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1/28/13
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Writing 220

Title in Progress

Why write? Well why bother, right? Is it alright to just not WRITE? When compared to thought and speech, it almost makes writing seem elite. Nearly anyone can think or speak, yet the number of those who choose to write is quite petite. Now, if it were alright to ignore what may seem like a bore, there would be no hard-wood floor for the world to rest on. Furthermore, there would be no door, to open up, pore, and explore the endless combinations of written language. Writing gives us a physical, tangible, concrete method of language that we can touch. Something that thought and speech cannot trust. Without writing, we might as well all be dust.

I wrote this little, and seemingly meaningless, blurb when my writing professor asked to take a couple minutes and jot down “Why do you write?” When it came time to crackdown on this assignment, this task at hand, this manifesto or creed if you will, I never imagined I would open it up with a poem. Lord knows I’m no poet, either. But after class was over, and I took another look at this paragraph, and something struck me about the nature of it. It was very imperfect. I couldn’t pretend it was something great, or that it was something I’d be proud to share, but I realized that *I enjoyed it*. It was at that moment, that I realized maybe my poem was subconsciously a satire. I couldn’t deny that the entire paragraph was hypocritical at its core.

There I was, boldly prophesying how writing was a dominant, more important expression of language compared to thought and speech. Well, surely orators and philosophers

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alike would disagree. In fact, it also occurred to me that to understand the poem I had just written, one would have to either read the poem silently in their head, or to read the poem aloud. Most people refer to these actions as thought and speech, respectively. My ideology then traveled down a path of wondering, "Well, if writing is no longer the most important form of literary expression, then why do people write? *Why do I write?*"

And still I managed to come back to this short, insignificant poem. It did make me happy, that is true. But individual pleasure alone wasn't a deep or compelling enough reason to make an argument for I write. Now, I'll acknowledge that for some people, this is a good enough reason to defend just about anything. And if I had to, I certainly could defend why I write solely on the bliss it creates for me. Yet, it just didn't make sense to use the same logic that an addict would use to make a case for why he continues to abuse a drug, to explain why I continued to write. Or maybe, in hindsight, it did. Either way, I still wanted to probe deeper. There must have been more to this craft than my own, personal enjoyment.

I finally settled upon the idea that writing was one, of a myriad of ways that an individual can express themselves. Writing also is a broad category with an unlimited number of unconventional applications, both in the public and private spheres. It can refer to anything from defacing property and writing your message on the walls of the city, to materializing your deepest, darkest secrets outside and storing them in a location no soul besides your own will ever find. There is a certain charm that the act of "writing" is associated with such a large scope activities, all meaningful and with a distinct, yet dynamic purposes.

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In the Western culture I was raised in, self-expression, no matter what form it takes, plays a large role in how we define ourselves as a unique individual. An independent culture, as the title implies, promotes independence. We are all striving for a way to demonstrate how we are different, how we stand out from the crowd. There is a passion that has been instilled in us to seek out a method of self-expression that we can excel in. This, this is what writing does for me.

In both the public and private spheres, writing has become one of the dominant ways I feed this Western craving for expressing myself. It is certainly not my only fashion, but it is one I have become increasingly comfortable with, especially with the angst I carried as a teenager suddenly settling down. When I was younger, I used to let my behavior do my self-expressing. In other words, I was a little rebellious and outspoken. In the last year or two I've found myself becoming more mellow and softer-spoken. Things just don't get me riled up like they used to. I **thought** that maybe, this was called growing up. Turns out, although my behavior may have shifted in a quieter direction, that reckless, anarchist voice still exists internally. I've discovered that the act writing is one of the few ways that I can still harness that passionate, self-expressive voice. And one I hope to never lose. This is why I write. While I am not completely satisfied (as no writer ever is) with this as the answer to the question, it will stand for now.

Note that this essay describes exclusively "Why I Write" as opposed to "Why We Write". Other writers may have their own agenda for why they decide to put that pen to paper or fingers to keyboard. I am not trying to imprint my own reasons for why it is that I write, on you,

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the reader. The relationship between writer and reader has always been a fascinating one, and that being said, I only wish to encourage you, the reader, to pursue whatever method of expression you take fancy to. For me, writing is what flows. It's what works. That being said, it would be boring if every human being capable of doing so became a writer. Variety is the spice of life and different folks have different strokes, cliché as that may sound.



If you have seen the movie *Office Space*, this reference will make sense.