

# INKWELL



THE EVERGREEN STATE COLLEGE WRITING CENTER  
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## EDITOR'S NOTE

NICKY TISO

What do you see in a Rorschach inkblot? Be careful, the answer will reveal your latent zoophilia. But we're not doctors here to straightjacket your psyche; we're writers, we frolic in padded rooms! We do with text as doctors do with inkblots: interpret. We are here to help you, reader, decipher your own (ink)inations. Let the roil of words reveal what subtleties attract you, and let the staggered patterns of ink inflect a larger purpose in your eyes. No one will savor the motifs, thumb the pages, or digest the devices the same way your juicy brain will! Who the hell are we to diagnose who you are based on what you interpret? I should hope it's mad. The figures that unmask themselves in the guises of this book, be they interactive, improvisational, or Socratic, should appear as ghosts waiting to be given form.

This process of giving form parallels how you respond visually to an inkblot: By injecting meaning into an empty clutter of black goo symmetrically folded, you tap your subconscious, find your desires, and recognize an internal characteristic manifested in an external abstraction. Suddenly, the alien becomes intimate, and the intimate becomes alien. My hope is that such an exercise within these pages beckons to leap beyond and show you that culture, in all its seeming corporeality, is nothing but an inkblot waiting to be reinterpreted, again and again and again, so long as you have the courage to imagine.

This is a book of questions, to be explored, deciphered, digested, and purged. We do not offer the text contained within this vessel as a whole entity, nor do we expect any one reader to identify with every article in these pages. Now I've laid a claim, so prove me wrong. This is not a novel: This is a dare. Are you diverse enough to connect to the idea of *lipograms*, *interwriting*, *the hybridism of revision*, and *mind mapping*? Where there is no singular meaning or pinpointable purpose, there is possibility, and possibility is where we thrive. By possibility I mean the infinite potential to organize these ideas in whatever constellation works for you, however chaotic, remembering, as Nietzsche said, "*One must have chaos in oneself to give birth to a dancing star.*" Enter *Inkwell*, our dancing star. Rooted in an organic network of ideas ranging from maxims to stratum, we form connections, no matter how disparate the landscape.

*Inkwell* is a living document; each writer contributes their idea like an eccentric ingredient to make one hell of a cosmos. Each year a new nebula is cast based on the articles and their relationships. This year, we flexed its functioning to act as a literary journal and a manifesto. Special guests,

external to our direct community but still very much a part of it, are included. *Inkwell* is historically student-originated and student-oriented, made specifically of the Writing Center's blood, sweat, and tears. So what do Portland poets Jules Boykoff and Kaia Sand have to do with our community? The point of a community is not exclusivity; it is not a closed circle; we do not breed under stasis; we include those who interact with and extend our streams of thought. These special contributors gave their time and talent to show solidarity with our intent, and I am ebullient to have their words as our partners in crime.

As you will see, *Inkwell* channels a multitude of forms that each read quite differently from one another. Our goal is to make this range of voices accessible. Towards the success of this, I offer some suggestions for reading:

Approach the structure of the text, or the way in which something is being said, as much as the content, or what is being said; in many instances hereafter the literary techniques used to convey ideas are representational of the ideas themselves.

Participate. We are not passively telling you how to write, we are actively presenting the act of writing itself and what that can embody. Some examples:

Victoria Larkin's article, *Rough Notes on a Life*, is written as though it were a journal entry, while the subject matter concerns, for the most part, the possibilities of journaling.

C.V. Rotondo's article, *Creating Radical Space from Interwriting Through the Spiral*, addresses the contradictions and liberations of a collaborative atmosphere through a consorting of politically deconstructive voices. Its theatricality makes it a performance piece, so try reading the roles aloud.

Meghan McNealy's article, *Encyclopaedia Stercore Tari*, experiments with "creating limitations for ourselves and embracing... the possibility for creativity with language." To demonstrate such a practice, she translates a single paragraph through the lens of various constraints into different, though entirely relatable, paragraphs, and briefly explains the methods utilized to craft each result.

Shaun Johnson's article, *Questions of Travel*, anecdotally investigates the power of how questions are framed within an academic institution, to reveal their critical influence on how learning takes place.

Dear Reader, we embrace the experimental because it pushes the boundaries of who we can be. We know no abandon in envisioning alternatives within language, where, in the words of Member of the Faculty David Wolach, we find "a hidden commitment, sociopolitical or otherwise." We have no problem articulating a human sense of urgency that responds to the mutating world around us, because in doing that we foster a syntactical sensitivity necessary to rekindle an exhausted morality. Dear Reader, we are as referential as we are experiential. We fluctuate on a pendulum between mirroring our very processes with the definitions of what those processes can be, so do not be afraid to swing with us, or better yet, challenge our momentum. These are our sentiments; our aesthetic; our lives. This is who we are.