



Spring 2015: Seuss Edition

VERBAL EQUINOX

Weber State University's Writing Center Journal

VERBAL EQUINOX: SEUSS EDITION

SPRING 2015

IN THIS ISSUE:

Exploring Ryan Evans' Seuss Assignment

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**Some of the names and locations in the student pieces of this issue reflect established Seussian motifs and stories in order to echo the spirit of Dr. Seuss' original works.*

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IN THIS ISSUE:

Dr. Seuss

PERSPECTIVES

4

Amy Kees & Benjamin Bigelow
Discussing Composition, Creativity, and Dr. Seuss
with Ryan Evans

8

Matthew Drollette
Tutor Perspectives

STUDENT CONTRIBUTIONS

11

C.J. Garside
Biff the Bully

18

Amber Bridenstine, Jake Jarrell
Whos Can Change, Too!

26

Brandi Bolin, Jennifer Datus, Lizbeth Rosales
Dorian Dances the Tankerbamboo

35

Reina Nelson
What is Socially So?

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

40

Our Thanks

Amy Kees, Benjamin Bigelow

DR. SEUSS AS AN ACADEMIC PURSUIT:

Discussing Composition, Creativity, and Dr. Seuss with Ryan Evans

As an instructor of Developmental English, Ryan Evans was tired of Dorian Gray. His students thought the material was stuffy and boring, and their level of interest reflected this fact. For some time, he had considered using an entirely different approach to the curriculum. Finally, he put it to a vote. The class decided unanimously that they would rather venture into his experimental assignment than continue on with Mr. Wilde.

For their assignment, the students would be writing stories in the style of Dr. Seuss. The stories had to include rhyming elements and had to address a current or ongoing social or political issue. Evans explained how they would have to introduce charac-

ters, scenes, and conflicts. He did everything he could to give the students a solid understanding, from showing a diagram of a plot outline to explaining climax and resolution. He even brought his daughter to class one day as an example of just whom the students were writing for. In the end, the most helpful aid was Seuss himself. Every day, Evans would bring a new Seuss story with him and read it to the class so they could analyze it together.

The Dr. Seuss project taught the students to write simply and effectively, forgoing the thesaurus for plain English. Throughout the creative process, the students made several realizations. The first was that by using simple language, they gained a better understanding not only of their argument, but of the reasoning behind their own underlying beliefs. The second was that writing a story in the style of Seuss was not easy. A few of the students even told Evans that if they had to put it to a vote all over again, they would choose Oscar Wilde.

The results of the assignment were amazing. Instead of receiving papers that failed to

"The Seuss project was not an attempt to make things easy for my students. It was meant to engage them in the writing process in a way that let them feel they had a model for their writing and a direction to head in with both audience and purpose."

live up to the students' potential, wandered through the material, or were just not well written, Evans found that the papers were impassioned, well put together, and representative of higher level work.

The following is an interview conducted by two tutors, Ben and Amy, in which they discuss with professor Evans his exciting experiment in composition.

Verbal Equinox: How did this project come about?

Ryan Evans: I assigned The Picture of Dorian Gray to my Developmental English 0955 (DE) students. It was difficult to read, and they didn't get it. It seemed boring to them. As a result, I was beginning to dread the essays I would receive. At that time, I had been sitting on an idea for a more creative project. I wanted to have my students write a Dr. Seuss story as a fun way to end the semester.

I actually put it to a vote, and I made the stipulation that everyone had to agree. If one student wanted to write an essay, we wouldn't do the project. Both classes decided to do Dr. Seuss, which gives you an idea of how much they hated the novel, or the essay, or maybe how easy they thought the Seuss project would be.

So, I made the assignment

that they would write a Dr. Seuss story. The Seuss project was not an attempt to make things easy for my students. It was meant to engage them in the writing process in a way that let them feel they had a model for their writing and a direction to head in with both audience and purpose. What I saw, as far as results, was that the writing in the Dr. Seuss stories was far more advanced than it had been in previous essays. Simply put, they were writing at a higher level than in most DE courses.

DE often focuses on run on sentences and comma splices. With this project, I was able to focus on the writing process. I was able to show them how changing one word can impact a story. They showed enthusiasm while engaging with this paper, and that was exciting for me as a teacher.

VE: How did you prepare the students?

Evans: We talked about what makes a story. I showed them the diagram of a plot line. I explained that you have the introduction, where you introduce the scene, the characters, and the conflict. Then you have the climax and the resolution. It was just really basic. I borrowed a couple books on character development, but

what really helped, I think, was that I brought a Dr. Seuss book everyday and read it to them, and we analyzed it. We looked at Dr. Seuss and talked about how, say, Yertle the Turtle is not just about a turtle in the mud. You could liken it to the Revolutionary War and King George III. There are very clear political points in these books.

The students soon realized that the audience was not me, the professor. They were writing to a broader and more varied audience than I guessed, but at the very least, little kids were the target audience we could all agree on that would keep the vocabulary accessible and consistently defined within the text. I actually brought my daughter to class so they could see who they were writing for. In college, we have this idea that we must use big words, but the thesaurus is a pitfall. Good writers learn very quickly to stop using it. This project taught the students to write simply and effectively, and for the most part, I would say that more of the Dr. Seuss papers were successful holistically, as compared to essays. More students who, in other essays, wrote poorly, didn't write to their potential, didn't address the questions, and didn't even write to their level, did all of those things in the Dr. Seuss papers.

VE: Are there any common topics that seem to arise during this project?

Evans: I recieved quite a variety of topics. There have been stories about gay marriage, abuse, mental disability, and the situation in Crimea. I even got a story about the Korean ice skater in the Olympics who was beaten by the Russian skater and the scandal surrounding that. I think the topic that I've seen the most is recycling. There have been a few stories having to do with government, too, like the Affordable Care Act or the government shutdown, but few focused on the same topic.

VE: Have you run into any topics that were inappropriate?

Evans: No. I believe there is literally no right answer, especially in English. I really struggle with the idea of drawing a line when it comes to topics. I haven't found a topic that I am absolutely against. There was one regarding gay marriage that I was concerned about because of the direction that topic can take, but it ended up being one of my favorite stories. At the end of the day, what I'm more concerned about is whether or not the student can state an opinion and intelligently defend it. I grade the content, the

message, and how it's presented.

VE: Was this project successful as a group project?

Evans: Having them work in groups, while important, was not always so easy. Aside from the average issues that come up with group projects—lack of participation, miscommunications, disagreements, social loafing—the students would often argue about how their stories would end. While students had agreed to write about a certain topic, individuals were often polarized, which lead to disagreement as to how their social dilemma was to be resolved. In the first semester

that I assigned this project, the students were allowed to work in groups, and I realized that the stories they wrote had more internal issues. Students who chose to work in big groups often produced stories that seemed disjointed because the students' voices often clashed. This wasn't a factor in grading the assignments, but it made me rethink whether I should let the students work in groups in the future. Even though the group stories may not have read as well as the others, the learning outcomes compensated for this. Regardless, I got the best work from the students who worked by themselves.

Ryan Evans' Bio

Ryan has been teaching Developmental English for Weber State as an Adjunct Professor since August 2012. He completed a B.A. in English and a B.A. in History at Brigham Young University – Idaho in 2010 and his M.A. in English at Weber State in 2012. While attending WSU, he founded and edited *Aelurus*, a literary journal for graduate students. *Aelurus* is currently in its fourth year of production and has begun to extend to other grad students throughout the Midwest/West Coast. Ryan is currently a doctoral candidate at Lancaster University in the UK studying the effects of Marxism on Irish Drama in the early twentieth century. Upon completion of that degree, he plans to continue teaching in higher education and to write a little on the side. He is married with two kids, and his family is the motivation for just about everything he does. On a (rare) quiet day off, he loves to sit at his desk and read a good book.

Matthew Drollette

TUTOR PERSPECTIVES

Writing Consultant, Weber State University

We had been told that students would be coming into the writing center to brainstorm an assignment that was altogether different from what we had tutored in the past, and the opportunity piqued our curiosity. Was this an essay or a short story? We were told that it was both and that it was to be written in a style reminiscent of Dr. Seuss. The initial response was, "How is that possible?" We soon found out, though, that not only was it possible, it was also effective in fostering student engagement. The assignment turned out to be a valuable way to assess students' learning while providing them with a creative way to deal with academic writing. It also allowed us to stretch our creativity and find academic meaning in such a creative, innovative composition assignment.

"I thought that seeing the Dr. Seuss papers as a final product was very rewarding. I could see how . . . they improved through interaction between my tutoring and the tutoring of others."

As with all the assignments we tutor, our main focus with the Dr. Seuss essays was how to best help the student; however, during the brainstorming process, we were initially unsure of how to approach something as unfamiliar and unconventional as the Seuss project. Besides the obvious concern over our unfamiliarity with this new type of essay, I think we were all wondering how to help students adhere to academic conventions within such a radically different assignment. We all take classes wherein the formulaic essay is king, and we have grown used to incorporating those basic essay elements into every aspect of our academic writing. Our near over-familiarity with academic form raised a concern among us as to how we could help students see those formulas at work in their own exploration of relevant, modern ideas within a new and exciting format. What it came down to, for the tutors, was an early realization that the same element that we strive for in an academic essay was still present in the Seuss papers: an argument.

Most tutors found the

"...both students and tutors benefit most when they are encouraged to stretch their imaginations and their creativity. Evans's Dr. Seuss assignment definitely allowed for the discovery that we all crave."

instructor-required brainstorming sessions to be a success for both tutors and students. It was successful for students because it gave them focus and direction that they may not have had before the session, and it was helpful to us because we were able to begin visualizing what form these assignments would begin to take and focus our skills as tutors in a way that would be most effective for these students.

After having the realization that this assignment focused on a familiar aspect of rhetoric through the mutual discovery of the brainstorming process, it was easier for us to understand what help we could offer the students. Instead of merely focusing on grammar and mechanics, which is unfortunately the go-to when faced with an unfamiliar assignment, we were able to pinpoint the big-picture issues we saw across multiple drafts as they came through the Writing Center. Was their argument apparent? Did the plot of the story accurately reflect or illustrate the

current event on which it was modeled? Did the resolution logically fit the argument that was being made? With these questions in mind, we were able to help the students focus on the areas of the assignment that were most important without getting overly bogged down in mechanics early on in the process.

Being able to understand the academic components of the assignment was instrumental in allowing us to best serve the students, and the final products showed that our heightened understanding of these elements resulted in positive learning outcomes for the students who were then able to apply the skills learned in a tutoring session toward the revision process. This is most evident when reviewing the tutors' responses to the finished essays, which responses were overwhelmingly positive. The tutors, having seen these projects progress from the early stages of brainstorming to a nearly final draft, were impressed that the assignments were able to accomplish so much. In response to the final essays, one tutor commented,

"I thought that seeing the Dr. Seuss papers as a final product was very rewarding. I could see how I was a part of several people's papers and how they improved through interaction

between my tutoring and the tutoring of others.”

This concept of reward was echoed by several of us as we were able to review the final product that we had seen in multiple drafts and identify the progress each student had made on the way. A second tutor stated,

“I loved to see the papers flourish. It was also a good experience to go back through the papers because we don’t often get that experience as tutors. Seeing the final versions was encouraging.”

Essentially, the opportunity to see this assignment as a final product gave us a sense of affirmation; it validated what we do on a daily basis and helped us to see in a concrete way how our efforts are truly reflected in

the final revision of a student’s assignment.

Setting aside the obvious difficulties we as tutors initially had when dealing with these assignments and the benefits to the students for having written them, the overall takeaway from this experience is that it was fun. Tutors enjoy working creatively with students, and it is the process of shared discovery that keeps us engaged and excited about what we do. Whether that discovery comes in the form of helping a student better argue a thesis statement or in creating fictional characters and worlds, both students and tutors benefit most when they are encouraged to stretch their imaginations and their creativity. Evans’s Dr. Seuss assignment definitely allowed for the discovery that we all crave.

CJ Garside

BIF THE BULLY

The sun came up in Who-ville one day.
It was bright and beautiful, and the children wanted to play.
Lilly Sue was excited for the party that night.
She had made decorations that were super tight!
When afternoon came, it was time, you know,
to get the decorations where they needed to go.

She stacked the decorations, oh, so high.
The stack teetered and tottered as she walked them by.
While carrying her decorations up so high,
she felt proud of herself as she looked at the sky.
Then Bif the Bully came walking near.
When Lilly Sue saw him, her knees shook in fear.
She knew Bif was a bully and might do something mean.
She didn't want him to turn into a monster, all green.

As Bif walked by her, he pushed her around,
causing all of the decorations to fall on the ground.
Seeing her creations torn apart,
Lilly Sue wondered if Bif had a heart.
She looked at Bif and said, "That was rude."
Bif quipped back, "Quit being a prude."
Lilly Sue said, "Can't you see I need help?"
"Nope, I can't!" said Bif with a yelp.
"No, no, no, I won't help you.
That's not what I want to do.
I am a bully, and I know how to show it.
I am a bully, and you just need to know it."

Eddy was skateboarding down the street,
waving at everyone he would meet.
He skated around the corner, showing off his skills.
He was flipping and flying, having lots of thrills.
Things couldn't be better as he skated around the town.
Nothing would bring Eddy down.

He skated around the corner, and much to his surprise,
he ran straight into Bif and his evil eyes.
“Where do you think you’re going, little Eddy boy?
Are you afraid I’ll hurt you? Do you think I’ll break your toy?”

Eddy’s teeth were chattering. He was scared to death.
He was afraid to move. He couldn’t take a breath.
Bif the Bully knocked him down and kicked the board away.
“Can’t you just be nice to me and not ruin my day?
I was having lots of fun until you came along.
But then you knocked me off my board and kicked me in the ‘you
know what’
Can’t you see that I need help?”

“No, I can’t!” said Bif with a yelp.
“No, no, no, I won’t help you.
That’s not what I want to do.
I am a bully, and I know how to show it.
I am a bully, and you just need to know it.”

Lilly Sue and Eddy were very scared. They didn’t know what to do.
They were afraid to walk in the Who-ville streets because of what
Bif could do.
Bif was a bully because he was mean.
His behavior was aggressive, the worst they had seen.
They were afraid to walk to school or even play outside
because they knew if Bif came by, they would have to hide.

Lilly Sue and Eddy were in school the next day.
At recess, they were afraid to play.
Bif was outside and doing his thing,
being rude to the kids and being mean.
He stole a ball and made fun of a girl
who had a red head full of curls.
They saw him bullying kids every day,
shoving them so they couldn’t play.
At lunch time, they were afraid to eat,
even when there was a yummy treat.

Bif could hurt them or yell at them loud.
He was always mean in front of a crowd.
They wanted him to stop, but what could they do?
Bif was bigger than them and the football team too.

Then they heard Bif saying what he always did
after he tormented some little kid.
“I am a bully, I know how to show it.
I am a bully, and you just need to know it.”

The teacher saw what was happening in class.
She wanted to knock Bif on his... (well, you know!)
She felt bad for the children whose feelings were hurt,
who were getting their shoes thrown in the dirt.
She knew that there were things that could be done
to make living in Who-ville much more fun.

So, when Lilly and Eddy came inside to study,
the teacher had Freddy be their buddy.
If a person is bullied, be their friend.
It will help them stick it out to the end.
Listen about the things they’ve been through
because most of the time, they don’t know what to do.

So Friendly Freddy listened to Lilly,
and he didn’t think her story was silly.
He sat with Eddy during lunch,
so he could eat and munch and munch.
He listened while Eddy told his story.
Friendly Freddy was glad it wasn’t gory.
At recess, he invited Eddy to play
a Who-ville game the Who-ville way.
No one got bullied, and the kids had fun.
They got to laugh and walk and run.
Lilly Sue and Eddy were confident now
because Friendly Freddy had shown them how.

Friendly Freddy was really cool.
He helped Lilly Sue and Eddy even after school.
He sent them a text to be sure they were fine.

He provided support with every line.
 Set a good example for others,
 don't be a bully to sisters or brothers.
 He told them to be careful and nice.
 Lilly Sue and Eddy took his advice.
 He made them see that life was okay,
 even if Bif sometimes got in the way.

Freddy took the issue one level higher
 and created awareness with ads and a flyer.
 He plastered them all around the school
 and told everyone that bullying wasn't cool.
 Lilly Sue and Eddy helped him out.
 They stood on the corner to scream and shout,
 "Don't be a bully. Don't knock people down.
 Instead, let's have a nicer town."

The awareness campaign seemed to be working.
 People were nicer, and they weren't shirking.
 A culture of respect was happening at the school.
 Friendly Freddy thought it was really cool.
 Lilly Sue and Eddy started feeling safe in town.
 They thought Friendly Freddy was the best thing around.

But they still weren't sure about Bully Bif.
 He was a question mark, a big "if".
 They hadn't seen him for a few days.
 They wondered if he had changed his ways.

They didn't wait long as he came down the street.
 Still not being nice to the people he'd meet.
 He was pushing and shoving and being real mean.
 Bif was still the Bully King.
 Friendly Freddy and Eddy and Lilly Sue
 didn't know quite what to do.
 Bif didn't seem to care who got hurt.
 He was a bully at play and a bully at work.
 "I am a bully. I know how to show it.
 I am a bully, and you just need to know it."

But Friendly Freddy would still be nice.
He would take his own advice.
There had to be some good in Bif.
Freddy looked hard and said, "as if!"
Freddy knew something had to be done
if the Who-ville-ites were ever going to have fun.
Then Friendly Freddy did something really cool,
even though others thought he was a fool.

He talked to Bif and said, "Don't be rude.
Lilly Sue is not a prude.
You could have more friends if you would be nice.
Listen to me and take my advice."

Bif laughed in his face! "What do you know?
I feel like telling you where to go.
I am a bully. I know how to show it.
I am a bully, and you just need to know it."

Friendly Freddy knew something sad.
Bif's later life could also be bad.
When kids are bullies in elementary school,
they can end up in jail because they break the rules.
One out of four bullies, by age thirty,
have a criminal record, and it's not because they're flirty.
Bullies are at risk for problems in life.
When they grow up, they have lots of strife.

They fail their classes if they are in school,
because they never follow the Golden Rule.
They don't have relationships that others enjoy,
regardless if they are a girl or a boy.
If we listen to what the research has told,
they're also violent when they get old.
Bullies get rejected by their peers,
and lose their friendships of many years,
and often don't have good careers.
Bif was headed to a dead end life,
full of problems, sadness, and strife.

Then the day came that Bif saw the light.
It happened when he was having a plight.
He was walking to school when he fell on his knee.
It was scraped and bloody as could be.
He could barely walk because it hurt so bad.
But when people saw it was him, they didn't feel sad.
It served him right because he was so mean.
After all, he was the Bully King.

But around the corner came Lilly Sue.
She saw Bif and knew just what to do.
Instead of making fun of him and calling him names,
Lilly Sue went to him to see why he was lame.

"Lilly Sue, can you help me? I can barely walk.
I'm sorry for all the meany talk."
Lilly Sue was kind, she knew what to do.
"Yes, yes, yes, I will help you."

She was much too small to help him bend,
so she had to get the help of her friends.
"Freddy and Eddy," she gave a shout.
Both of them came to help her out.
Together they took care of the king,
even though he had always been mean.
They cleaned his knee and made him feel good.
The three of them did what they should.
Then they sent Bif on his way,
waiting to see him another day.

Lilly Sue was walking through the town.
Her pile of books was weighing her down.
She tripped and fell and the books went all over,
in the streets and in the clover.
Bif came by and saw her plight.
But he was nice and saw the light.

Lilly Sue said, "Can you give me some help?"
"Sure I can," said Bif with a yelp.
"Yes, yes, yes, I will help you."

That is what I want to do.
I am not a bully, and I know how to show it.
I am your friend, and you just need to know it.”

Eddy was skateboarding down the street
when he hit the curb and stubbed his feet.
His toes were hurt, and he was in pain.
Bif was there to help again.

“Can you get my board and give me some help?”
“Sure can!” said Bif, with a friendly yelp.
“Yes, yes, yes, I will help you.
That is what I want to do.
I am not a bully, and I know how to show it.
I am your friend, and you just need to know it.”

Lilly Sue, Eddy and Freddy were friends evermore.
And now with Bif, there were four.
They walked down the street, all of them together,
knowing that they would be friends forever.

Brandi Bolin, Jennifer Datus, Lizbeth Rosales

DORIAN DANCES THE TANKERHAMBOO

Group Project

Our story begins on a spec 'top a shoe,
in a tiny little town called Frazzlemaroo.
The Whos who lived here loved saying "Helloo,"
to each of their neighbors from old to new.
There lived a small Who within Frazzlemaroo.
His name was Dorian Who,
his age was three years times two.
He had a secret that nobody knew.
He wanted to dance the Tankerhamboo.

It was just any other day.
Dorian was with his friends.
Basil and Henry were the best.
Their friendship would never end. They walked every
day together to the Frazzlemaroo Elementary School.
Making fun of girls for dancing
was something they thought was cool.

When they made it to the school's entrance
with its giant bright yellow doors,
they couldn't wait to leave already.
School was sometimes such a bore.
They looked down the hallway,
and saw Sibyl Sue coming near.
It looked like she was wearing something different,
something a little weird.

Why, Sibyl was wearing a tutu,
all purple, green, and sparkly.
Dorian gazed in wonder,
but his friends' stared more darkly.
"Why are you wearing that?" Dorian asked, the
smiling Sibyl Sue.
"It is for my ballet class." Sybil replied.

“Really?” Henry asked,
“Is that what you do?”

“Yes, and I think you should give it a chance.”
“No way, silly girl. Boys don’t dance!”
“Basil, dear friend,
no need for alarm.
Each Who is different.
There’s really no harm.
We should let our friends do what they please
without second thought.
We shouldn’t tell our friends what they ought not.”

“So, will you try dancing, Dorian Who?
I’m in need of a partner, someone like you.”
“I don’t think so. I mean...
I don’t know what to do,
my friends would make a stink
of me doing the Tankerhamboo.”
“Oh please, Dorian, please. You’re always with the
boys.
Just give it a chance, it’s really a joy.”

“I don’t think that I should try
and mess with their say so.”
“If you don’t try, Dorian you will never know.”
“Okay, I’ll try once.
My friends shouldn’t care.”
“Thank you for trying.
You’ll be the only boy there!”
“Really?” Dorian asked, now a little unsure.
“Yes! I can’t wait!
I’ll give you the dancing grand tour!” Sybil exclaimed
as she skipped away.

Dorian thought, “Should I go or stay?
I cannot believe I get to dance.
There’s no way I’m giving up this chance.”
Dance was something
Dorian always wanted to do.

He really wanted to try the Tankerhamboo.

Dancing brought memories of another time,
a time when Dorian
would see his mom dance in line.
Swaying and leaping,
she was a beautiful sight.
He would go down to the studio
to see her dance in the spot light.
His mom saw his interest
and began teaching him some steps.
He had to keep this secret,
his friends wouldn't be impressed.

He began to love how much fun he was having.
But still worried about his friends' possible laughing.
Soon he turned five and his worry grew great.
He stopped going to his mom's lessons.
He ended his dancing fate.
"Dorian, there's nothing to worry about my dear.
If those boys are your friends,
they shouldn't sneer.
They should be happy you're happy, you see.
You should dance, and they should let you be."
The bell rang loud and snapped
Dorian out of his thought.
He hurried to his class hoping he didn't upset Mrs.
Haffernaut.

Dorian sat in the back
with his two best buds.
His mind, however, was still in a fuzz.
"Hey guys?" Dorian asked.
"What's wrong?" they replied.
"Well..what's wrong with dancing?
What's there to hide?"
"We play cops and robbers.
That's more fun to do."
"Boys just don't dance.
Why? Did Sybil say something to you?"

“I was just curious. No need to wonder.”
He hoped going with Sybil
wouldn’t turn into a blunder.

The last bell of the day rang in the air.
The boys gathered their things
without a moment to spare.
“Are you ready?
My mom’s waiting in the van.”
Dorian stopped.
He forgot to tell them the change in plans.
“Oh, I’m sorry. I can’t come out today.
I’ve got too much to do, no time to play.”
“Okay..” the boys muttered
wondering what was wrong.
But they left him alone,
they didn’t stay long.
Dorian watched them leave
and when the coast was clear,
got up and ran to the ballet class that was near.

When he walked through the door,
he saw Sybil right away.
She smiled bright and waved him over.
“You’re here! Yayy!
Come meet Ms. Honey Who Berry, she’s crazy cool.
She’ll teach you how to dance
and The Dancing Golden Rule”
Sybil took Dorian to the brightly dressed Who
teacher.
Her clothes were so mismatched,
she looked like one of the Zayvermooroon
creatures.

“Ms. Honey Who Berry,
you may call me.
Sybil tells me you’d like to dance freely.
I’ll teach you a thing or two if you’d like.
It’s as easy as riding a Baby Who bike.”
Dorian and Sibyl twirled and swayed.

Practicing their relieve's and Demi-ple.
 Dorian was happiest while showing his moves.
 And hoped he could one day share
 this joy with the other Whos.
 But Dorian feared
 "What would Henry and Basil say?"
 He knew those boys would not be "happay."
 They would surely laugh,
 point their fingers, and sneer.
 Dorian could hear their superfluous jeers.

"Please, Dorian, please don't let your fear grow.
 Those silly boys,
 they just don't know."
 Sibyl continued to plead with her friend.
 She did not want to see
 Dorian's dancing joy end.
 "Cops and robbers is all they play.
 There is no beauty in their day.
 If they are real friends as you have said,
 they will be happy for you.
 Put this fear to bed."
 And just as they reached the end of their class.
 A boy peeked in from the hall.
 It was Basil. GASP!

Basil was amazed at this horrid display.
 "Dorian is that really you?"
 "Why are you acting this way?"
 "Basil, please don't tell Henry.
 He will surely laugh.
 He wouldn't understand,
 he would have a calf!"
 "Let's go away from here.
 and I won't tell a soul.
 Leave the tutu behind.
 Let go of your hold."

Dorian agreed
 and started for the door.

But inside, his heart
began dropping all the way to the floor.
“Please Dorian, don’t go!
You have a gift,
a gift I’m sure.
When you dance, people stop.
You’re not just dancing,
it’s much more.” Dorian stopped.
What is that he should do?
Sibyl is the greatest of Who friends,
And just marvelous at dancing the Tankerhamboo.

The next day, Ms. Honey Who Berry
sees Dorian in the hall.
“Dorian, Hellooooo! Come talk to me, doll.
You were fabulous yesterday
while dancing in class.
I must say, you caught on so very fast.
Would you like to perform in
our Spring Who Recital?
We would love you to dance with us.
We could give you a lead title.”

Dorian hesitated for a moment,
a little unsure, but thought to himself,
Why not? I want to dance more.
“I would love to perform the Tankerhamboo.
The only thing is...
will my friends approve?”
Ms. Honey Who Berry
looks down at the young Who,
“If they are your friends,
they will be happy for you.”
He remembered Sybil said the same thing.
Maybe they were both right.
“I will dance in the Spring Recital.
I will give it all I got.
They’ll be happy for me,
not tell me what I ought not.”

Sibyl was worried
Basil would get in the way.
So she stopped him in the hall
for just a moment to say.
“If only you could see, dear boy,
how great our friend can be.
Dancing is his greatest joy.
There’s so much there to be seen.
Every Who is different,
they like something another may not.
A true friend lets them do what they like,
not tell them what they ought not.”

Sibyl tried at no avail
to convince Basil of their friend’s new passion.
Basil could not believe his friends desire.
He had to take some action.
Basil went straight to Henry
to tell him what he saw.
Henry couldn’t believe his ears.
Henry was in awe.
“What is this?
It cannot be. Dorian doesn’t dance.
We have to do something about this.
He can’t start dancing. He just can’t.”

Henry and Basil plotted
a way to end Dorian’s fun.
They would take away his dancing shoes.
Then his dancing would be done.
They snuck into Dorian’s locker
and took away those shoes.
But Sybil saw them.
What have they done?!
What’s Dorian going to do?!
Sybil stopped them with no delay.
And once again spoke in reason.
“Henry and Basil, let Dorian dance.
You must let him try.
Give him a chance”

“We will go and see him try,
but boys dont dance.” Basil said with a sigh.

Meanwhile, Dorian was oh so sad.
He looked for his friends,
but they still thought dancing was bad.
They surely had abandoned him.
It was obvious now,
but he couldn't quit the play.
He made a vow.

But, wait! he thought
Maybe its not too late.
He can still dance and have friends.
It'll be great!
He can dance like he wants
and still play cops and robbers.
He can do what he likes
and not drive anyone bonkers.
“This won't be the last time
I dance on a stage.
I'm going to show them this is not just a phase.”

Dorian got ready to perform for his friends,
and once on stage, Sibyl smiles at him.
They too will be friends till the end.
Henry and Basil saw their friend on stage having
fun.
Made them see,
Hey, there's no harm done.
He wasn't hurting himself or another Who,
so why shouldn't he be allowed to do the
Tankerhamboo?
The twinkle in his eye
made them grin in delight.
Maybe Dorian could teach them to dance,
he just might.

The four Whos left the school
that day arm in arm.

They saw they're all different,
no need for alarm.
Each Who likes
something another may not.
A true friend lets them do what they like,
not tell them what they ought not.

Amber Bridenstine, Jake Jarrell

WHOS CAN CHANGE, TOO!

Group Project

Once upon a time, in a world just like yours,
there lived a little girl named Mindy Lou Who.
Mindy loved to laugh, to dance, and to sing.
She was a normal girl, who did normal Who things.
She lived in a town called WhoVille you see.
Everything seemed so perfect. No one wanted to leave.

As the years went on, the town filled up with smog.
No one cleaned up their trash; the air turned into fog.
The Mayor Montgomery built up a huge curtain.
The trash disappeared, but the air seemed to worsen.
The rivers became full of bottles and garbage.
The water was dirty, and the ocean was tarnished.
The animals around moved out from the town.
As years went by, they were nowhere to be found.

As time went by, the Whos all became sad.
No one wanted to play, and their health went all bad.
Mindy Lou Who was two when all this began,
and now she was a teenager who needed a plan.
Mindy's mother named Cindy was feeling so ill,
not even medicine would help Cindy heal.
Mindy pondered ideas to get rid of the pollution;
She decided to go to the Mayor to find a solution.

Mindy Lou Who went down to the center of town.
She saw Mayor Montgomery on his chair looking down.
“My name is Mindy Lou Who, and I need some help.
I believe the smog and the fog is not helping our health.
My mother is sick, and there's nothing to do.
Please help us Mr. Mayor, please help us small Whos.”

“Little girl, we have tried,”

Mr. Mayor replied.

"We have put up that curtain that is shiny and neat to keep out the crud that was under our feet."

Mindy Lou Who thought maybe there's nothing to do. She's just a small girl; She's just one small Who.

She went back to her mother, miss Cindy Lou Who.

Cindy came up with a plan. She knew what to do.

"I've heard of a place just over the mountain.

I've heard they have plenty of fresh water fountains.

Perhaps you could visit the town over there.

Maybe they can help show us Whos how to clean up the air."

Mindy Lou Who said, "Great, I will travel to their town in hopes to find a solution to your health. Mom, don't frown." She packed her a bag full of food and small tools to show the entire town that she was no fool.

Mindy started her journey up the jaggedy path. She was nervous and lost and without any map. For miles and miles the trail felt so long, she decided to stop to build a fire before dawn.

While sitting by her fire, she heard noises in the trees. The branches were breaking and shaking the leaves. Then out from the darkness behind a big bush, Mindy saw a bear jump out in a rush.

Mindy screamed, and she shouted. She was so very scared. She realized he was shouting too, a big screaming bear! Both the bear and Mindy stopped screaming and stared. Mindy looked so confused at this big screaming bear.

"Why are you screaming?" Mindy asked this big bear. "You scared me with your scream as I jumped out of there" Mindy was confused. She had never met a bear, let alone met a talking bear, who seemed very aware. "What is your name?" asked Mindy. "Oh me, I am Blair. Blair the bear as they call me, and who are you there?"

"I am Mindy Lou Who from WhoVille you see,
that town below the fog; I am here to be free.
My mother is very sick in the town I live in.
I am here to find help but don't know where to begin.
There was no other way out of my town but this route.
What are you doing up here? Why are you wandering about?"

"I like it up here. The view is sure swell.
But the reason I am here is to get water from a well.
I am from The Town of O'Hare, at the bottom of the hill.
I like my water fresh, non-filtered, and chill.
I can take you down to the town to figure it out;
we will help your family and town, that is no doubt."
"That would be wonderful, Blair; I was so scared all alone.
I was hoping to eventually make it back to my home."

"Do not fear my little friend. I will find the way there.
We will make it there safe to the Town of O'Hare.
Once we arrive, you could talk to the Mayor.
Lady Mable is helpful in this kind of nature."

They went on their way. Down the trail they did trot.
They galloped and sang. They quite liked it a lot.
By morning they made it to the Town of O'Hare.
Mindy looked all around; she stopped, and she stared.
She saw a bright light shining into the town;
the air was so crisp, so clear, and not brown,
nothing like the fog or the smog or the dirt,
This town was shining so bright, not a speck not a squirt.

Unsoiled, unsmudged, and green all around,
there were gardens and rivers and colors abound.
The houses were made with bottles so bright,
illuminating the sky with a bright, brilliant light.
Mindy Lou Who was stunned with this sparkling town,
and she knew what WhoVille needed to turn it around.

Blair the bear brought Mindy into town square
to meet Lady Mable in hopes to find care.
As they walked to the center of this shining bright city,

Lady Mable sat in a chair, so perfectly pretty.
 The chair sat with all of the rest of the folks.
 Lady Mable and friends laughed while telling some jokes.

While everyone smiled, and giggled, and yelped,
 Mindy said, "Hello there, I am Mindy and I'm searching for help.
 I come from Whoville over there on the other side of town,
 and my people are bogged in a fog all around.
 I have come a long way to find help for my mother,
 who's sick from the smog and the fog. It makes me wonder
 about the way this town keeps itself clean.
 Is there a way you can help my town also be green?"

Lady Mable just smiled and answered, "Why yes!
 I will show you around. I will show you what's next.
 There are many things you can do to help the earth become green,
 like planting, recycling, and reusing some things."
 Lady Mable and Mindy walked around the entire town
 to be shown all the ways WhoVille could turn around.

The first stop she showed her the bottles and cans
 that were made into houses and boats on the sand.
 By reusing and recycling the things all around,
 it keeps all the garbage from piling in the center of town.
 They did not have a mail-room overflowing with papers;
 Instead they used emails and signs with big lasers.

This helps the forest grow oh-so-green and so tall,
 which in turn helps provide the clean air for them all.
 The next spot they walked past was a garden of food.
 There were herbs and some fruits and more vegetables, too!
 They never threw out the old vegetable peels;
 They threw them into a bucket after every meal.
 The bucket of compost was stirred round and round;
 the nutrients were made to be put in the ground.
 The garden sure loved the rich composted mix.
 It helped rid of the garbage and even small sticks.

The food was traded from town to town;
 that way everyone got to have food all around.

The houses were lit with candles and such
to save all the energy from being used too much.
The idea here was simple, keep everything green.
Reuse and recycle to keep everything clean.

“You see Mindy Lou Who, there are things you can do
to change the things that you are used to.
If the Whos don't know about any other way,
the smog and the fog and the garbage will stay.
Starting small with a task, just a change or two,
there are things to do differently, even Whos can change, too!”

“Oh Mayor, thank you, for this eye opening view,
but however will I teach all the Whos to change, too?”
Mindy looked all around and decided what to use,
“I'll bring back the water; there's no way they'll refuse!
May I ask one more favor while I am still around?
Blair the Bear, will you take me back to my town?
Will you help me convince the Whos of a solution?
I believe if we change, we can get rid of the pollution.”

“But of course Mindy Lou Who. I'd love to help you find
the ways that are green; we can both change their minds!
Let's be off on our journey over Monstrous Mountain,
and on the way, we can stop by the fresh water fountain.”

They started their journey again up the trails,
while they searched and they searched for the fresh water wells.
They found a big well and filled up a canteen.
They packed all the water, so fresh and so clean.

Mindy saw in a distance, looking down on her town,
the smog and the fog was still gathered around.
The town below could not be seen from above;
the pollution laid a blanket of clouds with gross crud.

Blair the Bear and Mindy walked into town,
still yucky and cruddy with garbage all around.
The Whos walked by; they would stop and stare.
They were so scared and shocked that she walked with a bear.

Mayor Montgomery sat in his high Mayor chair,
and looked down and asked, "What are you doing down there?"

Mindy built up the courage to tell everyone around,
"I left to find help for the sake of our town.
See the smog and the fog and the piles of dirt,
it is yucky and mucky and makes our lungs hurt.
If we all make a change to help clean up the air,
we can clean up the garbage and mess over there."
Mindy pointed to the right at the large curtain cover,
and Blair tore it open for the Whos to discover.
There were piles and piles of garbage wide spread.
The smell stunk up the air, and the trees were all dead.

The Whos gasped and they asked, "Is this what you were hiding?
No wonder the smog and the fog keeps presiding"

Mindy told everyone about the town of O'Hare,
how everyone works together and is very aware.
They reuse and recycle to keep garbage down.
They compost and make gardens and flowers around.
The town of O'Hare is untarnished and clean.
She continued to say how they too can go green.
"If we all work together and put in some work,
we too can change this smog, the garbage, and dirt."

The Mayor just stood there with his arms in a fold,
"There's no way there is truth in this story you told."
Mindy pulled out the canteen of the fresh mountain water.
He took it but stood there; He wouldn't even bother.

"Try it. You'll like it." The Whos sat there in silence.
They all thought the Mayor would not believe in this non-sense.
"The town is so clean, and the mountains are clear
of smudgy and yucky messes, like the garbage here.
This makes the water taste so crisp and so light.
Try it; You'll like it. You'll think it's alright."

The Mayor took one sip of the drink that she shared.
"Yahoooooooo! This is the best water from the town of O'Hare.

I see now, with this, it is time for a change.
We can do it, us Whos. We can all re-arrange.
There is no time to waste. Let's start doing this now.
Mindy, you are in charge of telling us how!"

"I'd be honored to help us become more aware
and all thanks to Blair and the Town of O'Hare.
First, we will start with all the plastic bottles.
No more buying in bulk, even you with the goggles!

We all need to have just one canteen each,
to re-fill so the bottles don't end up at the beach.
Did you know that we use twenty-five million bottles an hour?!
Those bottles are wasted and thrown into towers.
The towers are piling just right over there,
with all of our garbage when we aren't aware.

Next, we will learn a way to re-use
the bottles and glass and even our boots.
We can build other things from the garbage with ropes.
We'll build houses and playgrounds and even a boat.

And let's not forget all trees we cut down.
If we stop wasting paper, they can stay in our town.
In turn the big trees will give clean air to breathe.
Our lungs will be happy and feel so relieved.

The smog and the fog will all go away.
We can all change this town, so don't be afraid.

The next thing we do is plant gardens all over.
We'll replace all of our lawns, say goodbye to the mower!
There's plenty of room to grow our own food,
we'll grow vegetables for stews and fruits for our juice.
It is healthier and tastier than fast food places.
It comes from the ground and not one thing is wasted.

We will use all the scraps from the leftover food,
to put into composting piles of stew.
The composting piles are such a big deal

of reusing and stewing of leftover meals.
 It goes back into the ground for the plants to use, too.
 It's a cycle you see, like a circle we choose.
 Instead of wasting and throwing away,
 let's all start recycling. Let's all start today!"

The Who's all around started moving at once.
 There was no time to waste if they wanted this done.
 They all worked together to make everything clean,
 unspotted, unsoiled, untarnished, and green.
 They planted the gardens; they stopped using so much paper.
 They used emails and signs that were put up by Mr. Draper.

The smog and the fog began to disappear,
 and the rain and the sun made a rainbow appear.
 The Whos were so proud that the town that was so clean.
 They all hooted and hollered and shouted "Go green!"

Mindy walked home to check on her mother,
 who was still in her bed sleeping under the covers.
 "Mom, you should look out the window and see
 the things I have changed, just little old me.

Please meet my friend Blair from the Town of O'Hare;
 he's the one who showed me how to be so aware.
 I have helped with the messes and garbage in town.
 I have helped clean our air, the pollution is down.
 I would love you to taste the fresh water we found,
 and the fresh vegetables we got from straight from the ground."

Cindy smiled with a very proud look on her face;
 her daughter had changed their great town in just days.
 She drank up the water and ate all the food.
 Her face flushed with some color; she was in a great mood.

"I'm so proud of you Mindy; just look what you've done!
 Even the smallest of voices can be heard to and from.
 Just you Mindy Lou Who; You knew what to do
 to make changes in the world. Even Whos can change too!"

Reina Nelson

WHAT IS SOCIALLY SO?

One warm summer day, when little Whos play,
 one little girl's life was soon to be changed.
 Her name was Luna, a cute little girl.
 She liked to climb mountains and play in the bay.
 She would climb up the trees and build things with pride,
 enjoying the the sunshine and being outside.
 These things were kept secret.
 Poor Luna was troubled that no Who must know
 because it was not socially so.

"I should fix the kink in my mom's sink," she said with a smile,
 laying in a green field with her orange crocodile.
 "Or maybe not," she said with a frown.
 "Or she'll try to teach me how to make a fancy can cake.
 I'm not that good in the kitchen,
 and what I do, I feed to my kitten!
 I don't know why I bother to try.
 I always mess up.
 I wish I could do what makes me so happy.
 Then maybe, just maybe, it will all be worthwhile,"
 she said with a sigh.

The orange crocodile chipped in and said,
 "You know Luna, it's not socially so!
 They'll make you scoop rooftops or mop gum drops!
 Do not talk like that, for you could get us both in trouble.
 The Whos of Smallville are uptight.
 I cannot think what would happen if someone heard you!"

Luna lived in Smallville, where each and everyone is a Who.
 There were big Whos and little Whos,
 green Whos and mean Whos,
 and every Who had a Who job.

The girls were to bake and make, mop and shop.
 Learning to make fancy can cakes and frosted milkshakes.
 Any Who who was caught doing any jobs that they were not
 supposed to be doing got in big trouble.

Luna listened to her orange crocodile,
 "I know," she said.
 "No Who will know what I do not like to show."
 They started walking back to town when they saw Mr. Flird.
 Mr. Flird was a great big bird, a bird no Who liked,
 for Mr. Flird had a herd of mean little blue birds.
 They had heard Luna and her orange crocodile
 and now were going to fly back and tell the Who of the hood.
 They would surely put her on a stage
 in a cage and decide her fate.
 They would make her work in the sherk shop
 to mop the rooftops.

"Oh no! Mr. Flird!" She screamed.
 Luna and her orange crocodile ran quickly back to town,
 but they came into some trouble with the pink rinkadink.
 You don't want to upset a pink rinkadink,
 for when they turn mean, they eat all the town's green beans.

"Excuse me pink rinkadink, can we get past?
 For I must get to town real fast!" Said Luna.
 "I cannot let you past, for my canoe is in two.
 If you can fix my canoe I will let you pass," He said.
 "Yes! Yes!" Said Luna "I will fix your canoe if you do let us past,
 I need a nail and a hammer and I need them fast!"
 The pink rinkadink gave her a nail and a hammer
 and was amazed at how fast and well she worked.
 His canoe was no longer in two; it was even better than before!
 "I will let you pass, but your talent for fixing things is truly
 amazing, keep it up, for a talent like this should not be wasted."

Luna and her orange crocodile got to pass.
 Hurrying along fast, they could still see Mr. Flird
 and his herd of little blue birds just ahead,
 running into Doctor Who along the way.

“Hello Luna” he said. “Hello!” she yelled running past him.
“Luna! The gates are broken they have fallen.
Mr. Flird and his mean blue birds knocked them down.
You cannot get into town,
for the gates are broken down!”
Luna stopped. “I can fix them.” she said,
“Doctor Who do you have a hammer and a nail?”
She asked, clearly out of breath.
“I am afraid I do not,” he replied.
“What about a rock and some chalk?” She asked.
“Yes!” yelled Doctor Who as he ran in to his little Who house.
In less than five minutes the gates were up and better than ever.
“My goodness!” said Doctor Who, “What a talent you have!
Do not be ashamed. Do not let your talent go to waste!”

There was the town just in sight;
all the Whos were gathered together.
Standing, looking puzzled and wuzzled.
Luna was running to Mr. Flird,
who was walking up to the Who of the Hood.
“Mr Flird, please! No Who must know!
It’s not socially so! They’ll put me on the stage in a cage.
Sentence me to mop rooftops or scoop gum drops.
Please Mr. Flird, don’t tell them that I like to fix kinks in sinks
or mend broken things. Don’t you understand Mr. Flird?
I’m not good at making fancy can cakes;
I can’t even make a frosted milkshake!
Don’t punish me for something I do not like to do.
I promise I will not show what
I do not want other Whos to know.” Cried Luna.
A sly look came across Mr. Flird’s face.
Luna looked around, noticing for the first time
how loud she had been talking.
There was no need for Mr. Flird to say anything
because she already had.
The Who of the Hood pushed his way through the crowd.

“Luna, this is not socially so!” he said,
“The men are real great, they fix up our gates,
you’re taking their jobs away from them. What shall we do now?”

Make her scrape the bottom of shoes,
 shovel rooftops or make some fundus?"
 "Yes! Yes!" screamed the crowd, so loathsome and proud.
 The Whos grabbed her and jabbed her
 and put her on the stage in a cage.

It was just one small voice,
 one that was heard even over the noise.
 "Stop!" cried the orange crocodile.
 It was just one simple word, one that shifted their world.
 So simple and small that carried power and all.
 "Luna is one smart girl. She fixes and mends
 all the things that do break.
 She did fix the main gate that the men have not touched;
 don't you see what a talent she has?
 Why hold inside something so great?
 She does not cook so well in the kitchen,
 so why should we keep her there?
 She can fix canoes and mend broken shoes,
 she is real great at the things she can do.
 Don't you Whos see that we must let her be?"
 The crowd went silent for what seemed like a while.
 Until...

"I like to bake fancy can cakes!" yelled a blue Who.
 "I like to fix wiz its!" screamed a pink little Who.
 On and on the shouts came from afar,
 the Whos changing Smallville one shout at a time.
 Telling their secrets they have kept night in and night out.
 "Luna, my dear, you have altered it all. You are right my dear;
 you have changed Smallville in all.
 Each and every Who is new.
 They have opened their hearts and changed their minds.
 Who knew all Whos had such secrets inside?
 It took you Luna and the courage of your orange crocodile.
 Can you now see all of the Whos are as happy as can be?
 Thank you Luna. My gratitude is great.
 I'm now going to go home and make a frosted milkshake!"
 said the Who of the Hood.
 From there, Smallville was a wonderful town of different talents.

New things were discovered every day.
Instead of just having every girl mop and shop and chop
and every boy Who just fix wiz-its
and what's-its and muts-its and puts-its.
The town even became bigger and better.
More and more Whos from different towns came around.
Making Smallville no longer Smallville. It was Largeville.
Every Who had some special kind of talent,
and each talent was different.
Luna was now the new Who of the Hood.
Every Saturday, she started to bring all the Whos
to the Who town square.
Each and every Who would get the chance to show
off their talents to all of their neighbors and friends and family.
This was a bonding experience
and just brought all of them closer together.
Luna would show the Who people how to fix things.
The old Who of the Hood would make
frosted milkshakes for all of the little Whos.
There were canoe shapers and can makers,
there were Whos that liked to roller skate
and Whos that made glass plates.
Every Who in Largeville was as happy as could be,
thanks to Luna and her orange crocodile
who gave to town a different way to look at things.
And every Who lived as happy as ever.

Acknowledgements

To the VE Staff and Contributors,

The Verbal Equinox editors would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to all the contributors of this special edition of VE. A special thanks goes out to Ryan Evans for his hard work and dedication to the Writing Center, the Developmental English Program, and Verbal Equinox as a whole. His novel approach to teaching was the sole inspiration for this special edition of our journal, and the in-depth interview he provided us helped us to develop a broader understanding of writing pedagogy, students' critical thinking, and the writing process in general.

In addition, we would like to thank all of the Writing Center tutors and staff who helped the English 0955 students make the best of their projects. It is important to understand that these finished products came about from collaborative efforts of students and tutors working together throughout every stage of the writing process from brainstorming to final drafts. Our tutors do an excellent job at providing students with writing strategies to help them develop as proficient students of writing. Without the high standards and efficacy exemplified by the tutors at the Weber State Writing Center, this edition of Verbal Equinox could not have been possible.

We would also like to extend a warm thanks to Claire Hughes, the Writing Center coordinator, for her mentorship toward us as tutors and for her continued support of and passion for Verbal Equinox. Her devotion to developmental English and the excitement she expressed concerning Ryan Evans' Dr. Seuss Project provided us with a focus that allowed us not only to create this edition of Verbal Equinox but also to see, in a broader sense, the long-lasting effects of student-tutor collaboration.

Finally, we would like to thank the student contributors—CJ Garside, Brandi Bolin, Jennifer Datus, Lizbeth Rosales, Amber Bridenstine, Jake Jarrell, and Reina Nelson—for the extensive amount of work and effort they have put into their projects. We are proud to publish these stories as prime examples of this wonderfully atypical composition assignment, examples that fully show a level of commitment and active engagement that is not always seen within students' academic work. We sincerely thank you for letting us use your words so that others may explore this exciting experiment in composition.

Sincerely,
Matthew Drollette, Editor in Chief
Amy Kees, Editor
Benjamin Bigelow, Editor