES BOUND UNDER THIS AGREEMENT.**

A "BUSINESSMAN" is a male wearing business-casual attire in the possession of an iPhone\*.

A "WRITER" is a female who shall record events that shall take place during the meetings (see SECTION 2).

A "COLLEGE STUDENT" is a male attendee of any such university or college approved by the Higher Learning Commission with multi-directional hair and juvenile complexion, wearing a white shirt thereunder.

"PASSENGERS" constitute the BUSINESSMAN, WRITER, and COLLEGE STUDENT.

A "STREET PERSON" is a female of 60 or above years without possession of a permanent residence.

#### **SECTION 2. MEETINGS.**

(a) The three PASSENGERS shall meet once in a lifetime on the 23rd of March, 2012 on Metra's Milwaukee District West Line going toward Union Station in Chicago, Illinois. The meeting shall commence at 1:15 PM.

(b) The WRITER shall meet the STREET PERSON at Union Station female lavatory on the 23rd of March, 2012, at 1:45PM.

### **ARTICLE 2. PURPOSE AND PROTOCOL.**

#### **SECTION 1. PURPOSE**

There shall be no purpose for such meetings.

#### **SECTION 2. PROTOCOL**

(a) Should the BUSINESSMAN deploy his cellular telephone at the fullest extent of its volume without discretion, the WRITER shall thenceforth in good faith regard the COLLEGE STUDENT. The WRITER and the COLLEGE STUDENT shall not reach a quorum, henceforth breaching the social contract (EXHIBIT A). The interaction will be terminated, and the WRITER shall relocate, hereby declaring the terms, conditions, and principles of the acquaintanceship void.

(b) The STREET PERSON shall stand in the Union Station bathroom common area therein the WRITER will debrief the STREET PERSON. The STREET PERSON shall stipulate the conditions of the assistance requested. Provided that the assistance require public indecency as

dictated by Illinois state law (720 ILCS 5/11-21), the WRITER shall make a motion to adjourn the meeting by means of stating “no” and exiting the premises.

#### **EXHIBIT A. SOCIAL CONTRACT.**

Polite etiquette ensuing from childhood verbal and non-verbal interactions whereby an individual engaging in such behavior develops congenial attitudes towards other individuals, including those whom the individual has not met hitherto.

*\*IPhone is a registered trademark of Apple, Inc. Use herein is solely intended for educational and factual purposes.*

## TWEET

**Bethany** @xercisesinstyle 23 Mar

Chicago here I come <http://tinyurl.com/8llgyqo> #metra

**Bethany** @xercisesinstyle 23 Mar

Ban phones from middle aged business men? Yea or nay?

**Bethany** @xercisesinstyle 23 Mar

Communication #FAIL. RLRT @rudeboy "What!!!!!"

**Bethany** @xercisesinstyle 23 Mar

a stranger asking u to take their pants off isn't as sexy as  
in the movies...station br #awkward moment with @Ladyofthebags

## SHAKESPEARIAN SONNET

Upon a lengthy carriage I took course,  
And piercing dins didst thrum about mine ears—  
The Lord fond'ling his hand-chime was the source.  
Before him sat a knave of eighteen years.  
Camaraderie passed gently 'tween our eyes,  
His snowy shirt, his flowing hair unkempt,  
But what man could have discerned his disguise?  
“What?” spake he, emboldened with contempt.  
The rear compartment beckoned me to rest,  
And left me at the town square chamber pot.  
A ragged shrew at the basin wept—  
Abandon her to sorrow I could not.  
But good Samaritans descend to “no’s”  
When asked to lower strangers’ soiled hose.

LOL CATS









**i wash mah handz**



**whahwawhwhah**



**i haz axident**



**u needz hewp?**



**u iz take dem off?**



**um, no.**

## WINE TASTING

This Cabernet Sauvignon is best enjoyed on a commuter train about 1PM. Its haunting aroma exudes piercing notes of Blackberry that last well beyond the finish. Classy label, though, don't you think? And here we have a Chardonnay. You may find it to have lots of body with a distinctive nose, yet it is declining in concentration—a delicate contrast to the vineyard's Pinot Grigio. The Chard is very agreeable and warm while the Pinot is an earthy young wine, quite forward in its attack, as it's unfiltered. Notice how the Chard lacks backbone in comparison?

Next, we'll move on to the reds—be sure to rinse your glass first. Good, now here we have a 1940 Merlot. It's on the pruney, overripe side, but high in alcoholic content! As you approach it, you may find it to be unpleasantly scented and watery towards the bottom. You can move on to the next if you'd like.

## YELP REVIEW

[Metra Milwaukee District West Line](#)

Category: [Public Transportation Systems](#)

Neighborhood: [Near West Side](#)



3/23/12

Reviewed by [Bethany B.](#)

I decided to take the train downtown recently and went around 1PM train to avoid the work commuters. On the positive side, the seats were nice and comfy, and I didn't have to worry about driving downtown. I liked being able to relax... for about the first 5 minutes.

The noise level was ridiculous. Basically the guy across the aisle from me was playing a game on his phone and failed to have the common courtesy to turn the volume down. He was in business type clothes, so why he wasn't at work already is beyond me. The train conductors didn't even ask him to turn it down a notch (or ten).

To top it off, the person in front of him was a spaz. I looked at him because I thought he was having issues with phone guy too. He screamed "what?" at me in front of everyone. Plus he was wearing an undershirt and his hair practically had flies buzzing around it. Don't they have a dress code on these things? I said "sorry" to him and ended up gathering my stuff and moving to the next train car.

So, in a nutshell:

### Pros

- Nice seats
- Not having to sit in Chicago traffic/pay for parking

### Cons

- Being screamed at
- Not getting any work done due to ignorant passengers

I really wanted to like my experience going downtown. Next time I'll stick with driving.

Was this review...? Useful ✓ Funny ✓ Cool ✓

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[Union Station Ladies Room](#)

Category: [Bathrooms](#)

Neighborhood: [Near West Side](#)



3/23/12

Reviewed by [Bethany B.](#)

This particular bathroom was actually nice compared to most train station bathrooms. It was very clean and, dare I say, attractive? The counter tops looked like stone, there were flowers, and the sinks were some sort of hammered metal. It's not going to appear on HGTV or anything, but still.

Here is where things took a turn for the worse, however. After I used the bathroom, I went out to wash my hands and there was a woman standing there, 60 or so, clothes a little dirty. She seemed upset, so I asked her if I could help in some way, like calling someone. Unfortunately, her preferred method of being helped was me taking her pants off for her. So, needless to say, my time there was cut short.

All said and done, I'd use it again. Well, as long as pants woman isn't a regular visitor.

Was this review...? Useful ✓ (1) Funny ✓ (3) Cool ✓

## WRITING AS CRAFTING: REFLECTIONS ON REMIXING *EXERCISES IN STYLE*

The idea to “remix” Raymond Queneau’s *Exercises in Style* came to me, ironically, while aboard a Metra train going to downtown Chicago. At the time, I was taking a Stylistics course and had spent much of the quarter reading and analyzing excerpts of Queneau’s book. As the Stylistics course progressed, my interest shifted from analyzing passages to writing passages, but I knew this task was beyond the scope of the course.

Part of this desire stemmed from the fact that Queneau’s book was published in 1947<sup>1</sup>: so much had shifted culturally since then. There had to be untapped styles to explore, styles more representative of my generation. What would a book on exercises in style look like *today*? I wondered. Had style evolved, and if so, how?

Then, on a dreary April day, sitting on those blue leather benches that I have since recalled hundreds of times, I remembered two incidents that had happened to me a month earlier. A man was playing with his cell phone and...you know the rest. I sensed the parallels to Queneau’s story instantly: public transit, two distinct parts, a recurring character, interactions gone awry. But the story was different enough that readers would not feel as if they were re-reading the original *Exercises in Style*. Using this modern story, I would continue Queneau’s work.

I also realized that such a project would be the perfect capstone project for a Master’s in Writing and Publishing (MAWP). DePaul’s MAWP provides students with the flexibility to experiment with many different types of writing; through this project, I would be able to reflect back on courses taken over the past three years. Moreover, I would be viewing those courses through a renewed “style lens.” Would this stylistic layer enhance my understanding of, and skill level in, each

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<sup>1</sup> Queneau, Raymond. *Exercises in Style*. Translated by Barbara Wright. New York, NY: New Directions Books, (1981).

subject area? To investigate this, I included entries relating to courses I had taken: Poetry Writing (SHAKESPERIAN SONNET), Long-form Fiction (NOVEL), Memoir Writing (MEMOIR), The Art of Interviewing (ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT), Screen Writing (SCREENPLAY), Language and Style for Writers (CLEFTS), Publishing (QUERY LETTER), and Digital Publishing (BLOG).

In addition to experimenting with MAWP styles, I realized that, as a “21<sup>st</sup> century remix,” I should try my best to incorporate 21<sup>st</sup> century styles. I considered technology that had emerged since 1947, special interests that had become more mainstream since Queneau’s time, and/or general topic areas not addressed by Queneau. Interestingly, as I brainstormed potential entries, I saw how technology seemed to relate to topics much older than the devices through which information about those topics are now accessed. In other words, I can teach myself to dance ballet, write a résumé, speak “sommelier”—all because millions of people are willing to share their knowledge through video tutorials, blog posts, Wikipedia articles, PDF examples, and more. Take AUCTIONEER—there are several TV shows that depict auctions, so even though I have never attended an auction, I have watched enough episodes of “Storage Wars” to know what the auctioneer might sound like. Then, to learn about bid chants, I spent about thirty minutes watching YouTube videos created by auctioneers. Learning about new things is more convenient than ever before; all one needs to do is click on a link or browse TV listings. Therefore, my process for choosing style exercises was organic. If a style came to mind—even if it seemed impossible—I wrote it down with the understanding that I could emulate it with enough examples.

My third goal was to focus on entries that would be considered styles. Seeing as this thesis contains exercises in *style*, this goal may be obvious, but some of Queneau’s entries seem more like word puzzles than style exercises: epenthesis, synchysis, apheresis, apocope, syncope, (several) permutations, aragoge, metathesis, and so on. I wanted entries to reflect feasible language scenarios,

and thus, while writing, I continually asked myself, “would the average person be able to identify the style of this entry?”

Perhaps evident already is the fact that the definition of “style” is broad—something that even experts in the field of Stylistics have pointed out<sup>2</sup>. Style can mean the language characteristics of a single person<sup>3</sup>; a group of people like the Elizabethans (style of a time period) or Appalachians (style of a regional group/social class)<sup>4</sup>; a particular genre or author group<sup>5</sup> (literary non-fiction writers, beat poets); or a particular industry or interest group<sup>6</sup> (lawyers, golfers). Style can even refer to how literary, “good, effective, or beautiful” writing is<sup>7</sup>, as in “Margaret Atwood has great style!” With all of these options in mind, I came to define style as something people *recognize* that is *narrow enough to contain predictable and distinct stylistic features*.

This corresponds well with the idea of register. If someone is writing or speaking in a particular register, the observer can identify who is speaking, whom they would be speaking to, and the activity or situation. Take for example the following interaction:

“Next in line.”

“I’ll take an Egg McMuffin and a number three.”

“That’ll be \$6.37.”

Within three lines, we know this is a customer interacting with an employee at McDonald’s.

A register emerges when the field of discourse, mode of discourse, and tenor of discourse converge in expected ways<sup>8</sup>. The field of discourse refers to the topic being discussed (sports, wine) or the overall category of content (poetry); mode of discourse refers to the form through which the

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<sup>2</sup> Crystal, David and Derek Davy. *Investigating English Style* (Bloomington & London: Indiana University Press, 1969), 9.

<sup>3</sup> Crystal, David and Derek Davy. *Investigating English Style* (Bloomington & London: Indiana University Press, 1969), 9.

<sup>4</sup> Gregory, Michael and Suzanne Caroll. *Language and Situation* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978), 4-5.

<sup>5</sup> Crystal, David and Derek Davy. *Investigating English Style* (Bloomington & London: Indiana University Press, 1969), 10.

<sup>6</sup> Gregory, Michael and Suzanne Caroll. *Language and Situation*.(London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978), 7-11.

<sup>7</sup> Crystal, David and Derek Davy. *Investigating English Style* (Bloomington & London: Indiana University Press, 1969), 10.

<sup>8</sup> Gregory, Michael and Suzanne Caroll. *Language and Situation*.(London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978), 64.



field is delivered (written, spoken); and tenor refers to what the language is trying to accomplish practically (teach, persuade, entertain) and relationally (unite, distance)<sup>9</sup>. These three lenses are not so distinct, however. In the case of the entry RAP, the use of slang relates to both mode and tenor: slang *words* are a part of the mode, and those slang words affect the rapper/listener relationship (tenor). As these concepts are quite complicated, I will present some more examples:

**Table 1. Examples of field, mode, and tenor as they relate to the concept of register.**

REGISTER	Field (the what)	Mode (the how— structurally)	Tenor (the why)	
			Functional Tenor (the practical purpose)	Personal Tenor (the social purpose)
Legal	Law	Written, has long sentences and legalese	Establish protocol	Maintain distance from reader
Wine review	Wine	Written, has wine jargon, first and second person permitted	Entertain and inform	Unite with reader
Football broadcast	Sports (football)	Spoken, has sports terms and colloquial features	Entertain and announce	Unite with viewer

Going back to my definition of style—“something people *recognize* that is *narrow enough to contain predictable and distinct stylistic features*”—field is similar to “something people recognize.” In the *recognizable* category (field) of law, there are *predicable* and *distinct* features: I expect lengthy, confusing words and jargon (mode), and I expect not to be able to understand it (combination of mode and tenor).

However, in writing this thesis, I decided that I did not want all entries to be registers. Although, everything that is a register is probably a style, not every style is a register. PISSED OFF,

<sup>9</sup> Craig Sirles, notes from Stylistics course, DePaul University, Chicago, IL spring 2012.

for example, is not a register but seems to me a style. People can *recognize* an angry passage and *predict* what features it might contain (swear words, insults, exclamation points) that *distinguish* it from a more neutral passage. Hence, I felt my definition more accurately reflected what style constitutes and tried to adhere to it throughout the process of writing this thesis.

Because of this definition, I let go of some entries, like INVERSE, which told the “opposite” story of THE GIST: “Standing in an open field, middle of the night. A man is completely concentrating while an unemployed, phone-less woman in a burlap sack looks around silently...” I realized that this entry was not *stylistically* different from THE GIST. Likewise, PERSONAL EMAIL was too general to be a style, not to mention that each person writes differently. Some entries that “made the cut,” but seem to break the style rule, would be CLEFTS and PERSPECTIVE SHIFTS. CLEFTS explores syntax patterns and is the only entry that serves as a language experiment and not a likely language scenario. PERSPECTIVE SHIFTS is another peculiar entry, which is not a style; however, it shows idiolects—a person’s own personal style—and could potentially be broken down into 3 dialectal styles with more refining.

Another major restriction that I used while writing this thesis was to try to maintain a semblance of the core story. Again, this may seem obvious, but was an issue I took with Matt Madden’s *99 Ways to Tell a Story*. Madden borrowed Queneau’s idea, creating 99 different comic book illustrations of a story. In Madden’s story, a man gets up from his work desk, presumably to go to the kitchen. But while he is on the way, his partner asks him the time. He answers, continues to the refrigerator, opens it, and forgets “What the hell [he] was...looking for anyway.”<sup>10</sup> Madden does a fantastic job experimenting with visual styles, but some entries contain different characters *and* a different plot (see “Public Service Announcement” and “Exercises In Love”). If the style of an entry restricts the story so much so that the resulting entry bares no semblance to the original, then should

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<sup>10</sup> Madden, Matt. *99 Ways to Tell a Story* (New York, NY: Chamberlain Brothers, 2005), 3.

the entry be included in the collection? In my own work, I had had an entry called AIRLINE, which presented “flight attendant speak”; but the story was so hidden that it might as well have been a list of phrases that flight attendants use. So, moving forward, I tried to limit new characters to narrators *outside* the bounds of the story, such as the Psychotherapist in PSYCHOTHERAPIST (PROGRESS NOTE). I gave myself permission to do so because the resulting entry maintained the core story and kept the story fresh for readers.

Once completed, the pieces were arranged to maximize reader interest. Some are juxtaposed for disparity—contrasting modes (LEGAL/TWEET), intellectual levels (SOCIAL SCIENCES/CRAIG’S LIST), content (POLITICALLY INCORRECT/BALANCED), tones (KID’S SHOW/SARCASTIC), or combinations of these. Other proximate entries overlap to encourage comparisons or create unique dialogues between related pieces: PSYCHOTHERAPIST and PARANOID relate to mental health; JUNK MAIL and RÉSUMÉ relate to business, QUERY LETTER and NOVEL relate to publishing. ORAL HISTORY and INSTANT MESSAGE seem dissimilar, yet they are two types of consultative exchanges—how might they be similar or different, and why? The collection begins and concludes with entries that reflect back on events; the first entry fondly remembers the story (NOSTALGIC) while the last entry reviews it (YELP REVIEW).

I also created a “rubric” to analyze each entry’s stylistic features (see Appendix). Analysis was necessary because it would uncover aspects of the text of which I was not conscious and highlight any themes relating to my overarching research questions. Through the analysis process, I might also be able to revise the entries to ensure that they truly represented the style for which they were named. For example, if I claimed that a certain style was characterized by long sentences, I would make sure that my entry contained long sentences.

My initial rubric looked like this, but I soon recognized that the first measurement tool had flaws.

**NAME OF ENTRY**

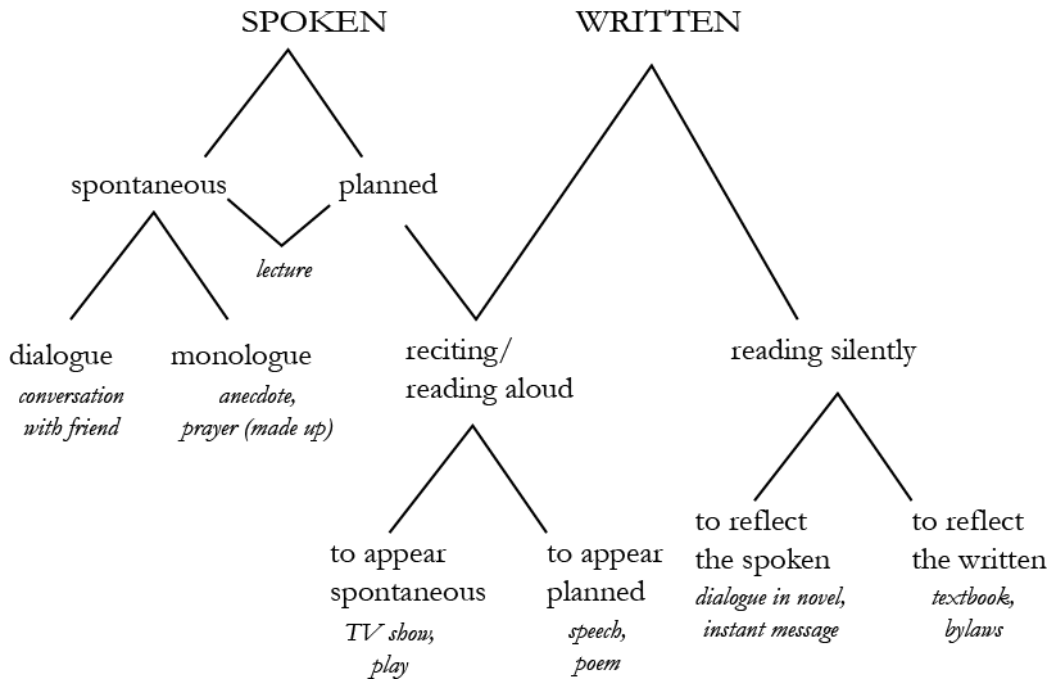
<b>Spoken to Written continuum (mode)</b>	← -----→ <b>Spoken</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>Written</b></span>
<b>Intimate to Formal continuum</b>	← -----→ <b>Intimate Casual Consultative Formal</b>
<b>Notes:</b>	[significant stylistic features]
<b>Field if applicable</b>	
<b>Tenor (a) Personal</b>	(a)
<b>(b) Functional</b>	(b)

The spoken to written continuum was intended to show how close a communicator’s voice was to spoken or written versions of English. But I became confused when I had to evaluate entries like CRAIG’S LIST or ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW, which are written but have many colloquial qualities. Placing them on the spoken side of the continuum did not seem totally accurate, especially when part of my purpose was to identify the mode. Furthermore, some entries can be performed or spoken, such as REALITY SHOW or SHAKESPEARIAN SONNET, and cannot easily place on either end of the spectrum. I realized, then, I should classify the intended mode and address “speakerly” and “writerly” elements within the other measurement tools. The intimate-formal scale in particular corresponds to the spoken-written scale. So, as to not create redundancy, the current rubric factors in the mode chart developed by Gregory and Caroll<sup>11</sup>. Below is an adaptation and simplification of their chart with examples for clarity.

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<sup>11</sup> Gregory, Michael and Suzanne Caroll. *Language and Situation* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978), 47.

Figure 1. Adaption of chart by Gregory and Caroll.



As shown here, mode is not simply about whether the entry is written or spoken but explores nuances of spoken and written communications.

The next row of the rubric relates to the work of Joos who parsed style into “five clocks,” or five versions of English used at different times. English is “not a single homogeneous phenomenon at all, but rather a complex of many different varieties of language in use in all kinds of situation[...].”<sup>12</sup> The version of English we use with a supervisor is different than the version of English we use with a best friend; the version of English we use in a text message is different than the English we use in an online forum, and so on. Joos dispels the myth that there is an overarching proper English by showing five language variations that are proper in the appropriate context.

<sup>12</sup> Crystal, David and Derek Davy. *Investigating English Style* (Bloomington & London: Indiana University Press, 1969), 2.

**Table 2. Intimate to Frozen continuum based on *The Five Clocks* by Joos<sup>13</sup>.**

<b>Intimate</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• has omission to the extreme (30) as in just a grunt or a single word</li> <li>• uses jargon (30)</li> <li>• "fuses two personalities" (40)</li> </ul>	<b>Relies on shared knowledge</b>
<b>Casual</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• treats listener as an "insider" (23); is complimentary "supposing that he will understand without [explanation]" (23)</li> <li>• includes slang and ellipsis [omission] (23)</li> <li>• "integrates disparate personalities into a social group" (40)</li> <li>• lacks background information (23)</li> <li>• does not rely "on listeners' participation" (23)</li> </ul>	
<b>Consultative</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "addressee participates continuously" (23)</li> <li>• "speaker supplies background information" (23)</li> <li>• conversation adjourned rather than lapsing "into silences or kidding" (29)</li> <li>• "produces cooperation without...integration" (40)</li> </ul>	
<b>Formal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reader absent—not incorporated or acknowledged (34); text detached from reader (38)</li> <li>• cohesion present (38)</li> <li>• designed to inform (35)</li> <li>• writer/speaker plans in advance what will be communicated (37)</li> <li>• "informs the individual separately, so that his future planning may be the more discriminate" (40)</li> </ul>	
<b>Frozen</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refers to literature: meant to be read and re-read <i>intact</i> (51-52)</li> <li>• "lures the reader on and on through successive inventive discoveries" (45)</li> </ul>	

As I am sure Joos was aware, style is more fluid than these categories allow, and texts can span more than one category. AUCTIONEER, for example, does not seem to fit perfectly into any of these categories. It involves responses from the audience (consultative?), is friendly towards the audience (casual?), and has jargon/refers to a situation being witnessed by participants only (intimate?). Also, perhaps I misunderstand Joos's use of jargon, but jargon can be a formal characteristic too because it tends to appear in formal writing (PSYCHOTHERAPIST or LEGAL).

<sup>13</sup> Joos, Martin. *The Five Clocks* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1961), page numbers indicated in chart.

Another difficulty of the five clocks article is that categories are not discussed in a way that compares all features across the board. One has to make educated guesses about other clocks' features: Can one omit in consultative style? Can slang exist in frozen style?

**Table 3. Example of trying to fill in the blanks in Joos's Five Clocks.**

<i>Feature</i>	← -----				----- →
	<b>Intimate</b>	<b>Casual</b>	<b>Consultative</b>	<b>Formal</b>	<b>Frozen*</b>
<b>Omission</b>	Omission to extreme	Some omission	Omission may occur but by mistake	Effort to explain all; transitions, metadiscourse, known-new contract, etc.	Gaps might be lyrical in nature (like a poem); leaves it to reader to make discoveries
<b>Organization</b>	Spontaneous	Spontaneous	Spontaneous with some forethought	Pre-planned and revised	Pre-planned and revised
<b>Relationship between participants</b>	Joins personalities	Creates social group	Respects other through cooperation	Does not address other	Depends
<b>Slang/jargon</b>	Permitted	Permitted	Occasional	Not permitted	Depends
<b>Purpose</b>	Strengthen relationship	Strengthen relationship	Consult with	Inform	Provoke thought and inspire through art
	Private language, greater need to know audience			Public language, usually acquired through education; associated with correctness	

*\* Frozen style was not used in the rubric, as none of the entries are canonical literature.*

One common issue was trying to identify where something fell between intimate and casual. If someone needs to be present to understand what is being described (AUCTIONEER, POP SONG, CHOREOGRAPHER, WINE TASTING), is that intimate or casual? There is surely a middle ground between “some omission” and grunting (extreme omission).

Interestingly, when laid out like this (Table 3), one begins to notice overlaps between the five clocks and the idea of register. Organization, omission, and slang, refer to aspects of the mode, while

relationship and purpose refer to personal and functional tenor. Regardless, the style rubric addresses field and tenor directly in rows 4 and 5.

Although the measurement tools were helpful in trying to think about and compare entries, the more one tries to group and categorize stylistic features, the less these generalizations seem to reflect reality, particularly with newer styles. Regarding the five clocks, where does one put BLOG? As the analysis claims (see Appendix):

The style is challenging to place on the intimate-formal continuum. It has colloquial elements like idioms (*in the same boat*), exclamation marks, and contractions, but it also consults with the audience using reader questions/responses, and tries to explain the situation in detail (consultative or formal).

SCREEN-PLAY posed a similar challenge: where would it fit on the intimate-formal scale? Or let us assert that imperative sentences are an informal feature because they address and involve the reader. What about shouting orders at someone (CHOREOGRAPHER): could this also be a formal tactic, distancing the listener from the speaker? Finally, let us claim that colloquial elements are a sign that something is spoken. This cannot be the case with new technological styles that fuse written modes and spoken attributes (LOL CATS, YAHOO ANSWERS, INSTANT MESSAGE, and more).

Even with tenor, mode, and field, not every legitimate style has these categories. Many styles in the Appendix are missing the field of discourse and contain questionable answers to personal tenor, perhaps supporting my earlier claim that all styles are not registers. The personal tenor of CRAIG'S LIST states, "distant in that contributors try to remain anonymous yet intimate in its brevity, frankness, and honesty" (see Appendix). The complexity of style was why the "Notes" section of the rubric, row 3, was so important. A narrative exploration was the place to discuss features like word choice, syntax, and semantics without subordinating them under other categories like clocks.



My difficulty in categorizing entries pointed me back to some of my initial guiding questions: what would a book on exercises in style look like *today*, and what might it say about how style has evolved? Technology has created numerous styles, which are mode dominated—consider the prominence of acronyms (LOL, BRB), abbreviations (wut, sup), symbols (@, hashtags), emoticons, formatting/layout, and multimedia. Yet, while many modern styles are clearly written (we haven't started saying “hashtag cool” in real life conversations yet), they serve to resemble the informality of spoken, casual communication. Consider TEXT MESSAGE, INSTANT MESSAGE, TWEET, FACEBOOK, CRAIG'S LIST, YELP, YAHOO ANSWERS, and LOL CATS. Style has always been a reflection of users, so what I see here is a cultural shift. These technologies have replaced and/or added to daily in-person interactions. Our innate social needs are being satisfied in alternative ways through technology, which has caused us to adapt—to create an informal written tech-language.

Mode, particularly word choice, also seemed to be the primary characteristic of other entries. This is not a style evolution, per se, as groups have always had jargon, but perhaps groups are not as insular anymore and are more susceptible to outside influence due to technology. As I mentioned earlier in the essay, technology provided me with a “free access pass” into worlds once known to only small groups of people; one can become a self-made expert on almost any topic using their phone, TV, computer, Kindle, etc. Logically, using these same devices, one can become a part of a group and influence that group.

With this in mind, diverse influence seems to be one major difference between style in Queneau's time and style today. Style has always been in the hands of users, but never in the history of the world have humans had such easy access to information and to other authors. Every literate person with Internet access can become an author. They can publish ten times per day between Twitter, Blogger, or Facebook; they can incorporate images, links, and videos, creating inseparable

dialogues between text and media; they can bring the attributes of one style into another style — Twitter hashtags are on Facebook; “text speak” appears on Craig’s list, and so on. Stylistic features are being created by the everyday user and propagated by their audience of everyday users, quicker and easier than ever before.

The link between style and influence was explored in 2011, by a group of computer science researchers. These researchers studied 7,733 texts by 537 individuals—of different academic disciplines—who wrote between 1550-1952. They observed that authors from hundreds of years ago typically emulated what little literature was available to them<sup>14</sup>. Then, in the modern period (1907 – 1952), the increasing availability of literature impacted the evolution of style. Modern writers' styles became more diverse as the volume of diverse texts available to them expanded:

[F]or more recent authors choices of books to read has increased dramatically... leading to rather heterogeneous reading patterns and a greater overall diversity of authored works...with even more authors to choose from and selection dominated by contemporaneous authors. This suggests a simple evolutionary model for patterns of influence.<sup>15</sup>

Intriguingly, their study stops shortly after Raymond Queneau’s *Exercises in Style* was published. We can only imagine that if style “style itself [was] evolving at an accelerating pace,”<sup>16</sup> before 1952, it can only continue expanding due to our vast exposure to different texts and ideas. The number of communications that people engage in and witness on a daily basis must be astronomical compared to people of earlier centuries.

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<sup>14</sup> James M. Hughesa, et al., “Quantitative patterns of stylistic influence in the evolution of literature,” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 109, no. 20 (2012): 7684.

<sup>15</sup> James M. Hughesa, et al., “Quantitative patterns of stylistic influence in the evolution of literature,” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 109, no. 20 (2012): 7684-7685

<sup>16</sup> James M. Hughesa, et al., “Quantitative patterns of stylistic influence in the evolution of literature,” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 109, no. 20 (2012): 7685.

Furthermore, consider that technology itself is evolving at an accelerating pace<sup>17</sup>. Future technology has the potential to create new platforms and devices that will necessitate their own styles. Although it is hard to believe that more technological styles could be created, 20 years ago, something like Twitter would have been unimaginable. We can never truly imagine what types of platforms will be created and will become popular.

In light of this discussion on influence, it is important to address how completing these exercises have influenced me as a writer. At the beginning of the study, I had wondered if applying a stylistic lens would enhance my understanding of, and skill level in, various subject areas relating to writing. I do not believe the project has significantly improved my skill level in particular genres or subjects; instead, I have witnessed overall benefits that apply to writing in general.

Throughout my studies, I have heard numerous times that “writing is a craft.” Crafting speaks to painstaking, deliberate efforts towards achieving that perfect manuscript. But, practically speaking, how does one craft a piece of writing? This felt elusive, like handing someone a famous painting and painting supplies, and then saying, “Recreate this”—or telling me to improve but now *how* to improve.

Style seems to me the *how*. Style offers “tangible” items to play with: Which words should I tweak to make the poem less heavy-handed? Can I change up the sentence patterns or length here to create suspense? What kind of personal tenor should my narrator have? What is the purpose (functional tenor) of this piece, and what changes can I make to achieve it? How much background information should I provide in this situation? Just as grammar provides writers with the taxonomy to correct basic writing, style provides taxonomy for improving creative writing, making revision

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<sup>17</sup> Kurzweil, Ray, “The Law of Accelerating Returns,” Kurzweil Accelerating Intelligence, <http://www.kurzweilai.net/the-law-of-accelerating-returns> (accessed January 14, 2013).

seem all the more manageable. The writer can also study other texts with specific stylistic criteria in mind to see how these texts are successful (or unsuccessful). I recall reading many pieces for classes, enjoying them, and not knowing how I might imitate them or even why I appreciated them. Now, equipped with the stylistic toolbox, I can “dissect” these pieces, sit down at my computer, and begin what it has taken me over three years to learn: to craft.

**APPENDIX**  
*In alphabetical order*

**a TITLE is exactly what THEY would expect (PARANOID)**

<b>Mode</b>	Spoken OR written to reflect the spoken
<b>Intimate to Formal continuum</b>	← -----X-----→ <b>Intimate Casual Consultative Formal</b>
<b>Notes:</b>	The piece seems casual because the reader is treated as an insider. The author omits information, such as what secret organization is pursuing her. This omission is reinforced on a micro-level with contractions and missing punctuation.  Paranoia is conveyed through semantics; we gather that a group is after the speaker, though she seems unreliable due to capital words and run-on sentences. Is she in a rush, yelling, or just plain crazy? Word choice contributes to the style but mostly in the context of phrases ( <i>secret organization, mind control, government agent, reveal all, following me, not even safe, hypnosis, false identity, biological contagion, hurry</i> ).
<b>Field if applicable</b>	
<b>Tenor (a) Personal (b) Functional</b>	(a) Unite (b) Convey information, get help

**AUCTIONEER**

<b>Mode</b>	Spoken > spontaneous with some parts planned
<b>Intimate to Formal continuum</b>	← -----X-----→ <b>Intimate Casual Consultative Formal</b>
<b>Notes:</b>	The story of THE GIST is told in spurts of auctioneer bid chant. In bid chants, auctioneers stress the current bid amount repeatedly using rhythmic filler words like “would you give me?”, “able to bid?”, and nonsense words strung together <sup>18</sup> . In this piece, the nonsense phrases are phrases of the story: beeps-ringedy-ding, lady-lookin-round-the, kid-ina-tee-shirt, etc. Words specific to the auction field of discourse include <i>bidding, sold, paddle</i> , and <i>antique</i> . The piece leans toward the intimate side due to omission; it masks the story, especially if recited at high speed.
<b>Field if applicable</b>	Auction
<b>Tenor (a) Personal (b) Functional</b>	(a) Be likeable but not allow audience to hear all the words (keep some distance) (b) Maintain excitement, raise value of auction items

**BALANCED**

<b>Mode</b>	Most likely written
<b>Intimate to Formal continuum</b>	← -----X-----→ <b>Intimate Casual Consultative Formal</b>
<b>Notes:</b>	The author does not want to make authoritative statements or overgeneralize, so she uses metadiscourse ( <i>I believe, aforementioned</i> ) and qualifiers like <i>many, most likely, often, some, appear to be, may have, and seem to</i> . Accordingly, there are no judgments attached to words. Rather than using

<sup>18</sup> Rsfiberglass, “auctioneer chant how to,” Youtube video, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t821Bm0ZuoY> (accessed November, 9 2012). ; Singingpine, “How to be an auctioneer: Bid calling lesson #1 (more auction lessons to follow),” Youtube video, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lzeI2589VFI> (accessed November 9, 2012).

	<p>“old” or “young,” the author lists exact ages. She refers to all characters’ ethnicities as to not single out just one. The author goes a tad overboard when she clarifies that the train includes non-commuters, the boy’s hair is <i>dirty (in color) blond</i>, the train cars are equal, and the homeless woman is <i>residence-challenged</i>.</p> <p>The piece feels formal and written due to the lack of colloquial elements (no contractions, no first or second person), the length of the piece (it is almost twice the length of THE GIST), and the vocabulary (<i>descent, tousled, corporate, identifies, frequent, amenities, employment, origins, adjacent, assortment, phoning, prefers, boundaries, exits</i>). Although the vocabulary is not at an extremely high level, it seems above normal conversational levels. Related, people speaking would not specify all of the ethnic information unless in a special scenario, such as providing the police with a testimony. The use of metadiscourse signals formality, in that formal writing avoids making assumptions about the reader and tries to explain everything to them<sup>19</sup>. Related, qualifiers make this seem formal because they are the type of words used in academic essays.</p>
<b>Field if applicable</b>	Potentially government, education, or social sciences related
<b>Tenor (a) Personal (b) Functional</b>	(a) Maintain distance from reader to best communicate impartial information (b) Convey information in an unbiased way

### BLOG

<b>Mode</b>	Written > planned
<b>Intimate to Formal continuum</b>	<p style="text-align: center;">← -----X-----&gt;</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Intimate    Casual    Consultative    Formal</b></p>
<b>Notes:</b>	<p>There are many definitions of blogs<sup>20</sup> probably due to the fact that there are myriad types of blogs on the web: how-to blogs, product blogs, topic blogs (i.e. politics, theology), and others. Put stylistically, the <i>field</i> of discourse varies drastically from blog to blog. However, technological structure and tenor may show that consistency exists in the “blogosphere.”</p> <p>Above all, blogs share technological features: they are “a hierarchy of text, images, media objects and data, arranged chronologically, that can be viewed in an HTML browser”<sup>21</sup>. In addition, blogs’ personal tenor typically involves bolstering a sense of closeness with readers or forming a virtual community. There is a bond that develops between blogger and reader; “A weblog is kind of a continual tour, with a human guide who you get to know. There are many guides to choose from [and] each develops an audience.”<sup>22</sup> This bond is reinforced if the blog allows reader comments.</p> <p>Hence, BLOG tries to showcase the reader/commenter relationship. The blogger has an audience, as established by the fact that she delivers</p>

<sup>19</sup> Joos, Martin. *The Five Clocks* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1961), 37-38.

<sup>20</sup> Rowse, Darren, “What is a Blog?” ProBlogger, entry posted February 14, 2006, <http://www.problogger.net/archives/2006/02/14/what-is-a-blog-2/> (accessed November 10, 2012).

<sup>21</sup> Winer, Dave, “What makes a weblog a weblog?” Harvard Law School, May 23, 2003, <http://blogs.law.harvard.edu/whatmakesaweblogaweblog.html> (accessed November 10, 2012).

<sup>22</sup> Winer, Dave, “The History of Weblogs,” 2002, <http://oldweblogscomblog.scripting.com/historyOfWeblogs> (accessed November 10, 2012).

	<p>expected posts (<i>Philosophic Friday, today's episode</i>), responds directly to readers (<i>Thanks Notaddinganythingnew</i>), uses second person, and asks readers questions. Readers also get to know their “guide” as she talks about her life in first person.</p> <p>Regarding functional tenor, blogs tend to have a didactic and entertaining quality. Although functional tenor will vary according to the type of blog—a marketing blog aims to persuade the viewer to purchase, while a how-to blog teaches someone a new task—information seeking lays at the root of it; the viewer Googles how poach an egg or browses a company blog site to see which new laptop best fits his/her needs. Blogs also seek to entertain. After all, authors have three seconds or less to capture readers attention<sup>23</sup>. Many people will not read a blog post until the end unless they are engaged and/or the information they seek is of dire importance. Some blogs exist only to entertain (<i>Hyperbole and a Half, Clients from Hell, Stuff White People Like</i>, to name a few).</p> <p>BLOG shows how a blogger tries to add a didactic layer to a post, with questions on the <i>spectrum of human obligation</i> and <i>maintaining a sense of other people's humanness</i>. She tries to engage the reader using reader questions, an interesting hook (<i>it's time to pick and prod your brain!</i>), and a prominent voice (use of “I” with clear opinions—<i>doing such a thing for a complete stranger would be absolutely crazy</i>).</p> <p>The style is challenging to place on the intimate-formal continuum. It has colloquial elements like idioms (<i>in the same boat</i>), exclamation marks, and contractions, but it also consults with the audience using reader questions/responses, and tries to explain the situation in detail (consultative or formal).</p>
<b>Field if applicable</b>	
<b>Tenor (a) Personal</b>	(a) Unite
<b>(b) Functional</b>	(b) Inform, provoke/challenge, entertain

### CHOREOGRAPHER

<b>Mode</b>	Spoken > spontaneous
<b>Intimate to Formal continuum</b>	<p>← -----X-----&gt;</p> <p><b>Intimate Casual Consultative Formal</b></p>
<b>Notes:</b>	<p>This entry is based on my personal experiences in dance class and musical theater. Most choreographers will use a mixture of dance terminology and counting to help keep students on rhythm and on task. They may come up with a name for moves that do not have names, or describe what is literally happening in a scene, to jog dancers' memories. Dancers will recite these chants in their heads or even mumble them to remember the next steps.</p> <p>With this in mind, the entry fits into an 8-count rhythm and contains plenty of dance jargon. The dance jargon consists of ballet terms with a couple of modern dance terms (<i>contract</i> and <i>first position parallel</i>). First position parallel in a deep plié reflects the type of position one would sit in if one were on a</p>

<sup>23</sup> Barr, Chris, *The Yahoo! Style Guide*, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. (New York, NY: St. Martin's Griffin, 2010), 5.

	train. The contracting motion refers to being taken aback by the ballerino's frappe (i.e. strike).
<b>Field if applicable</b>	Dance, ballet
<b>Tenor (a) Personal</b> <b>(b) Functional</b>	(a) Slight distance to maintain some authority? (b) Give directions

### CLEFTS

<b>Mode</b>	Written > for silent reading > to reflect the written
<b>Intimate to Formal continuum</b>	<p style="text-align: center;">← -----X-----→</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Intimate    Casual    Consultative    Formal</b></p>
<b>Notes:</b>	<p>What this entry does is <b>demonstrate</b> how emphasis shifts with a cleft pattern. Cleft sentence patterns allow authors to control word emphasis within their sentences. It-clefts, there-clefts, and what-clefts draw attention to the words following the it/there/what and the to-be verb<sup>24</sup>, as shown in the following examples:</p> <p>From CLEFTS: It was <b>30 minutes later</b> when the same woman reached Union Station.</p> <p>Other possible options using clefts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was a <b>bathroom</b> where the woman entered 30 minutes later.</li> <li>• It was <b>Union Station</b> that contained the bathroom that she entered 30 minutes later.</li> <li>• What entered the Union Station bathroom 30 minutes later was <b>a woman</b>.</li> </ul> <p>Clefts tend to contain extra words because one needs to add an it, what, or there and a to-be verb. To be-verbs tend to make sentences longer than necessary. Accordingly, CLEFTS is more than 70 words longer than THE GIST. Note that some of the length is due to the awkwardness of using clefts for the entire passage:</p> <p>From CLEFTS: It was not odd that a homeless woman was standing by the sink there; it was odd that she was whimpering. What the young woman asked her was, "Do you need help? Do you need me to call someone?" There was an answer: "Will you take them off?" It was her pants. There was hesitation and refusal from the woman. (60 words)</p> <p>From THE GIST: She notices an older homeless lady by the sink in distress and asks if she needs help. The lady requests that the young woman take her pants off for her. The young woman says no and leaves. (37 words)</p> <p>The piece feels more distant and formal because we tend to speak to others using human subjects and simpler constructions.</p>
<b>Field if applicable</b>	
<b>Tenor (a) Personal</b> <b>(b) Functional</b>	(a) Distance (b) Convey information

<sup>24</sup> Craig Sirles, notes from Language and Style for Writers course, DePaul University, Chicago, IL, summer 2010.



**CRAIG'S LIST PERSONAL AD**

<b>Mode</b>	Written > for silent reading > to reflect the spoken																																																							
<b>Intimate to Formal continuum</b>	← -----X----->																																																							
	<b>Intimate</b>	<b>Casual Consultative Formal</b>																																																						
<b>Notes:</b>	<p>Craig's list personal ads consist of people trying to find everyone from virtual pen pals to sex partners. Yet, there are stylistic commonalities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grammar is relaxed, and punctuation is optional (I'm same as <i>Im</i>, commas not very common).</li> <li>• Fragments are used, particularly leaving out the subject if the subject is I or you (<i>Want someone to text with; Must be able to respond right away</i>).</li> <li>• Imperatives are expected (<i>msg me wit a pic; email me with "phones" in the subject line</i>).</li> <li>• Jargon includes abbreviations like <i>w4m</i> (woman looking for man), <i>420 friendly</i> (ok with smoking marijuana), <i>u</i> (you), <u>msg</u> (message), <i>pic</i> (picture), <i>thx</i> (thanks).</li> <li>• When people post pictures, they tend to stay anonymous, showing only a body part or using an Internet meme relating to their personality/the post. The internet meme is something new, as I never saw this when <del>I looked</del> a friend of mine looked in the strictly platonic section a few years ago. (Psh, who would look for friends on Craig's list? Definitely not me.)</li> </ul> <p>To prepare for writing the exercises, I did a statistical analysis of 100 ads to find out the most frequently used words, some of which I incorporated in the entry. What I found was truly fascinating and perhaps shows how single words relate to much broader semantics and to the field and tenor of discourse:</p> <p align="center"><b>Word frequency within 100 Craig's List personal ads</b></p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>1. To 288</td> <td>19. Like 65</td> <td>37. Some 35</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2. A 282</td> <td>20. That 64</td> <td>38. Chicago 35</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3. I/i 269</td> <td>21. Am 64</td> <td>39. Want 35</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4. And 251</td> <td>22. M4w 61</td> <td>40. Know 33</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5. The 163</td> <td>23. Is 60</td> <td>41. Guy 33</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6. I'm/Im 130</td> <td>24. Out 57</td> <td>42. Good 33</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7. For 127</td> <td>25. Not 55</td> <td>43. Would 33</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8. You 113</td> <td>26. My 51</td> <td>44. Time 32</td> </tr> <tr> <td>9. In 102</td> <td>27. Someone 47</td> <td>45. Don't 32</td> </tr> <tr> <td>10. Of 97</td> <td>28. About 45</td> <td>46. Get 30</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11. Me 95</td> <td>29. So 45</td> <td>47. All 30</td> </tr> <tr> <td>12. Looking 95</td> <td>30. Who 44</td> <td>48. Friends 29</td> </tr> <tr> <td>13. Or 85</td> <td>31. This 42</td> <td>49. Friend 29</td> </tr> <tr> <td>14. Just 83</td> <td>32. Are 41</td> <td>50. As 29</td> </tr> <tr> <td>15. With 80</td> <td>33. But 40</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>16. Have 70</td> <td>34. Your 38</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>17. If 67</td> <td>35. Can 36</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>18. Be 66</td> <td>36. Pic 35</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>		1. To 288	19. Like 65	37. Some 35	2. A 282	20. That 64	38. Chicago 35	3. I/i 269	21. Am 64	39. Want 35	4. And 251	22. M4w 61	40. Know 33	5. The 163	23. Is 60	41. Guy 33	6. I'm/Im 130	24. Out 57	42. Good 33	7. For 127	25. Not 55	43. Would 33	8. You 113	26. My 51	44. Time 32	9. In 102	27. Someone 47	45. Don't 32	10. Of 97	28. About 45	46. Get 30	11. Me 95	29. So 45	47. All 30	12. Looking 95	30. Who 44	48. Friends 29	13. Or 85	31. This 42	49. Friend 29	14. Just 83	32. Are 41	50. As 29	15. With 80	33. But 40		16. Have 70	34. Your 38		17. If 67	35. Can 36		18. Be 66	36. Pic 35	
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	<p>A few observations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “To” is a common word, but I hypothesize that these numbers are high because members are often seek people to go places (let’s go to a movie) or list hypothetical hang out scenarios (I just want someone to cuddle with). This could be why <i>out</i> is number 24. “To” is also an important component of infinitive verbs and some phrasal verbs.</li> <li>• The frequency of <i>looking for</i>, <i>someone</i>, and <i>who</i> reflect the field and functional tenor, as these writers are seeking others for some purpose and have some qualities in mind. Perhaps this is why <i>like</i> and <i>want</i> occur so frequently.</li> <li>• These ads center around the writer, who the person is/what they look like, and what he/she wants from the reader. This is supported by the frequency of <i>I</i>, <i>I’m</i>, <i>me</i>, <i>you</i>, and <i>your</i>. Related, <i>not</i> and <i>don’t</i> could be related to what the person is not like or does not want.</li> <li>• <i>If</i> and <i>can</i> show that the posts contain conditional requests (if you’re interested..., if you’re cute..., we can go to a concert).</li> <li>• <i>Just</i> equates to something like only, basically, or please (I’m just tired of doing nothing; I’m just looking for someone to date; I’m just bored; Just email me; Just don’t want to see this ticket go to waste) and seems indicative of a request—something one inserts to make it more likely that another will listen or oblige them.</li> <li>• <i>Friend</i> and <i>friends</i> speaks again to the social connections that people yearn for on the site.</li> </ul>
<b>Field if applicable</b>	Personal ad
<b>Tenor (a) Personal (b) Functional</b>	(a) Distant in that contributors try to remain anonymous yet intimate in its brevity, frankness, and honesty (b) Entice potential friends/lovers, confess, reach out to others

### FACEBOOK STATUS UPDATE

<b>Mode</b>	Written > for silent reading > to reflect the written or spoken
<b>Intimate to Formal continuum</b>	<p>← -----X-----&gt;</p> <p><b>Intimate    Casual    Consultative    Formal</b></p>
<b>Notes:</b>	<p>A Facebook user since 2005, I reduce most Facebook status updates to the following “semantic units”:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sharing daily tidbits (eating a really good sandwich), moderately important information (anniversary), or major life events (birth of child). Pictures are sometimes included.</li> <li>• Complaining (usually passive aggressively) about strangers, acquaintances, society, and inanimate objects.</li> <li>• Posting humorous videos, pictures, links, and occurrences.</li> <li>• Posting news stories, articles, or blog posts that resonate with the member.</li> <li>• Shamelessly self-promoting—places traveled, cabinets installed, articles published, and other feats accomplished. Pictures are often included.</li> <li>• Remembering inside jokes with friends, especially using tagging and photos.</li> <li>• Sharing ideology/interests (Bible verses, political rants, sports</li> </ul>

	<p>commentary) or activism.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Posting deep, funny, or inspirational quotes.</li> <li>• Asking for friends' input.</li> </ul> <p>Hence, the post starts out with some harmless bragging and/or sharing about going to Chicago. It includes a picture of a Metra ticket and the common Internet and texting &lt;3 symbol, meaning “love this” or some equivalent. The writer complains about strangers, looking for friends to “like” or concur with her post. One of these complaints includes a pattern I have seen of late, involving an abbreviated letter to someone (or something), such as,</p> <p>Dear thesis, Please write yourself. Love Bethany</p> <p>After the “what” incident, the writer posts a “deep quote” about solitude and wraps it up with another comment about a stranger.</p> <p>An important aspect of Facebook is “keeping up appearances.” The audience for most posts is broad, and so people will consider how what they post will effect others’ perceptions<sup>25</sup>. For this reason, members often try to be witty in their postings. Instead of saying “Public transportation sucks” or “I was just asked to take a woman’s pants off” the writer plays with reader expectations and prosody:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Know what sucks about public transportation? The fact that it’s PUBLIC.</i></li> <li>• <i>Union station bathrooms aren’t half bad...except for being asked to take a random homeless woman’s pants off.</i></li> </ul> <p>Due to the broad audience, posts can range from intimate to consultative, depending on the content of the post and the intended circle (family, real friends, coworkers, all friends). Posts with tagging, or posts on friends’ walls, will tend to be intimate, referring to something that only a handful of people understand. Status updates may include more details depending on the functional tenor. Recent Facebook posts under my account demonstrate the range:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “So about how I want to save up for a hot air balloon now...” <i>Posted while attending a hot air balloon festival, which only close friends and coworkers would know. Purpose is for my own memory’s sake.</i></li> <li>• “What is the difference -- stylistically -- between Facebook status updates and tweets?” <i>More consultative and aimed toward everyone. Purpose is getting opinions.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Field if applicable</b>	
<b>Tenor (a) Personal</b>	(a) Unite
<b>(b) Functional</b>	(b) Share life events, share interests, vent, impress friends, pass time

### INSTANT MESSAGE

<b>Mode</b>	Written > for silent reading > to reflect the spoken
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<sup>25</sup> Turkle, Sherry, *Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other*, (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2011), Nook E-book 212-213.

<b>Intimate to Formal continuum</b>	← -----X-----→ <b>Intimate Casual Consultative Formal</b>
<b>Notes:</b>	<p>The back and forth nature of IM makes it consultative, although the relaxed grammar brings the entry toward casual. People tend to make the effort to provide more detail in IM conversations, which differentiates it from something like a Facebook post. They would want the person corresponding with them to understand what they are saying in order to respond, just like in an in-person conversation.</p> <p>Stylistic markers of IM include screen names, emoticons, acronyms like LOL, sup for “what’s up?,” optional apostrophes and capitalization, typos (<i>teh, somethign</i>), missing words (<i>will you take pants off?</i>), dunno for “don’t know,” asterisks around real life actions (<i>*sigh*</i>), and “text message speak” like u for “you” and i for “I.” However, users tend to type out more on IM than on phones because a computer keyboard is easier to use. Another stylistic feature for IMs could be that participants tend to write out almost full sentences, but use the line breaks like punctuation.</p> <p>I_heart_Queneau: theres kind of an annoying guy on here  I_heart_Queneau: playing on his phone for the last 5 min  I_heart_Queneau: im thinking about asking him to stop</p> <p>Verses:  There’s kind of an annoying guy on here, playing on his phone for the last 5 minutes. I’m thinking about asking him to stop.</p> <p>This pattern is not something I realized until considering what stylistic features differentiate texting from IMing. Texting and IMing share features, but length is a huge difference. In this collection, INSTANT MESSAGE is about 153 words (subtracting the screen names), while TEXT MESSAGE is about 63 words (subtracting time stamps).</p>
<b>Field if applicable</b>	
<b>Tenor (a) Personal (b) Functional</b>	(a) Unite (b) Share information, amuse oneself

### JOKE

<b>Mode</b>	Spoken > spontaneous with some planning
<b>Intimate to Formal continuum</b>	← -----X-----→ <b>Intimate Casual Consultative Formal</b>
<b>Notes:</b>	<p>Although the jokes aren’t funny, this entry explores the notion that comedy is presented in threes. In the first passage, there are three characters and three actions (noticing the phone, noticing it again, and the punch line). The three characters “walk on a to a train,” which is very similar to the famous syntax pattern “walk into a bar.” The characters are also boiled down to a certain category (businessman, college kid, and writer). The generalization of characters is important in jokes so that people can imagine the characters right away: a nun, a priest, and an alter boy; an Englishman, and Irishman, and a Scotsman; a blonde, a brunette, and a red head.</p> <p>The second example starts with “Get it?,” which has some semantic significance. This joke depicts a conversation between two people, a</p>

	common theme in comedy, such as “Michael Jackson goes to heaven and talks to Saint Peter...” It has a recurring character, which sometimes happens when a series of jokes are told. The last line can be taken as a sarcastic remark by the homeless woman.
<i>Field if applicable</i>	
<b>Tenor (a) Personal</b> <b>(b) Functional</b>	(a) Unite (b) Be funny

### JUNK MAIL (TRAVEL PACKAGE)

<b>Mode</b>	Written > for silent reading > to reflect the written
<b>Intimate to Formal continuum</b>	← -----X-----→ <b>Intimate Casual Consultative Formal</b>
<b>Notes:</b>	<p>The entry explores marketing language, particularly words that make the merchandise seem larger than life. The words must excite customers and make them feel special: <i>NEW, exclusive, entitled, luxurious, limitless, latest, access, furnished, convenience, opulence, complimentary, finest, fresh, memorable, discover, experience, enjoy, package, upgrade, 30% off, serving</i>. This is bolstered on the semantic level, as the customer learns that he will be pampered by attentive staff, receive free admission, and “enjoy” gourmet water. The fact that a man receives an invitation to the <i>Ladies Room™</i> speaks to the fact that these mass mailings are computer generated with improper filters. (As intriguing as Viagra is, they are really wasting their time on me.)</p> <p>The characters in the story become employees with business titles relating to their role in the story: Mobile Operations Specialist, Direct Response Administrator, and Innovative Inquiry Facilitator. Other elements of the story show through in the settings, which are described in greater detail than in <i>THE GIST (Milwaukee District West Line, stainless steel rear doors, finest in porcelain amenities with water from Chicago’s own Lake Michigan)</i>.</p> <p>The passage seems formal due to standard letter elements: “Dear Mr. Smith,” a closing sentence or two offering to speak to the consumer about the product, “Sincerely,” and a signature including the sender’s job title. It is not completely formal, though, because first and second person are used to forge a consumer/company relationship.</p>
<i>Field if applicable</i>	Marketing, Travel
<b>Tenor (a) Personal</b> <b>(b) Functional</b>	(a) Unite (b) Entice, persuade, earn trust

### KIDS’ SHOW

<b>Mode</b>	Written > reciting> to appear spontaneous
<b>Intimate to Formal continuum</b>	← -----X-----→ <b>Intimate Casual Consultative Formal</b>
<b>Notes:</b>	KID’S SHOW consists of many short and simple sentences, text that would be easier for a child to understand. The Flesch Kincaid Grade level supports this claim, as the grade level for KIDS’ SHOW is 2.42 (without stage directions). Compare this number to <i>THE GIST</i> , which is 5.93, or <i>LEGAL</i> , which is 12.14 (without headings). Accordingly, complex ideas are simplified. Characters are sad, mad, naughty; they want to make friends—or don’t, as the case may be.

	The content is upbeat with many exclamation marks and positive affirmations ( <i>outstanding, stupendous, very good</i> ). Songs and questions keep the scenes engaging, encouraging audience involvement: <i>What color is his shirt? Do you have a lot of friends? What do we do after we use the potty? Can you say transportation?</i> Words like <i>potty, friends, boys, girls, naughty, and stranger danger</i> establish children as the main audience group. The fact that it is a show is reinforced by the phrase <i>we'll be right back after these messages</i> .
<b>Field if applicable</b>	Children's entertainment
<b>Tenor (a) Personal</b>	(a) Unite
<b>(b) Functional</b>	(b) Entertain, teach basic lessons, generate excitement around learning

### LEGAL

<b>Mode</b>	Written > for reading silently > to reflect written																																								
<b>Intimate to Formal continuum</b>	← -----X----->																																								
	<b>Intimate</b>	<b>Casual</b>																																							
	<b>Consultative</b>	<b>Formal</b>																																							
<b>Notes:</b>	<p>Like a true legal document, LEGAL contains headings, definitions, and a small print disclaimer. It is specific (<i>a female of 60 or above years without possession of a permanent residence</i>' vs. older homeless lady) yet extremely convoluted. The convoluted nature stems from the legalese and unnecessarily long sentences. Legal words and phrases include <i>parties, bound, shall, thereunder, discretion, thenceforth, henceforth, breaching, contract, hereby, terms, conditions, void, in good faith, common, debrief, stipulate, Illinois state law, 720 ILCS 5/11-21, make a motion, adjourn, whereby, hitherto, registered trademark, inc., herein, and solely intended</i>. Sentences are extended through to-be verbs, relative clauses, adjectivals, adverbials, and participial phrases.</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th style="text-align: center;">THE GIST</th> <th style="text-align: center;">LEGAL</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>Number of characters (without spaces)</b></td> <td style="text-align: center;">579.00</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1,798.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>Number of words</b></td> <td style="text-align: center;">129.00</td> <td style="text-align: center;">343.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>Number of sentences</b></td> <td style="text-align: center;">13.00</td> <td style="text-align: center;">18.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>Average number of characters per word</b></td> <td style="text-align: center;">4.49</td> <td style="text-align: center;">5.24</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>Average number of syllables per word</b></td> <td style="text-align: center;">1.50</td> <td style="text-align: center;">1.72</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>Average number of words per sentence</b></td> <td style="text-align: center;">9.92</td> <td style="text-align: center;">19.06</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The comparison above shows a drastic difference in the number of words per sentence, not the number of sentences. Although LEGAL uses several multisyllabic words, the average number of characters and syllables per word barely surpasses THE GIST. Upon a further breakdown, we can see that the extra phrases, held together by mono-syllabic words, skew the average:</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">Word frequency</th> <th style="text-align: center;">1</th> <th style="text-align: center;">2</th> <th style="text-align: center;">3</th> <th style="text-align: center;">4</th> <th style="text-align: center;">5</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td><b>LEGAL</b></td> <td>the (32)</td> <td>a (18)</td> <td>shall (12)</td> <td>of (11)</td> <td>and (10)</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>THE GIST</b></td> <td>the (12)</td> <td>she (5)</td> <td>woman (4)</td> <td>and (4)</td> <td>a (4)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			THE GIST	LEGAL	<b>Number of characters (without spaces)</b>	579.00	1,798.00	<b>Number of words</b>	129.00	343.00	<b>Number of sentences</b>	13.00	18.00	<b>Average number of characters per word</b>	4.49	5.24	<b>Average number of syllables per word</b>	1.50	1.72	<b>Average number of words per sentence</b>	9.92	19.06	Word frequency	1	2	3	4	5	<b>LEGAL</b>	the (32)	a (18)	shall (12)	of (11)	and (10)	<b>THE GIST</b>	the (12)	she (5)	woman (4)	and (4)	a (4)
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	Note that the two share 3 common words (the, a, and). However, human subjects appear in the top five words of THE GIST, whereas <i>shall</i> and <i>of</i> appear in LEGAL. Human subjects are associated with simpler language. <sup>26</sup>
<b>Field if applicable</b>	Law
<b>Tenor (a) Personal (b) Functional</b>	(a) Distance reader and author to maintain authority (b) Intimidate, establish procedures

#### LOCAL NEWS STORY (ONLINE)

<b>Mode</b>	Written > for reading silently > to reflect written
<b>Intimate to Formal continuum</b>	← -----X-----> <b>Intimate Casual Consultative Formal</b>
<b>Notes:</b>	The piece begins with the location in all caps and continues with other common aspects of a local news story: a short introduction, incident/perpetrator summary, and a request for further information. The story is presented as something police, witnesses, and unidentified sources have said, not as proven facts. Characters remain anonymous, and the perpetrators are unknown except for alleged physical attributes.  Mode wise, the paragraphs consist of only 1-2 sentences. The piece contains words and phrases associated with crime, such as <i>suspects, harassed, sexual assault, attacker, victim, subjected, torture, incident, etc.</i>
<b>Field if applicable</b>	News
<b>Tenor (a) Personal (b) Functional</b>	(a) Distance (b) Report information

#### LOL CATS

<b>Mode</b>	Written > for silent reading > to reflect spoken and written
<b>Intimate to Formal continuum</b>	← -----X-----> <b>Intimate Casual Consultative Formal</b>
<b>Notes:</b>	The text of LOL cats captions have stylistic consistencies. The “cats” use “text speak” ( <i>wut, u, i</i> ), incorrect grammar ( <i>I haɜ, u iɜ, u needɜ</i> ), and unusual pronunciation ( <i>ɜ</i> instead of <i>s</i> , mah for my). Users often create eye-dialect ( <i>somny. nun away now</i> ) and phonetic spellings ( <i>axident</i> ). Graphologically, LOL cats is recognizable by white Impact font with a thick black outline.
<b>Field if applicable</b>	Internet meme, LOL cat
<b>Tenor (a) Personal (b) Functional</b>	(a) Unite (b) Be humorous

#### MATH (WORD PROBLEM)

<b>Mode</b>	Written > for reading silently > to reflect written
<b>Intimate to Formal continuum</b>	← -----X-----> <b>Intimate Casual Consultative Formal</b>
<b>Notes:</b>	The passage contains math words ( <i>hypotenuse, lines, right triangle, probability</i> ) and measurement units ( <i>MPH, per minute, ft., inches</i> ). Characters are referred to as passenger A, B, and C, and physical details of the passengers are left out. This is consistent with math problems, in that they are more concerned with numerical data than the agents taking action.

<sup>26</sup> Craig Sirles, notes from Language and Style for Writers course, DePaul University, Chicago, IL, summer 2010.

	The first problem begins with the infamous train scenario, bringing back traumatic memories of Algebra I. The second focuses on geometry and the third on statistics. All questions follow a similar pattern, listing relevant mathematical facts and concluding with a question based on those facts. Question two contains a trick question, though, so be careful!
<b>Field if applicable</b>	Mathematics
<b>Tenor (a) Personal (b) Functional</b>	(a) Distance (b) Test knowledge

### MEMOIR

<b>Mode</b>	Written > for reading silently > to reflect written
<b>Intimate to Formal continuum</b>	← -----X-----→ <b>Intimate Casual Consultative Formal</b>
<b>Notes:</b>	<p>The passage contains standard literary elements, such as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sensory words and descriptions/attention to characters and scenery: <i>navy blue leather benches, fingers drumming, crisp dress shirt, buzz cut, stark white undershirt, caramel skin, layers of denim</i></li> <li>• Abstraction: <i>idealism trickling down the sink</i></li> <li>• Simile: <i>as if he were nursing a hangover</i></li> <li>• Flashback: begins with end then loops to beginning</li> <li>• The technique of shifting from a suspenseful moment to backstory</li> <li>• Absolute phrases: <i>fingers drumming his smart phone, his dirty blond hair disheveled as if he were nursing a hangover, my idealism trickling down the sink</i></li> <li>• Transitional information: <i>When we reached the station, I exited the train, watching him from yards behind; I descended the concrete staircase to the basement of the station where I decided to use the restroom.</i></li> <li>• Character thoughts: <i>I considered my curious encounter earlier that day: dare I reach out again?</i></li> <li>• Dialogue tags</li> <li>• Liberty with language: <i>tongue-and-cheekily</i></li> </ul> <p>What makes this a likely candidate for memoir (as opposed to a first-person novel) is the fact that it includes thoughts and exposition from a future vantage point: <i>misery loves company; I would think back upon this moment, months later, wondering which one of us was out of line.</i> One major reason people read the genre to learn from others' real life experiences. These reflective moments have a didactic quality in memoir.</p>
<b>Field if applicable</b>	
<b>Tenor (a) Personal (b) Functional</b>	(a) Unite (b) Tell a story (amuse), share insights

### NOSTALGIC

<b>Mode</b>	Spoken > spontaneous OR Written > for reading silently > to reflect the spoken OR Written > reciting > to appear spontaneous
<b>Intimate to Formal continuum</b>	← -----X-----→ <b>Intimate Casual Consultative Formal</b>
<b>Notes:</b>	<p>The theme emerges from many semantic and lexical elements. The speaker sees things in a positive light: (<i>advanced age</i> vs. old, <i>drifting types</i> vs. homeless, <i>candid conversation</i> vs. the pants conversation, <i>golden rat's nest</i> vs. messy hair). The "what" incident is clouded by potentially false confusion (<i>I must have</i></p>



	<p><i>been trying to and for one reason or another).</i></p> <p>Positivity is also conveyed through individual words (<i>fine, strolled, pristine, friendly, joy, first-rate, sharp, abundant, powerful, occasion, bright</i>), exclamation points, and phrases like “<i>What a _____!</i>” The use of past tense (<i>The young fool I was, I remember it like it was yesterday, That was one fine day</i>) and haziness (<i>And his shirt was....white?</i>) helps relay the fact that this person is thinking about times long past.</p>
<b>Field if applicable</b>	
<b>Tenor (a) Personal</b>	(a) Create social bond
<b>(b) Functional</b>	(b) Share a story

### NOVEL

<b>Mode</b>	Written > for reading silently > to reflect written
<b>Intimate to Formal continuum</b>	<p>← -----X-----&gt;</p> <p><b>Intimate Casual Consultative Formal</b></p>
<b>Notes:</b>	<p>NOVEL contains much of the same characteristics as MEMOIR:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Simile: <i>as if the grass is pushing it</i></li> <li>• Absolute phrases: <i>her...hair straddling concave shoulders, his profile barely distinguishable</i></li> <li>• Character thoughts</li> <li>• Dialogue tags</li> <li>• Vivid descriptions</li> </ul> <p>But does it also differs from MEMOIR, as it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is told in third person</li> <li>• Is in present tense</li> <li>• Is linear</li> <li>• Establishes scene in a wider context (reader can visualize time of day and season)</li> <li>• Contains no transitional information, instead divided into chapters</li> <li>• Personifies the grass</li> <li>• Includes more participial phrases</li> <li>• Includes more vivid verbs/gerunds: <i>glides, recedes, clutches, shifts, convey, musters, whispers, trembles, gathers, searches, plops, hunches, rushing, giggling, contrast, hesitates</i></li> <li>• Includes more physical descriptions (the main character is described)</li> </ul> <p>I don't believe these show stylistic differences between fiction and memoir, just differences in my personal approach to writing these exercises. Again, the most significant difference is the exposition component of memoir. Memoir seems less formal/has a different relationship with the reader (personal tenor) because the reader learns about the actual author through the story. With fiction, it is taboo to equate the narrator with the author, as the narrator can be a character.</p>
<b>Field if applicable</b>	
<b>Tenor (a) Personal</b>	(a) Distance
<b>(b) Functional</b>	(b) Tell a story (amuse), make an underlying statement

### ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

<b>Mode</b>	Written and spoken?
<b>Intimate to Formal continuum</b>	← -----X-----→ <b>Intimate Casual Consultative Formal</b>
<b>Notes:</b>	<p>As an interview, the entry is consultative—a cycle of questions and answers. It is also less casual because both the interviewer and interviewee work together to unearth details. In a more casual or intimate setting, they would both know the details and would not need to openly discuss them. It would also be consultative because of the social expectation to wrap up the conversation (see last 4 lines of the passage).</p> <p>The mode here is confusing, as it is both written and spoken. The document contains time stamps, begins with details about the interview, and includes bracketed information (laughs, inaudible), but the rest of the text reflects spoken word—down to the “ums,” “likes,” and “uhs” of every day speech. Some of the other stylistic qualities I used were based on my reading of numerous interview transcripts in 2012, when I spent two quarters working with Miles Harvey on his oral history project. I noticed that interviewees would often switch between past and present when telling a story and that they used strings of compound sentences. These qualities are therefore in the exercise.</p> <p>Like a good oral history interviewer, Miles asks for sensory details, goes back a few times for clarification, and references the previous interview.</p>
<i>Field if applicable</i>	
<b>Tenor (a) Personal</b> <b>(b) Functional</b>	(a) Unite (b) Obtain information

### PERSPECTIVE SHIFTS

<b>Mode</b>	Spoken > spontaneous
<b>Intimate to Formal continuum</b>	← -----X-----→ <b>Intimate Casual Consultative Formal</b>
<b>Notes:</b>	PERSPECTIVE SHIFTS depicts the perspectives of the businessman, college kid, and homeless woman, a paragraph for each respectively. It is an experiment in distinct character voices.
<i>Field if applicable</i>	
<b>Tenor (a) Personal</b> <b>(b) Functional</b>	(a) N/A (b) N/A

### PISSED OFF

<b>Mode</b>	Spoken > spontaneous
<b>Intimate to Formal continuum</b>	← -----X-----→ <b>Intimate Casual Consultative Formal</b>
<b>Notes:</b>	Signals include exclamation marks, swear words ( <i>shit, goddamn, God, Jesus, son of a bitch, bastard</i> ) and other emotionally charged words/phrases ( <i>degenerates, smug, got the nerve, waste of space</i> ). It feels like a spoken rant due to contractions, parentheses, fragments, expletives, questions, use of “you,” and colloquial language ( <i>you gotta be shittin’ me, high as a kite, shoulda clocked him, take a leak</i> ).
<i>Field if applicable</i>	
<b>Tenor (a) Personal</b> <b>(b) Functional</b>	(a) Could unify or distance speaker from listener depending on listener’s reaction and prior relationship with the speaker

	(b) Release anger, be listened to, persuade
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**POLITICALLY INCORRECT**

<b>Mode</b>	Spoken > spontaneous
<b>Intimate to Formal continuum</b>	← -----X-----→ <b>Intimate Casual Consultative Formal</b>
<b>Notes:</b>	This passage is saturated with racist, sexist, homophobic, and generally offensive language. The demeaning word choice contributes to a mocking tone as do the asides/commentaries placed throughout ( <i>typical woman, white man's burden, of course, I don't get why she's so annoyed</i> , etc.) and imitations of other characters shown through eye-dialect. The author makes assumptions that the listener agrees with his/her generalizations, placing this further on the left hand of the intimate-formal scale.
<b>Field if applicable</b>	
<b>Tenor (a) Personal</b>	(a) Unite
<b>(b) Functional</b>	(b) Complain, persuade to share ideology

**POP SONG**

<b>Mode</b>	Sung?
<b>Intimate to Formal continuum</b>	← -----X-----→ <b>Intimate Casual Consultative Formal</b>
<b>Notes:</b>	<p>A song has both written and spoken (sung) potential, but its true purpose is to be heard, as the melody enhances the mood or message. The song is considered intimate because pop songs refer to situations that are not known to the audience, only to the songwriter. Situations are described in general terms; we do not know about whom the person is singing (unless we're talking about Justin Timberlake's "Cry Me a River"). The lyrics often express thoughts and feelings around the situation, not the situation itself. Take Lady Gaga's "Bad Romance" as an example. The chorus states</p> <p>I want your love and I want your revenge You and me could write a bad romance</p> <p>I want your love and All your lovers' revenge You and me could write a bad romance</p> <p>Thus, in POP SONG, the story of THIS GIST is barely distinguishable. A person reading POP SONG only would have no idea what actually happened. Some other characteristics that make this a song include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is by a band, not an individual</li> <li>• It has a verse, chorus, and bridge</li> <li>• It uses typical "filler" song words like <i>baby, yeah, ooo, girl, oh</i></li> <li>• It has rhymes that are sometimes trite in nature</li> <li>• It contains common song themes like looking into people's eyes, abandonment, and playing games</li> <li>• It uses first person and second person</li> </ul> <p>Why this is a pop song and not a rap or country song would be an</p>

	interesting study. My guess is that pop songs are the “average” and that other types of music deviate from it in different directions: more slang (rap), more details of the story (country), sadder (blues), etc.  Poetry is also similar to song lyrics in many ways: can be expressed aloud, has line, is sometimes obscure. Are most songs just un-poetic versions of poetry?
<b>Field if applicable</b>	Pop music
<b>Tenor (a) Personal</b> <b>(b) Functional</b>	(a) Unite (b) Gain fans and popularity, appeal to masses

### PSYCHOTHERAPIST (PROGRESS NOTES)

<b>Mode</b>	Written > for reading silently > to reflect written
<b>Intimate to Formal continuum</b>	← -----X→ <b>Intimate Casual Consultative Formal</b>
<b>Notes:</b>	The story of THE GIST is told in the context of therapy, with characters as clients. The psychotherapist becomes another character who comments on the actions of the characters using psychology language: <i>therapy, group dynamic, adolescent behavior, relaxation exercise, affect, express her feelings, dysfunctional, fight or flight, process her emotions, self-confidence, transference, monitor, affirmed, self-reflect, disruptive behaviors, presented as, anxious, depressed, AOD (alcohol or drug), brought up feelings, shame, hopelessness, aging, and relationship. Dr., psychiatric hospital, group therapy, and couples therapy</i> solidify the entry’s theme. Syntactically, the author uses passive voice (AOD is suspected) and refers to himself in the third person (this writer/staff). This is the standard based on the samples I reviewed and on my talking to experienced psychotherapists.
<b>Field if applicable</b>	Psychology
<b>Tenor (a) Personal</b> <b>(b) Functional</b>	(a) Distance (b) Report events, keep records

### QUERY LETTER

<b>Mode</b>	Written > for reading silently > to reflect written
<b>Intimate to Formal continuum</b>	← -----X→ <b>Intimate Casual Consultative Formal</b>
<b>Notes:</b>	QUERY LETTER contains all of the standard “slots” of a query letter to a literary agent: plot summary, word count and genre, reason why the agent is a fit for the book, writer biography, and polite thank you. Like JUNK MAIL (TRAVEL PACKAGE), QUERY LETTER makes the story of THE GIST sound more exciting with words like <i>epic, just in time, bold, rugged, younger man, tense, relationship, thrusts, shocking investigation, unthinkable, connotation, boundaries, redemption, and edgy</i> . The field of discourse is shown through word choice as well: <i>50,000-word, mystery, submit, novella, publishing, novels, fiction, stories, and journals</i> .
<b>Field if applicable</b>	Publishing, literature
<b>Tenor (a) Personal</b> <b>(b) Functional</b>	(a) Neutral—not too familiar, not too distant (b) Pique interest, describe story

### RAP

<b>Mode</b>	Written > for reciting > to appear both planned and spontaneous
<b>Intimate to Formal continuum</b>	← -----X-----→ <b>Intimate Casual Consultative Formal</b>

<b>Notes:</b>	<p>The most obvious stylistic features of RAP include swear words (<i>don't fuck with me, kill this shit, hell no</i>), urban slang (<i>thug, kick it, finna, playa, peace out, shorty</i>), non-standard syntax (<i>I be, he be</i>), and rhyming. The introduction includes a guest rapper (Lil' Queneau), and the piece includes some common themes in rap songs like toughness and expectations on the block.</p> <p>But RAP has other more subtle qualities that I really grew to appreciate when I composed this entry. RAP often has, at least in my experience,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playful internal rhyming (<i>kick it/stick it, city/gritty, dirt/curt, tough with me/fuck with me, shot/block, leave/me, diss/piss, sink/drink, loose/juice, ask/crass, asking me/pull her jeans</i>)</li> <li>• Mixtures of high and low language (<i>crass</i> and <i>curt</i> with words like <i>piss, yo</i>, and <i>hell no</i>)</li> <li>• References to famous works by other musicians (Prince—party like it's 1999, and Snoop Dog—sipping on gin and juice).</li> <li>• Intimate relationship with the audience, trusting them to finish the line (<i>where the sun don't, yeah</i>).</li> </ul>
<b>Field if applicable</b>	Rap music
<b>Tenor (a) Personal (b) Functional</b>	(a) Unite (b) Express oneself, gain fans

### REALITY SHOW

<b>Mode</b>	Spoken
<b>Intimate to Formal continuum</b>	<p style="text-align: center;">← -----X-----&gt;</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Intimate    Casual    Consultative    Formal</b></p>
<b>Notes:</b>	<p>Even though reality shows are shows, and not written texts, somehow the popularity of the genre has created consistency in show content and participant language. Participants often talk about events in present tense or as if they just happened, even though the show could be over at the time of commentary. They often talk about their feelings about others (<i>I feel...isolated; I don't really fit in; he thinks he's better than everyone else</i>). And every single moment, however mundane, is rehashed and dramatized.</p> <p>Words and phrases like <i>confessional, panel, alliance, competition, contestants, going home, challenge, hosts, eliminated</i>, and <i>your time starts now</i> help place the entry in the reality show "genre." The most well known reality show phrase, however, is <i>I'm not here to make friends</i>. Google the phrase, and one can see years of footage of reality show contestants "not wanting to make friends."</p>
<b>Field if applicable</b>	Reality TV programming
<b>Tenor (a) Personal (b) Functional</b>	(a) Unite (b) Entertain

### RECIPE

<b>Mode</b>	Written > for reading silently > to reflect written
<b>Intimate to Formal continuum</b>	<p style="text-align: center;">← -----X-----&gt;</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Intimate    Casual    Consultative    Formal</b></p>
<b>Notes:</b>	<p>RECIPE is loaded with cooking terms (<i>makes 2 servings, crisp, grated, tenderized, green, coarsely, zest, extract, ripe, reserve from above, rinsed thoroughly, to taste, cake, preheat, ingredients, combine, 350°F, stir, boil, turn down heat, stovetop, cool, sprinkle, blend, toss, form a paste</i>) and units of measurement that one would see in a recipe. The entry follows the standard format of an ingredient list and</p>

	instructions on how to prepare those ingredients. The entry is categorized as semi-formal because of the bullet points and other types of omission in recipes; authors often assume that readers know how boil, rinse, zest etc. Every single step is not broken down. The text addresses the audience directly with imperatives, yet feels distant without the use of first person/second person or other reader acknowledgments (jokes, questions). On a cooking show the personal tenor would shift towards uniting audience and host.
<b>Field if applicable</b>	Cooking
<b>Tenor (a) Personal</b> <b>(b) Functional</b>	(a) Neutral (b) Instruct

### RÉSUMÉ

<b>Mode</b>	Written > for reading silently > to reflect written
<b>Intimate to Formal continuum</b>	← -----X-----> <b>Intimate Casual Consultative Formal</b>
<b>Notes:</b>	The entry follows résumé standards of headings (work experience, volunteer experience), subheadings (place of employment, years worked), and parallel bulleted lists. THE GIST is conveyed with a positive spin throughout to show the applicants' best qualities. For example, the "what" incident becomes <i>Encouraged open questions in the work place</i> . Business words reinforce the theme: <i>manager, employees, work place, department, coworker, and training</i> .
<b>Field if applicable</b>	Business, résumé
<b>Tenor (a) Personal</b> <b>(b) Functional</b>	(a) Distant/Neutral (b) Summarize, impress

### SARCASTIC

<b>Mode</b>	Spoken > spontaneous
<b>Intimate to Formal continuum</b>	← -----X-----> <b>Intimate Casual Consultative Formal</b>
<b>Notes:</b>	Prosody plays a large role in this piece; without the proper intonation, it could be read as someone extremely happy about what happened to them. I tried to convey the sarcasm by extending the "u" sound in sure, adding in a laugh ( <i>ba!</i> ), and concluding with <i>Am I cursed or what?</i> In my experience, sarcasm has come to mean exaggerating in a way that is a clear departure from reality or common sense, such as <i>I did the heroic thing—told her no and bailed</i> . This is consistent with the Oxford American Dictionary <sup>27</sup> , which states that sarcasm is "the use of <b>irony</b> to mock or convey contempt." Irony is defined as "the expression of one's meaning by using language that normally <b>signifies the opposite</b> , typically for <b>humorous or emphatic effect</b> ."
<b>Field if applicable</b>	
<b>Tenor (a) Personal</b> <b>(b) Functional</b>	(a) Unite (b) Be funny, exaggerate

<sup>27</sup> Oxford American Dictionary, Mac OS X 10.6. ed., s.vv. "Sarcasm," "Irony."

**SCREEN PLAY**

<b>Mode</b>	Written > to be recited and read silently > to reflect spoken and written
<b>Intimate to Formal continuum</b>	← -----> ? <b>Intimate Casual Consultative Formal</b>
<b>Notes:</b>	<p>Before reading the text, the overall formatting and courier font gives us a clue that this is a screenplay. Upon closer review, we can see that the entry uses standard scene descriptions with locations, season, time of day, and time frames; action paragraphs; and centered dialogue with parenthetical instructions. Screenplay language like <i>CUT TO</i>, <i>FADE IN</i>, <i>BACK TO SCENE</i>, <i>POV</i>, <i>INT.</i> (interior shot), <i>EXT.</i> (exterior shot), <i>C. U.</i> (close up), and <i>beat</i> (pause) are used. Important objects and details are capitalized.</p> <p>As a style, the screenplay focuses on observable action only. So, rather than describing the thought of the main character, like in <i>MEMOIR</i> or <i>NOVEL</i>, we see the character's thoughts manifested: <i>The woman enters another train car and sits down, laughing to herself or at herself — we're not sure which.</i></p>
<b>Field if applicable</b>	
<b>Tenor (a) Personal</b>	(a) Unite?
<b>(b) Functional</b>	(b) Depict scenes, entertain

**SHAKESPEARIAN SONNET**

<b>Mode</b>	Written > to be read silently or recited > to reflect the written
<b>Intimate to Formal continuum</b>	← -----X→ <b>Intimate Casual Consultative Formal</b>
<b>Notes:</b>	<p>The entry follows the rhyme scheme and meter of a Shakespearian sonnet and goes into the second scene at the volta. It contains grammar from the Shakesperian era (<i>didst, thou, spake</i>) and attempts to rephrase 21<sup>st</sup> century concepts with language of an earlier period: train=<i>lengthy carriage</i>, cell phone=<i>hand chime</i>, another train car=<i>rear compartment</i>, Union Station bathroom=<i>town square chamber pot</i>. The Biblical reference of the Samaritan also seems to date the piece, or at least make it formal.</p> <p>It has aspects of the poetic register in that it lacks slang, uses personification (<i>compartment beckoned me to rest and left me</i>), adheres to a poetic form, contains rhyme, line, and cadence, and maintains distance from the reader. Although the poem does not have a strong didactic message—something that poems tend to have—the couplet expresses that there is a limit to everyone's kindness. The two moments depicted in the poem could realistically lead up to this realization.</p>
<b>Field if applicable</b>	Form poetry
<b>Tenor (a) Personal</b>	(a) Distance
<b>(b) Functional</b>	(b) Amuse, play with language

**SOCIAL SCIENCES (LITERATURE REVIEW)**

<b>Mode</b>	Written > for reading silently > to reflect written
<b>Intimate to Formal continuum</b>	← -----X→ <b>Intimate Casual Consultative Formal</b>

<b>Notes:</b>	<p>Literature reviews provide an overview of available literature on a given topic, focusing on the findings of other published authors. As a result, many sentences begin with an author’s name and the date of their publication. This is what is called the author-date method<sup>28</sup>, modeled three times in the entry. In one instance, the citation falls at the end of the paragraph.</p> <p>The passage includes jargon like <i>subjects</i> (which has a specialized meaning in this register), <i>participants</i>, <i>hypothesized</i>, <i>empathic</i>, <i>stimuli</i>, <i>probability</i>, <i>study</i>, and <i>n=3</i>. It includes a made up word, <i>trouserial</i>, similar to the way Queneau used “hatly” in his Philosophic exercise. Neither Queneau nor I are off base here. This happens often in the social sciences when professionals begin using the methods of a well-known person in the field: Jungian, Adlerian, Freudian, etc. English makes it oh-so-easy to create your own needed word—one that is understandable too.</p> <p>More common stylistic markers include passive voice (<i>were observed</i>), nominal phrases (<i>the utilization of</i>), and a lack of human agents, unless the sentence begins with an author. Authors sometimes tend to use words with more syllables to sound formal and/or intelligent (<i>hydro-receptacles</i> vs. toilet, <i>ocular convergence</i> vs. eye-contact, <i>utilization of cellular telephone divertissements</i> vs. playing games on cell phones, and more). Fascinatingly, the American Psychological Association publication manual stresses clarity. “Say only what needs to be said”<sup>29</sup> it states along with recommendations to avoid wordiness and jargon. Yet there continues to be a stigma around concise, straight-forward writing in the social sciences. My hunch is that (a) students are still reading poor examples from long ago and emulating them, (b) people in this industry need more training on what it means to write clearly and concisely, and (c) some people will always aspire to pompous writing.</p>
<b>Field if applicable</b>	Social sciences (literature review)
<b>Tenor (a) Personal (b) Functional</b>	(a) Distant from reader (b) Educate reader on available literature on a topic

### STONER

<b>Mode</b>	Spoken > spontaneous
<b>Intimate to Formal continuum</b>	<p>← -----X-----→</p> <p><b>Intimate    Casual    Consultative    Formal</b></p>
<b>Notes:</b>	<p>Looking at word/phrase choice alone, one can see that the passage is drug or hippie related: <i>yeab</i>, <i>man</i>, <i>pollution</i>, <i>keep the peace</i>, <i>protesting</i>, <i>pothead</i>, <i>kindred spirits</i>, <i>dreads</i>, <i>freaked out</i>, <i>high</i>, <i>paranoid</i>, <i>aura</i>, <i>bad stuff</i>, and <i>later dude</i>. Semantically, we gather that the speaker thinks the sunlight is too bright, relates to the more casual character on the train, and experiences a hallucination.</p> <p>The use of compound sentences, verbal phrases (<i>wrecking the serenity</i>, <i>starting some dreads</i>), and unconventional phrasal verbs (<i>said my apologies</i>, <i>made my heart cry</i>, <i>sizing up the scene</i>) draws out the passage and makes it sound fluid and</p>

<sup>28</sup> American Psychological Association, *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, (Washington DC: American Psychological Association, 2010), 174.

<sup>29</sup> American Psychological Association, *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, (Washington DC: American Psychological Association, 2010), 67.



	laidback, as one might expect when talking to a stoner. There appears to be a listener—or at least, an imagined listener—because the speaker comments, <i>What a trip, man</i> , and asks, <i>you know silent protesting?</i>
<b>Field if applicable</b>	
<b>Tenor (a) Personal</b> <b>(b) Functional</b>	(a) Create social bond (b) Share information, pass a joint

### TEXT MESSAGE

<b>Mode</b>	Written > for reading silently > to reflect written?
<b>Intimate to Formal continuum</b>	← -----X-----> <b>Intimate Casual Consultative Formal</b>
<b>Notes:</b>	<p>Texts are understood to be quick spurts of information, and phone keyboards are known to be cumbersome; therefore, people accept that the standards of English do not apply in texting. For example, if I were to text my boss, I would still use “u” rather than “you” because that is the acceptable form in texting. This makes texting informal in nature; omission is built into the language and the brief nature of each message.</p> <p>“Text speak” shortens words and phrases for users’ convenience (<i>wut, OMG, y, k, tthl, WTF, sucks</i>). For this reason, punctuation is not required but can be used for clarity and emphasis. Capitalization occurs because most phones automatically capitalize the first words of sentences. If it were not automated, I doubt people would go through the effort of capitalizing anything.</p> <p>Phones also remember previously used text, which is why the four exclamation marks appear (!!!!) twice in the entry. At one point, this user used four exclamation marks, and now this comes up every time she hits the exclamation mark. Accordingly, these automatic features sometimes work against us. Smart phones with a swipe type keyboard (where one drags his/her fingers along the screen rather than typing) produce incorrect words at times. iPhones also have an autocorrect feature that inserts the wrong word so much so that there is a popular acronym <i>DYAC</i> (damn you autocorrect). So, where typos are common in instant message, correctly spelled <i>incorrect</i> words are common in texting.</p>
<b>Field if applicable</b>	
<b>Tenor (a) Personal</b> <b>(b) Functional</b>	(a) Unite (b) Convey information quickly

### THE GIST

<b>Mode</b>	Written > for reading silently > to reflect written
<b>Intimate to Formal continuum</b>	← -----?-----> <b>Intimate Casual Consultative Formal</b>
<b>Notes:</b>	<p>As Madden points out, the idea of a neutral starting place is false:</p> <p>“Is there an essential nugget from which all stylistic and physical characteristics can be stripped? What would that core look like? This book begins with a comic I named ‘Template’ because it has the least overt manipulation of formal elements. Yet even a</p>

	<p>moment's consideration yields a series of questions: Why is it drawn in pen and not with a brush..."<sup>30</sup></p> <p>I struggled similarly with constructing what would be my "Notation." Even Queneau's Notation includes first person—"Two hours later, I meet him in the Coure De Rome" (19), which some might see as already including a bias. For this reason, my Notation is in third person but mirrors Queneau's notation in other ways. THE GIST includes two fragments, compared to Queneau's four. I made this choice to aid in reader understanding of the core story. Clarity is necessary in a two-paragraph passage containing that many characters and interactions. They both use relatively simple sentences with the occasional adverbial introduction (When he sees a vacant seat, he...; Two hours later, I meet him...). They are almost identical in word count.</p>
<b>Field if applicable</b>	
<b>Tenor (a) Personal</b>	(a) N/A
<b>(b) Functional</b>	(b) Convey story

### TWEET

<b>Mode</b>	Written > for reading silently > to reflect written?
<b>Intimate to Formal continuum</b>	<p>← -----X-----→</p> <p><b>Intimate Casual Consultative Formal</b></p>
<b>Notes:</b>	<p>Twitter is best known for its length limitation of 140 characters or less. The size restriction has influenced the other features, like the use of tiny URLs and acronyms like RT (re-tweet) and RLRT (real life re-tweet). Other notable features are hashtags and @ symbols. @ symbols identify who is speaking and to whom they are referring or responding in the post. Hashtags signify key topics in a tweet and ultimately categorize tweets<sup>31</sup>. Popular hashtags will show up as "trending"; one can click on the hashtag and see all the most recent tweets about that topic.</p> <p>Hashtags and @ symbols are now on Facebook too, possibly due to sites like hootsuite.com, which allow users to post across multiple social networking sites at one time. The content of tweets can also be similar to Facebook status updates; however, people may tweet along with an event on TV such a political debate (whereas on facebook, they would post once or twice). The short nature makes it suitable for real-time commenting. While a popular TV show like The Voice is on, there might be 20 new tweets on it every few seconds. Using the hashtag you can see what people all over the country are saying about the episode.</p>
<b>Field if applicable</b>	
<b>Tenor (a) Personal</b>	(a) Unite
<b>(b) Functional</b>	(b) Comment real-time on events, share social events, share interests and opinions, gain followers, pass time

### WINE TASTING

<b>Mode</b>	Spoken > spontaneous
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<sup>30</sup> Madden, Matt, *99 Ways to Tell a Story*, (New York, NY: Chamberlain Brothers, 2005), 1.

<sup>31</sup> Twitter, "What Are Hashtags ("#" Symbols)?" <https://support.twitter.com/articles/49309-what-are-hashtags-symbols> Twitter hashtags (accessed November 10, 2012).

<b>Intimate to Formal continuum</b>	← -----X----->? <b>Intimate Casual Consultative Formal</b>
<b>Notes:</b>	As a wine tasting would, the entry starts with white wines and ends with red wines. The sommelier speaks somewhere between consultative and formal, explaining the wines in detail but also addressing the participants directly. On the other hand, he/she makes assumptions that the participants understand the language of wine. The language of wine saturates the essay and provides some amusing double meanings: <i>Blackberry</i> (type of phone), <i>piercing notes</i> (high pitched beeps), <i>classy label</i> (businessman's attire), <i>lots of body</i> and <i>distinctive nose</i> (physical description of the woman), <i>declining in concentration</i> (distracted), <i>agreeable</i> and <i>warm</i> (personality of the woman), <i>young</i> (immaturity of college kid), <i>quite forward in its attack</i> and <i>unfiltered</i> ("what" incident), <i>lacks backbone</i> (woman fleeing), <i>rinse glass</i> (washing hands), <i>pruney and overripe</i> (elderly), <i>high in alcoholic content</i> (drunk), <i>unpleasantly scented and watery towards the bottom</i> (homeless/peed her pants), and <i>move on to the next</i> (leave the restroom).
<b>Field if applicable</b>	Wine
<b>Tenor (a) Personal (b) Functional</b>	(a) Unite (b) Teach, persuade

#### YAHOO ANSWERS

<b>Mode</b>	Written > to be read silently > to reflect the spoken
<b>Intimate to Formal continuum</b>	← -----X-----> <b>Intimate Casual Consultative Formal</b>
<b>Notes:</b>	<p>Yahoo Answers provides users with the opportunity to ask other users questions on any topic. Once a question is answered, users may vote on the best answer provided. Posts vary in length from one sentence with no background information to a short paragraph with some details.</p> <p>Relaxed grammar and slang are the norm, making it casual. Examples in the entry include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Its instead of it's</li> <li>• Confusion over there/their/they're</li> <li>• Confusion over then/than</li> <li>• Optional capitalization</li> <li>• Run-ons</li> <li>• Lack of punctuation</li> <li>• Contractions</li> <li>• Colloquial words like <i>pussy</i> and <i>gonna</i></li> </ul> <p>However, one can't be sure if this is due to the users not knowing English grammar in the first place!</p>
<b>Field if applicable</b>	
<b>Tenor (a) Personal (b) Functional</b>	(a) Unite (b) Obtain answers

#### YELP REVIEW

<b>Mode</b>	Written
<b>Intimate to Formal continuum</b>	← -----X-----> <b>Intimate Casual Consultative Formal</b>

<p><b>Notes:</b></p>	<p>Yelp reviews begin with the name of the establishment, category, neighborhood, star rating (a graphological staple of online reviews), name of reviewer, review, and usefulness/coolness/funniness buttons. The buttons encourage “Yelpers” to give praise to other reviewers for putting effort into their reviews.</p> <p>And for the most part, people do put in effort. They describe the establishment and their motivations for going there. They may describe the positives and negatives narratively or in a bulleted list. If the experience is very bad, they will skip providing a balanced point of view and “go for the jugular.” Complaints can be melodramatic (<i>failed to have the common courtesy; so why he wasn't at work already is beyond me; Don't they have a dress code on these things?; The noise level was ridiculous; He screamed “what?”</i>) and there may be attempts at building on the experience (<i>To top it off</i>).</p> <p>Yelpers like to be funny or at least engaging. You can count on snarky remarks (<i>didn't even ask him to turn it down a notch [or ten]</i>), shifts in tone (<i>I liked being able to relax...for about the first 5 minutes</i>), and humor (<i>It's not going to appear on HGTV or anything, but still; Unfortunately, her preferred method of being helped was me taking her pants off for her</i>).</p> <p>Authors write in first person with a strong voice at times (<i>Here is where things took a turn for the worse</i>), often inserting themselves into the text with metadiscourse (<i>dare I say, Well, Needless to say, all said and done, unfortunately</i>). The style is casual, so contractions and colloquial words are common (<i>comfy, turn it down a notch, spaz, moving my stuff, but still, pants woman</i>).</p>
<p><b>Field if applicable</b></p>	
<p><b>Tenor (a) Personal (b) Functional</b></p>	<p>(a) Unite (b) Share opinions on local businesses, entertain</p>

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