



Editor's Introduction

DR. BEN WETHERBEE

IN INTRODUCING THIS INAUGURAL volume of *The Drover Review*, I want to advance the bold idea that student writing matters *as writing*. But what does that mean?

Allow me a roundabout answer. Too often, student writing—whether its focus is sociology or microbiology, personal narrative or Renaissance literature—has something in common with, say, a grocery list, garage sale flier, or owner's manual for a lawnmower. These are all fairly docile, functionalist genres whose instrumental utility outstrips their intellectual content. Mary remembers to buy yogurt. She gets 10 dollars for that old dust-caked shelving unit. She primes the engine on the new Craftsman. And she gets a B in her Shakespeare class. Writing facilitates all these goals, but even when the mower starts on cue, readers rarely celebrate an owner's manual for its scholarship, craft, and rhetorical sophistication—the criteria that likely emerge when we speak about a scholarly journal article, *New Yorker* book review, or Virginia Woolf essay. In these instances, writing is understood—and rightly so—as an extension of the author's personal commitments and intellectual labor. Do these criteria apply toward Mary's Shakespeare paper? Can they?

Here's one way to approach the question. Rhetorician and writing professor Sharon Crowley swaps in a cleverly-placed capital to distinguish between "writing and Writing": "there's writing, which is the simple ordering and recording of thoughts or information and which can be done as easily by a secretary or a committee or a machine or a technical writer, since its [authority] is not relevant to its status as a text; and there's Writing, what Authors . . . do" (97). The core matter for Crowley, and the core matter here, is which category fits student writing. Often, I think, student writing drifts listlessly into the former, into the realm of grocery lists and lawnmower manuals and other genres of quasi-mechanical functionalism. In this context, writing is something students do to demonstrate grammatical proficiency, to get a good grade, and to hurdle institutional gates. At its most banal, this means trotting out perfunctory forms like the five-paragraph essay on standardized exams. Such exercises approach student work as lowercase-w writing, thereby eliding the possibilities of what Crowley might call *student Writing* by *student Authors*. To invite student Writing, the capital-W sort, and to read it as such means appreciating how students undertake real intellectual work and how their identities and experiences spill onto the page. This means recognizing students' authority over their own prose. Ideally, it also means publishing and circulating excellent examples of such prose—because writing, after all, wants to be read.

So here we are.

MY ARGUMENT, IN SHORT, IS that student writing will be stimulating, sophisticated, and challenging if two things happen. The first is tautologically obvious, but it bears asserting: instructors will need to encourage and allow their students to do stimulating, sophisticated, and challenging writing. I am proud to serve on the faculty of an institution, the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma, whose faculty ably meet this condition. USAO asks students to undertake meaningful, intellectually challenging writing across its disciplines and as part of its interdisciplinary liberal arts mission. Good writing

happens here, and it happens because faculty and administration across the school value writing.

Second, students should see their writing as not just a means to a grade, but as meaningful action with the potential to intervene in multiple contexts: in the classroom, yes, but also in scholarly conversations, in cultural debate, in politics—in short, *out there* in the discourse of the world. Because meaningful, relevant writing happens at USAO, *The Drover Review* wants to help circulate the ideas of USAO students, both across classrooms and beyond the classroom. So, again, here we are.

This journal has been conceived for two primary reasons, the first of which is unapologetically celebratory. Just as exhibitions and recitals showcase the craft and hard work of student artists and musicians, *The Drover Review* showcases student writing for the USAO community, as well as other audiences interested in the production and circulation of outstanding undergraduate work. There is proud precedent at USAO for this sort of effort. *The Accent*, USAO's arts and literature journal, has published creative prose and poetry by USAO undergraduates since 2013, and *The Trend*, our student-run news outlet, has facilitated student journalism for decades. In offering a venue for essayistic and scholarly genres—arguments, analyses, reviews, research projects, and so forth—*The Drover Review* fills a different but complementary role in celebrating student writing at this institution.

The second purpose is pedagogical: this journal should provide a valuable teaching resource. In my own classes, I plan to integrate *Drover Review* entries into course syllabi and class discussions. The works included here will help model structure, research, craft, and rhetorical strategies for other student writers, and the content of these essays will provide rich material for us to analyze and debate, to talk about and write about. These essays will also, I hope, help students and faculty envision how student writing can break loose into the world, beyond the strictures of letter grades and 12-point-

Times-New-Roman formatting—beyond the exclusive and immediate readership of the classroom. Of course, this is not to denigrate the intellectual work of the classroom itself. Rather, I hope *The Drover Review* and publications of its ilk help readers envision the student text and the classroom as entities dialogically and meaningfully linked to the outside world. As Bruce Horner has argued, academics ought to both “re-value” student writing as “legitimate academic work” and uphold the writing-intensive classroom as precisely the sort of space that can enable that kind of work (10, 16-17). To circulate excellent student writing by USAO students, as I see it, is to affirm both the work of individual authors and that of their classroom communities on this campus.

THIS VOLUME COMPRISES THREE sections, the first two devoted to the university’s two-term first-year writing curriculum: Writing I, USAO’s course on expository, argumentative, analytic, and researched writing; and Writing II, our course on literary analysis and scholarly research. The third section is devoted to a wide-ranging breadth of upper-level writing across the disciplines.

Leading off this volume’s inaugural cluster of Writing I essays, Sadie Wright’s “*Swan Lake’s Got Nothing on this Suicide*” offers a personal argument about the trials of ballet dancing and its dangers of abuse. Eren Hall, in “The Gunslinger, Who Is Also Named Gun Slinger,” then transports readers into a dream narrative set in a high-tech transmutation of the Wild West. And finally, in a pair of researched arguments, Jake Marion explores *Star Trek’s* ability to inspire real-world innovation in “To Boldly Go,” while Matthew Thomas, in “Occupation and Self-Worth,” reflects on the coupling of these titular themes in Alfred Lubrano’s essay “Bricklayer’s Boy.” Together, these essays bespeak the wide range of intellectual work students undertake in USAO’s first-term writing course.

The inaugural cluster of Writing II essays begins with Baylee Tasey’s “Peeling Back the Paper,” a short, incisive reader-response analysis of Charlotte Perkins Gilman’s “The Yellow Wallpaper.”

Next, Korbyn Peebles's "Love and Its Expressions in Atwood's Poem '[You Fit into Me]'" dives deep into a short Margaret Atwood poem to unearth a dualistic understanding of human love. From there, Tia McCarley's "Prince Florian Has a Name" critiques the figure of the Prince Archetype as it appears in a series of Disney films, and Ketia Henderson's "Psychosocial Development in *Coraline*" reviews scholarship on Neil Gaiman's children's novel, which she reads as an extended parable about autonomy and growth. The range of close reading, scholarly research, and diverse textual analysis embodied in these essays aptly illustrates the scope of USAO's second-term writing course.

The third section of essays extends from 2000-, 3000-, and 4000-level courses from across USAO's curriculum; these essays represent the disciplines of Psychology, Literature, and Rhetoric, as well as Interdisciplinary Studies courses in Life Sciences and World Thought, plus the capstone Senior Seminar. In the first of these essays, "Sexuality, Stigma, and Science," Emily Rand traces the asymmetrical treatment of female and male sexuality across scholarship, literature, and pop culture. Next, Baylee Bozarth's "Allegorical Domestic Violence in 'The-Birthmark'" offers a close look at issues of gender and power in a famous story by Nathaniel Hawthorne, while another piece of incisive literary criticism, McKenzie Schooley's "Jekyll and Hyde: A Case Study" then examines Robert Louis Stevenson's classic as a reflection of patriarchal hegemony and psychological repression. The fourth entry, Shauna Medina's "Parents in Prison and the Silent Victims," reviews and synthesizes scholarship on the detrimental effects of parental incarceration on children. In a pair of rhetorical analyses, "Cult of Misinformation" and "The Enthemematic Connotations of Trump's God and Devil Terms," Genevieve Gordon and Destani Malicoat Capps then respectively address the strange, ambiguous power of term "organic" in food discourse and President Trump's effective but manipulative strategies of political persuasion. Finally, Karis Jones, in "Hallucinogens and the Evolution of Humankind," surveys a wide array of scientific, artistic,

and cultural evidence for the role of hallucinogenic drugs in the role of human development, arguing for the positive, creative role of such consciousness-altering substances. The staggering range of intellectual and scholarly material that these essays cover reflects the expansive role scholarly and essayistic writing plays across USAO's majors and disciplines.

In assembling this volume, the Editorial Board wished to showcase the first-year writing courses in particular, but also represent the range of cross- and interdisciplinary writing that occurs across the majors and the Interdisciplinary Studies curriculum. We are beyond pleased with the range and quality of work students submitted to each of the Writing I, Writing II, and cross-disciplinary clusters. We received significantly more good work than we are able to publish in this volume and thus had to turn away many strong submissions. Such decisions made our jobs significantly more difficult. But this is also sort of difficulty an editor hopes to encounter.

I will also note that *The Drover Review* is proud to recruit current USAO students to serve on its Editorial Board, though we do not prohibit those students from also submitting work to the journal. Our board members Genevieve Gordon and Ketia Henderson each submitted work to the inaugural volume. They were each exempted from reviewing and assessing their own submissions, but the rest of the board overwhelmingly elected to publish both Genevieve and Ketia's work here.

THE INAUGURAL VOLUME OF THIS journal represents the efforts of many. First and foremost, for their hard work, creativity, and enthusiasm, I thank all the USAO students who submitted their writing to this volume. Put simply, your good work is why this journal exists.

I owe an especial thanks to my friend and colleague Shelley Rees, *The Drover Review's* Managing Editor, for her tireless, manifold help in getting this project rolling. Thanks, as well, go out to other members of the Editorial Board—faculty members Tonnia Anderson and John Bruce and the aforementioned students Genevieve

and Ketia—for their hard work evaluating submissions and promoting the journal. Thanks, also, to members of Shelley's technical writing class for helping to develop promotional materials for the journal, and to Beckie Hilburn for helping us advertise the journal through the Communications and Marketing office.

And, of course, I thank the many additional faculty who have promoted this journal to their students and whose writing assignments have yielded submissions to this volume. Those include Brenda Brown, Stephen Weber, Misty Steele, Jeannette Loutsch, Jason Shaw, Lee Hester, James Finck, and Zachary Simpson, among others. *The Drover Review* is fortunate to have so many supporters and cheerleaders across campus, even in its infancy.

So here we are. Finally, I thank *you*, the readers of this journal, for your interest in the remarkable work of the remarkable student writers represented here. For student writing to matter *as writing*, we'll need intellectually curious readers to treat it as such. I invite you to do just that. ►►

►► WORKS CITED

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