
wordworks

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weber state university writing center

Fall Quarter, 1991

As acting editor at the beginning of Fall Quarter, I was looking for the kind of writing that could appeal to people who work in other university Writing Centers, as well as to the Weber State audience. When I read Sundry's paper which she submitted to Dr. Schwiebert's Methods and Practice Class for 1Utortng Writing, I urged her to let it be reprinted as part of a series on similar discussions by WSU Writing Assistants.

Diane

Collaborating With Self: Exercise and Creativity

by Sundry Watanabe. Editor

I was trying on a new shirt the other day, primping in the mirror. As I scrutinized myself front, back and side, I said to my husband, "Well, what do you think?" He replied, "Suit yourself, dear. It doesn't really matter what I think."

The remark left me nonplussed, but I had to smile. He knows me quite well and he was right. I always ask for opinions, but the deciding factor for any action I take is what my second voice, as I call it, tells me. The opinion of my second voice is especially valuable when I am writing. I have learned to listen and respond to the running dialogue which occurs in my mind.

Donald Murray speaks of this internal dialogue in his article, "Teaching the Other Self: The Writer's First Reader." He states:

The self speaks, the other self ... responds ...

The self makes, the other self-evaluates. The two collaborate: a problem is spotted, discussed, defined; solutions are proposed, rejected, suggested, attempted, tested, discarded, accepted. (140)

How about that? I'm in good company if Murray talks to himself too. And we're not alone. Edward Albee, Edmund Blunden, Rebecca West, to mention a few, espouse the same idea (140).

"Wait a minute," I can hear students say. "We're not quite in the same league as those three. They are people of genius!" It's understandable that most student writers feel less than confident about their own writing. Students believe common misconceptions that abound about writing and writers. Namely: published authors must have a thousand times greater ability and creativity than students, authors were magically born with a gift, and above all, writing must

come easily to them.

In truth, the mentor process, the dialogue with self and other self, has become automatic with these fine writers-automatic to the point of ease.

However, anything that seems effortless must surely have developed through a series of practice efforts-trial and error. Writing is no different. James Moffet, in his article "I, You, and It," suggests that this kind of trial and error "best develops judgment and taste" (148). Through practice then, authors have honed their skills and have trained themselves to become their own firsthand best readers. They have developed thought-editorials that work for them.

It is this the case, then individuals only have to mentally walk backwards and figure out each step of their personal editorial process. When these steps are recognized, the editorial voice moves from an unconscious, rather undependable thought process to a conscious, reliable thought process. The craft of writing is learned by experimentation with the exercise. When the exercise comes easily, then creativity is possible.

I was given an opportunity to experiment with this idea just recently. Dr. Mikkelsen assigned our poetry class to find an image and write a poem inspired by that image. Because I normally wait for inspiration to strike before writing, I was worried. While reading a chapter in Ben McClelland's book, *Writing Practice* called "Discovering and Inventing Ideas," it occurred to me that I could try one of the pre-writing techniques he suggests. In fact, a dialogue began occurring with my other self:

Sundry: Okay, let's sit down and try it

Other Self: You haven't finished that book on techniques yet.

Sundry: Excuses, excuses. I've got to get started.

Other Self: Well then, what have you got so far?

Sundry: Just an image that keeps recurring in my mind. I don't know why.

Other Self: What image?

Sundry: A pair of wire-rimmed glasses limping over the table edge.

McClelland suggests six methods by which to discover and invent writing ideas. One of the methods is called brainstorming. It is a pre-writing technique much like improvisation in dance. It is the free flow of ideas without

intellectual censorship. The idea is to write a topic at the top of a blank page, and then rain words pertaining to the topic down on the paper as fast as you can. A time limit of about five minutes is set for this activity. At this stage it is important to freely follow where the flow leads. I wrote the image at the top of a page and proceeded to brainstorm.

Wire-rims limping over the table edge:
blinders, black curtains dropping without warning
smashed glass, fractured image, skewed
restless drumming, ceaseless motion, nervous twitches that never rest
forgotten, lags behind
Grand Canyon rut, shatters the perfect image
time blocks, left brain block, James staring blind
ambivalent, tentative, fearful
tension, interrupted synapse, Hiss the anger.

The more I wrote, the more I could see that the image had meaning. A feeling began to form out of the chaos of brainstorming. There was a glimmer of intent, still partially hidden, but becoming clearer all the time. And the dialogue with my other self-continued.

Sundy: I think this has something to do with James' glasses. He keeps forgetting them and he just acts so helpless.
Other Self: Helpless? What do you mean?
Sundy: Oh I don't know ...just kind of crippled, and apologizing.
Other Self: Two good words. I think you're getting somewhere. Do a quick free write and see if you get more.

There they are again:
the left behind
wire-rims, limping over the table edge
a nervous twitch startled them
Jump--a skewed image.
Hiss a sputtered oath.
This great Grand Canyon rut.

Other Self: Not bad. Is this the poem you want?
Sundy: No, not quite, but let's stop for a while now. I think I need some distance.

I put the assignment away and didn't think any more about it until driving to school the next morning. Suddenly a line tripped out of my subconscious:

"The whole of creation moves and shakes
while you are staring blind."

That was it-the whole crux of frustration in those words. I knew where this poem was going. The next time I sat down to write, the poem nearly wrote itself.:

After James Leaves

There they are again:
the left behind
wire-rims, limping over the table edge.

A nervous twitch started them
and they jumped,
a skewed image, a sputtered oath.

There they are again:
the lag-behind
wire-runs, apologizing while falling, forgotten.
A faulty synapse interrupted them
and they fractured,
a fearful frame, a tentative whisper.

Hiss at this Grand Canyon curtain.
The whole of creation moves and shakes
While you are staring blind.

Distance was again necessary at this point of the writing process. I turned the poem in. Each word decision had to be justified; each choice weighed for rhythm, readability and intent. Dr. Mikkelsen suggested a firm, even ruthless, paring down. The other self said, "It is a little melodramatic, don't you think?" The decision was finally made to let go of a pet word and phrase. Then, when self and other self-agreed, the result was a happy conclusion to revision.

After James Leaves

There they are again:
the left behind
wire-rims, crippled on the table edge.

A nervous twitch startled them
and they jumped,
a skewed image.

There they are again:
the la -behind
wire-runs, apologizing.
A faulty synapse,
and they fractured,
a fearful frame.

Creation moves and shakes
while you are staring
blind.

This exercise has taught me that craft, when consciously applied, can lead to previously untapped sources of creativity. When I exercised a repertoire of technique until a free flow of thought surfaced, I was rewarded with pools of delightful surprises. By trusting the intelligence of the other self, I captured an image that expanded my awareness of an important issue in my life. There is always a rationale behind writing. Intended content may not be achieved the first time, but with time, the other self can be taught to "propose ...consider ...evaluate ...collaborate ...discuss ...define ...attempt ...[and] accept" (Murray 140).

Work Cited

Murray, Donald M. "Teaching the Other Self: The Writer's First Reader." *College Composition and Communication*. 33 (May 1982): 140-147.

Writing Center Outreach: Sharing Our Good News with High Schools

by Diane Kulkarni, Writing Center Coordinator

Writing Center Outreach is a program the Writing Center started last year, to provide faculty-selected high school students with college-level tutor training. We wanted to share with the high school community what we've found in the university to work best in helping students become more skilled writers and editors of their own work..

St. Joseph Catholic High School opened its center in October of 1990 and Ben Lomond students took the training in January. In April Dr. Schwiebert trained over 60 students at Box Elder High in Brigham City.

This fall, Box Elder has taken off with the program by providing their writing assistants English12 credit when they work in the center and fulfill the requirements of a class on peer tutoring designed by Mrs. Shirley Merritt, the English teacher responsible for spearheading the project.

Carolyn Peterson who is the computer aid at Box Elder coordinates the new Center. One or two writing assistants are on duty each hour of the school day and will meet with students before or after school.

On October 22, the WSU Writing Center staff trained about 50 new students from St. Joseph, Bonneville and Davis High Schools. 12 returning assistants from St. Joseph and Box Elder attended a concurrent session. Ogden, Clearfield and Layton have expressed interest in attending a spring quarter workshop.

Wordworks would like to feature writing by WCO writing assistants in each issue.

From the High School:

"A Sweeter Taste Than Before"

by Jennifer Stoker, Box Elder Writing Assistant

The vapor is rising from the brim of the white cup, and the temperature from the coffee is warming his hand. The spoon is dropped into the mixture and stirred. Again and again the spoon stirs the coffee. Every time the spoon submerges in the liquid, a small amount of sugar is dissolved, giving the coffee a little sweeter taste than before.

As Judy walked into the room with a look of disgust upon her face, she confronted her husband Charles about the lighter. The lighter was silver and trimmed in gold. If you held it in your hands you could feel the smooth edges of the design. It was definitely a mark of craftsmanship. The raised letters, A and C, covered the front of the lighter. They were coated in a shiny gold that showed that it was a custom-made trinket.

Judy knew these initials. They marked the package of the most famous and expensive perfume in the world of fashion. She knew also that her husband didn't happen to come upon the lighter by accident.

She confronted him. She was furious about his late night working hours and his three-day weekend business

trips. For a long time now she had been picking up on little abnormalities that disrupted her husband's everyday life. She knew now for sure that he was seeing another woman and she knew who that woman was.

He lied again to Judy.. He had said that he was not seeing another woman even though she knew he was. The door shut as he walked out to go on another one of his "business trips."

Their eighth anniversary was only two days away. He would not even be there. He would be with her-Alexis Carthright!

Judy pictured them together: drinking their martinis, laughing and kissing, all the time that she was alone.

The doorbell rang and shattered her thoughts. It was a delivery for Mrs. Jones.

She signed for the package and went to the living room to unwrap it. The package was wrapped in bright red foil. She tore the paper off slowly in order to preserve its wholeness. Within the layers of red wrapping a vase with a note attached lay in the decorative mess. The note was from her husband. He had sent it to her because of their anniversary.

The delivery service didn't care much about the package, for the vase was cracked. A dark mark began at the top and ran the whole length of the vase. The mark, she thought, was ironic. It symbolized her husband's love for her now.

She decided to call her husband's secretary to see if she could get the phone number for where her husband was staying. The secretary complied with her wishes and gave her the number.

She dialed the number. A woman's voice answered. She immediately hung the phone up, only hoping it was a wrong number. She slowly and deliberately dialed the number for the second time. This time the phone was not answered until the sixth ring. The voice that answered was Charles'.

She hung up immediately. Her fears had been confirmed. He was having an affair with Alexis.

* * * * *

The doorbell rang. Alexis went to answer it. To her surprise there was a lady with blond hair pulled back in a bun.

"Hello. Can I help you?" the exquisitely dressed Alexis asked.

"Hello. I'm from Deseret Industries. We are collecting old clothes to repair and give to homeless families. Do you happen to have any that you would be willing to donate?"

"Come in. I have a few items that I can give."

Judy walked into the lavish apartment. While

Alexis was getting the clothing, Judy went into the adjoining kitchen. On the counter she saw the sugar bowl. It was made of fine crystal and had an elaborate design carved into its lid. The light reflected off the sharp edges of the expertly cut glass.

Judy had some knowledge of the many poisons of the world. She knew how poisonous iocane powder was. It had no odor, no taste, and no known antidote—one small grain of it and you would die within an hour.

Judy slipped a small vial out of her pocket. It contained the white iocane powder. She opened the lid and mixed the powder with the sugar in the crystal bowl.

Alexis came back with an armload of clothing. Most of the clothes were a man's; Judy knew whose it was: Charles'.

"I was just noticing the fine craftsmanship of this sugar bowl."

"Oh. That was a gift from my boyfriend."

As Judy walked away from the apartment, she laughed sinisterly to herself.

* * * * *

The phone rang. It was Charles' secretary calling to tell Judy that he would be home late.

Her heart sank. She only wanted to kill Alexis—not Charles!

Sheran to her car and got in. She revved the engine and sped towards Alexis' apartment.

Sheran to the door and knocked frantically. If only she had made it in time.

Charles ran to the back room. Alexis composed herself and then went to answer it.

Judy pushed her way inside.

"Where's Charles?"

Alexis realized who Judy was.

"He has already left to go home."

"Well, did he have coffee before he left?"

"Why?"

"I found out about Charles and you. I wanted to kill you—to get you out of the picture so that my marriage would not end. I put poison in your sugar bowl to kill you."

"Charles already left over an hour ago."

"Then I have nothing to live for," Judy said. "I'll go to the police and confess my crime."

The door shut behind her, and this time Alexis laughed to herself sinisterly.

"Who was that?" Charles asked, coming out of the back room.

"Oh, just some welfare agency."

"I have to tell you, Alexis. I can't go on ruining my marriage. I won't divorce Judy. I'm sorry, but my marriage to her means more than our affair."

"I understand. Will you at least have a last cup of coffee with a friend?"

The vapor is rising from the brim of the white cup,

and the temperature from the coffee is warming his hand. The spoon is dropped into the mixture and stirred. Again and again the spoon stirs the coffee. Every time the spoon submerges into the liquid a small amount of the sugar is dissolved, giving the coffee a little sweeter taste than before.

Successful Class Assignments

The Profile:

"All in a Day's Work"

An "A" paper by Michelle Spencer
from Dr. Kathleen Herndon's English 112 class

The key slides easily into the lock, quickly turning. We are entering the domain of Dr. Kathryn Barrett Cappel, a small and large animal veterinarian. She quickly and competently scans the scheduled appointments of the day, mentally noting fifteen dog and five cat vaccinations, an infected ear on a dog, and an infected leg on a cat.

She has three surgeries scheduled for the afternoon, two spays and the removal of a nail embedded in the hoof of a horse: a wide variety of problems awaiting her expertise.

Dr. Cappel conscientiously readies the examination room, laying out the instruments and vaccine serums she needs.

Next, she moves into the scrub-recovery room to check on yesterday's surgery patients.

Mayhem breaks loose as three dogs are startled out of their sleep. She talks quietly to them, as she gives each a fresh bowl of food and water. She visually examines each animal making sure it is on the road to recovery.

Last, she examines an old dog in the final stages of renal failure, making him as comfortable as possible. Dr. Cappel, with pain showing in her eyes, explains, "The owners won't allow euthanasia even though the animal is beyond saving, so the poor animal suffers in its bloated, grotesque condition. Death will probably come today."

The receptionist has arrived and turns the phones over to the office from the answering service. All three lines immediately light up and ring.

Dr. Cappel answers the first call; the woman on the other end is very upset. She has a Pug Terrier that has been in labor since 9:00 last night and is not making any progress. Can she bring her right in? The doctor answers, "Yes!"

Turning from the phone, she explains, "Dogs and cats with short stubby noses, such as Pugs, Bull Dogs and Persian cats often have a hard time delivering. Their stubby noses can't push through the birth canal like pointed noses do, and the baby becomes lodged on the pelvic bone as the other puppies behind are pushing to be born."

It's now 8:15 and the scheduled patients are arriving. Dr. Cappel gives each animal a physical exam before she vaccinates to make sure the animal is well. She explains to a new puppy owner the importance of vaccinations and

gives the first D.H.L.P.P. shot.

It will need to get a booster at nine weeks, 12 weeks and 16 weeks, again at one year and every year thereafter. A rabies shot will also be given at four months, then every two years to keep current.

D.H.L.P.P. shots protect against distemper, hepatitis, leptospirosis, parvovirus, and parainfluenza, all deadly diseases to a dog. Puppies are especially susceptible to parvo and can become infected easily from feces of other infected dogs. Dr. Cappel is treating a puppy in isolation now, having saved it from this killer.

The pregnant pug just arrived and an emergency C-section is underway. The vet's assistant, receptionist and I are pressed into helping. The mother is anesthetized and prepped; she looks very small asleep on the operating table. Her bulging belly is alive with squirming puppies.

The incision is made in the skin, in the center of the belly, down through the layer of fat subcutaneous tissue, through the linea alba, which is the tendon muscle layer, continuing into the peritoneum membrane which holds the visceral organs in the abdomen.

Dr. Cappel finds the uterus and carefully slices it open, exposing the puppies. She ties off and clips the umbilical cord of the first tiny puppy and hands it to the assistant, who starts rubbing the tiny chest quite hard and fast.

Dr. Cappel says this is necessary to start their breathing because the puppies haven't been forced through the birth canal, which would automatically start the breathing reflex.

Another puppy is handed to the receptionist and one to me. I start to rub and massage the chest, someone says to do it harder and faster. "I'm afraid of hurting it!" I say.

The assistant says do it anyway or we'll lose it. Two puppies are breathing and whimpering now; mine takes its first breath. This is great. What a feeling to watch this tiny creature come to life. By this time Dr. Cappel has delivered the afterbirth and is suturing the mother up. A blanket-lined cage is waiting, and she gently places the mother and babies in.

The delayed appointments have been patiently waiting in the reception area. Dr. Cappel examines the dog's infected ear and finds a low grade infection on the surface of the ear drum. She prescribes and dispenses amoxicillin, two daily for seven days.

The infected cat is taken into the scrub room where the doctor administers a local anesthetic. An abscess is lanced and drained, then flushed repeatedly with peroxide.

Dr. Cappel, returning the cat to the owner, explains, "Cats are infamous for abscesses. They fight with other cats and get clawed up. The cat gets a puncture wound that seals shut quickly, becoming infected by the dirty claws of the other cat. Usually the owner won't realize the cat is hurt until it's sick with an abscess requiring medical attention."

The morning continues to run smoothly as the appointments come and go. At 11:00 Dr. Cappel is scheduled to vaccinate a police dog. The officer has checked his

animal in, leaving the dog in the truck. As we go outside, Dr. Cappel whispers, "Gus doesn't like to get stuck."

"Great," I think. "Now what?"

The officer puts a leash and muzzle on Gus and leads him to the center of the parking lot, giving the command to sit and stay. Dr. Cappel goes to the side of the officer and injects the dog, stepping back behind the officer with him. This dog really hates shots.

Dr. Cappel handles the situation calmly and accepts the risks as they come. She has been bitten, severely clawed, requiring stitches, been run over by both horses and cattle, and suffered various other injuries during her practice, but she still enjoys the satisfaction she gets from making animals well.

She says animals are "children in fur coats" and should be handled, raised and treated accordingly.

The door explodes open and a young mother followed by two sobbing children burst in. A limp, lifeless dog is lying in her arms. She sobs, "He has just been hit by a car. I think he's dead. Can you do anything?"

The doctor takes the dog into the examination room and begins to check the injuries. It has a severe concussion, a broken front leg, cuts and abrasions, but by some miracle is still alive. Dr. Cappel consoles the young family, telling them their dog will be fine but will be staying in the clinic for a few days.

She can set the leg and clean the cuts. By the time the dog regains consciousness late that afternoon Dr. Cappel has had time to care for him.

The bright light above the operating table reflects in the scalpel as it slices smoothly through the abdomen of the German Shepherd. Dr. Cappel is performing the last of the small animal surgeries.

The spay is routine as the small incision is made, following the same procedure as the C-section earlier. "There is very little blood because the incision is made along the grain of the muscle instead of slicing through it," she explains.

She has performed so many of these, she moves automatically. A snip here and a snip there, she drops the small walnut-sized uterus and two round red marbles of ovaries into a gleaming stainless steel dish. She ties off the bleeders and sutures the peritoneal membrane closed, then the muscle layer, followed by the skin layer. The dog will spend the night in the clinic, being released to its owner tomorrow. Stitches come out in one week.

Before she performs the operation on the horse, Dr. Cappel takes a short, half-hour lunch. She is open and friendly, relaxing visibly as she tells of graduating from high school at sixteen in El Paso, Texas, entering Texas A and M that fall and graduating in the top ten percent of her class at the age of twenty-one.

Her father wanted her to become a human doctor; she wanted to be a vet. The outcome of their argument is obvious. She has been a practicing veterinarian since she

obvious. She has been a practicing veterinarian since she graduated, coming to Utah for her internship under Dr. Schonfeld and Dr. Widdison of Associated Veterinarians.

Upon finishing her internship, she set up a practice of her own, Riverdale Veterinary Clinic. She is very successful in her practice, treating both large and small animals in all areas of injuries and sicknesses.

She is also a very capable surgeon, handling operations from declawing a cat to performing delicate internal surgeries. She is on call for after-hours emergencies that can range from a very seriously cut horse that will require hours of stitching in the field, to a small animal that has been sick for days, and the owner wants it seen at 1 a.m.

She has to deal with sometimes irate, often hysterical, protective pet owners. She says most owners are easy to work with, but there are always a few who like to cause problems.

The horse has arrived and the owner leads the limping animal into the large animal surgery bay. The horse is placed in a stock that restricts his movement, and Dr. Cappel takes a radiograph (x-ray) of the hoof from three different angles. The film is developed, and she is able to see exactly where the nail is lying in the digital cushion of the hoof.

The nail entered the foot through the soft sole and became embedded in the digital cushion. The owner pulled part of the rusty, old nail out, breaking half of it off in the foot. It is lying parallel and adjacent to the coffin bone in the hoof.

The horse is backed out of the stock and anaesthetized. He becomes groggy, his head droops, his knees buckle, and he drops to the floor. Dr. Cappel rolls him onto his side and administers another small dose of anesthesia, main-lining it directly into the artery of the neck. She sterilizes the hoof, and using a power drill, drills into the frog corium, which is a very hard, tough, leathery V-shaped pad in the bottom of the hoof surrounded by the soft sole.

She doesn't want to cut into the soft sole if she can prevent it. Horses are said to have five hearts, one in the chest and in each of its four feet. The soft sole acts as a pump, pushing blood back to the heart with every step a horse takes.

Therefore, the tissue of the soft sole is very hard to heal and bleeds profusely when cut. Dr. Cappel has calculated the angle of the nail's entry and is able to get very close to it. She probes deep into the inner recesses of the hoof, working on touch rather than sight. She feels her probe strike metal and reaches for the forceps to extract the nail. It is about a quarter inch long, very rusty and dirty.

During this operation the room has been very quiet; the only sounds are the horse's steady breathing and the soft sound of metal bumping metal as she uses the instruments from the surgical pac.

She packs the incision with antibiotics, leaving it open to drain, allowing it to heal from the inside out. A large gauze bandage is applied, making a giant white slipper around the hoof. She injects the horse with three large doses

of antibiotics and a tetanus shot. She calls the owner in to explain the procedure to him, answering his questions and telling him the horse should be sound again in three months to a year, depending on how he heals.

The owner will have to keep his stable clean and dry. The wrapping can't get wet or dirty, which would allow infection to set in the coffin bone. If this happens, the horse will have to be destroyed. The owner looks rather startled, saying he thought this was no big deal.

Dr. Cappel assures him it is quite a "big deal" and very serious. She will visit the horse in three days to change the bandage and give two large doses of antibiotics. This will continue for two weeks until the wound is sealed shut.

The horse is released to go home and the assistant cleans up. Dr. Cappel checks the surgery patients and feeds the puppy in isolation. The old renal failure dog passed away during the horse surgery. The family was notified and they picked up the body for burial.

Dr. Cappel's schedule will be somewhat different tomorrow, but the same as she pulls the clinic door closed and quickly turns the key, locking her domain.

Writing in the Marketplace

Oct. 24, 1991

Featured speaker: Don Porter,

Movie reviewer for the *Ogden Standard-Examiner*

by Dennis Owens, Writing Assistant

"The newspaper business is a dying business," Don Porter, a journalist from the *Standard-Examiner* said during a speech Thursday. "At the start of my career, I'm watching it take a nose-dive."

Porter, a movie critic and feature writer, spoke to about 15 students and faculty members of Weber State during an informal presentation for "Writing in the Marketplace," sponsored by the English department.

Newspapers will probably always be around, but they will need to be radically changed, Porter said. Some of these changes will involve decreasing news coverage and increasing advertisements.

According to Porter, the *Standard-Examiner* tried this practice, often referred to as downsizing, during December of 1990.

The paper lost many subscribers as a result, he said.

Newspapers are also trying to become more "reader friendly" because so many people are turning to the television to obtain the news, Porter told the audience.

The newspaper industry is focusing on what Porter referred to as "news you can use" where readers are given condensed versions of news stories.

This is the format used by television and newspapers, such as *U.S.A. Today*, Porter said. Viewers can get many small bits of information quickly, but they do not learn much.

sion news broadcasters and then to read about the same stories in the newspaper. He said members of the audience would discover that the TV newscasters hadn't told them anything.

Along with changes taking place in the newspaper industry, Porter also talked about the influence advertisers and subscribers have on news content

Subscribers do influence the news presented, he said. "People have knee-jerk reactions to stuff that they hold dear...and that just comes with the territory."

Each time something is printed in the newspaper, somebody disagrees with it "Those are always the people you hear from," he continued.

Many subscribers were upset when the *Standard-Examiner* published a photograph of a child in an open casket. "We took a lot of flak for that," Porter recalled.

The *Standard-Examiner* pays more attention to readers' comments than complaints from its advertisers, Porter said. Some businesses have threatened to cancel advertisements as a result of articles which criticized their products, selling practices or prices.

Occasionally businesses do cancel their ads, he continued.

Although these situations affect the paper financially, Porter did not believe that advertisers' complaints had ever influenced news coverage.

Porter also discussed other journalism issues, including pressures faced by reporters, the importance of practical experience and the relationships journalists maintain with editors and public relations personnel.

Porter concluded by saying that even when more people move into the area, newspaper circulation remains down.

"People are just reading less," he said. "And that's really sad. We've got a bunch of people walking around out there who just don't have a clue as to what's going on in our community."

THE FAR SIDE By GARY LARSON



"I'm sorry, Mr. Caldwell, but the bigguy's on hlawey out. Ilyou want my opinion, bike him home, find a quiet apot out in the yerd, end squeah him."

Couplets for an Only Son

Late at night if I'm awake too long
I steal inside his darkened room, alone,
Moved by a startling power, deep pulling need,
To see at growth, asleep, my growing seed.

I place his casual arm beneath the sheet
And feel the busy marrow where my fingers meet,
Where science says the platelets are produced,
The throbbing corpuscles stamped and then set loose

I kneel, not for assurance against death,
But to feel the dampened molecules of his breath,
The life I witnessed blown into his lung
As it slips past his lips and sweetened tongue.

And feeling the blood within my own breast,
I reach down my hand and cover his chest.
I feel the vulnerable, insistent beat,
The heart, the blood, full-formed, complete.

Through my fingers, the message is quite plain:
I know that Abraham was certainly insane.

Brad Roghaar

Instructor, Department of English
Weber State University

First Place Crown of the 1991 Brigham Young University
Eisteddfod Poetry Competition
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Statement of Purpose: The Writing Center

•Dr. John Schwiebert
Writing Center Director

Staffed by undergraduate students (writing assistants), the Writing Center is a unique place where W. S. C. students can receive feedback on their writing in a comfortable, non-threatening environment. The Center seeks to help all students, of all levels of writing ability, at any stage of the writing process. Trained writing assistants ask questions, listen, demonstrate techniques of invention, drafting, and revising, and provide an attentive and challenging audience for the student writer. Rather than "fixing" or proofreading papers, we model strategies so that students can help themselves to become better writers. In this way the Center fosters independent thinking, promotes a collaborative spirit, and improves intellectual growth and writing ability.

word works

Editor: Sundy Watanabe Co-
editor: Michelle Emery

BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES

EISTEDDFOD
POETRY COMPETITION



Competitions to determine the most talented poets have been taking place for centuries in Wales. Entries are always submitted under a pseudonym to insure that the judges' decisions are unbiased. Prizes are awarded for the best ode and the best lyric at each year's Eisteddfod (eye-steth-vod), which means "a meeting for competition."

The Brigham Young University College of Humanities is pleased to announce that a similar competition will be held this year. The competitions are open to all.

INSTRUCTIONS: Entries should carry pseudonyms only. Each should be accompanied by a sealed envelope (with the pseudonym on the outside) containing the name, address, telephone number, social security number of the competitor, and a \$3.00 entry fee. No entries will be returned. Winners will be notified before 15 January 1992.

DEADLINE: Posrmarkedby31 December1991

FEE: \$3.00 per entry

SEND ENTRIES TO: Eisteddfod Poetry Competition
College of Humanities
2054JKHB
Brigham Young University
Provo, UT 84602

CHAIR COMPETITION: Prize: \$300 and a miniature chair

This is for a long poem, or ode, of not fewer than 50 lines and not more than 150 lines.

Subject: FIRE

CROWN COMPETITION: Prize: \$300 and a miniature crown

This is for a lyric poem of not more than 100 lines.

Subject: SOLDIERS