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Private, the Public, and the Published

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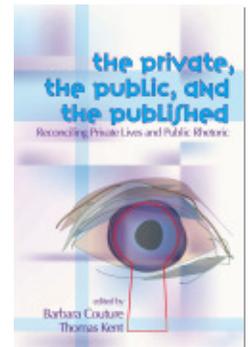
Published by Utah State University Press

Couture, Barbara and Thomas Kent.

Private, the Public, and the Published: Reconciling Private Lives and Public Rhetoric.

Utah State University Press, 2004.

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THE INFLUENCE OF EXPANDED ACCESS TO MASS COMMUNICATION ON PUBLIC EXPRESSION

The Rise of Representatives of the Personal

David S. Kaufer

The concept of a *public* is contested territory. We can't even decide on a preferred part of speech. Noun or adjective? Is the public an entity in search of properties? Or a property in search of entities? When we think of public in the entity sense, we usually think of it as a mass of citizens. A politician says, "The public is behind me," meaning that there is constituent backing. But how much backing? The difficulty in answering this question is that public, as entity, is a mass, not a count, noun. It is more like air than sheep. You can count the sheep in the field. But counting air? Of course, you can count people in a poll. Unfortunately, publics are not people polled. Our tradition of Whig liberalism celebrates politicians who make unpopular decisions, who speak to a public that includes excluded voices, future generations, and not just the voters that pollsters sample.

In American public address, *publics* as entities reference the speaker's perception of his or her backing—the public is behind me—when charging into a rhetorical situation or the barriers he or she must cross—what the public needs to understand—to address a situation effectively (see Cramer for a discussion of how the public is used within art controversies). Within both discourse conventions, the public as entity fills in rhetorical slots rather than draws out specific references to persons.

My interest in this chapter is more the adjectival sense of public, particularly as a modifier of the noun *expression*. What is public expression and what properties does it confer to ordinary expression? With Brian Butler, I have already addressed this question at some length (Kaufer and Butler) but will briefly summarize our answers here. Public

expression is expression that meets the speaker's goal of on-the-record predictiveness. By virtue of being predictive and on the record, a speaker is able to claim standing as a representative of a community's felt condition. The notions of on the record, predictiveness, and representativeness reinforce different sides of the same basic speech attributes. On-the-record expression means that the speaker permits the audience to hold his or her utterances to future review. The speaker going on the record allows audiences to archive his or her present expression and compare it for consistency with his or her future statements. Predictiveness refers to the speaker's self-imposed constraints in granting the audience this permission. It puts the speaker under pressure for constancy from past to future. Unlike promising, which obligates future action to a specific other, on-the-record predictiveness creates only a presumption, to nonspecific others, of constancy from present to future. Representativeness refers to the reasons why the audience claims these rights over the speaker and why the speaker feels bound by them. The speaker's words are meant to stand in, be a mouthpiece for, the audience's interests. The audience thus has a natural interest in the speaker's on-the-record predictiveness. A public speaker can say, "We will spend the surplus on social security" on the record and then contradict that statement months or years later ("We will spend the surplus on war with terrorists"). The speaker has not broken a personal promise. Still, the speaker must account for the inconsistency even if the shift from present to future is perfectly justified. That is the burden of public expression.

The term *public expression* is now often used interchangeably with *mass expression*. This practice is understandable but also a mistake. The adjective *mass* references the mathematical ratio of speaker to audience. The Greek amphitheater allowed for the one-to-many communication marking the tradition of oratory and public address. But a child babbling in a crowded amphitheater, though not forfeiting the environment of mass expression, never claims the title of public speaker in the sense of mouthpiece for others.

Extensions in mass expression wrought by technology correlate with changes in public expression. However, if we blur the two concepts, we lose any possibility of understanding their mutual influence or their joint and separate influence on new media. In the next section, I will turn my attention to the influence of the new media on mass expression,

putting us in a better position to understand how public expression may be changing as well.

NEW MEDIA AND THE OPENING OF ACCESS TO MASS EXPRESSION

New media have significantly opened access to individuals seeking to participate in mass expression. In traditional rhetoric, the many of mass expression had to fit into a single space, sharing propinquity growing out of shared proximity. Under new media assumptions, the disruption of proximity also weakened the assumption of propinquity. This is not because, with enhanced technological support, communication precludes strong ties between speakers and audiences. It is because with such support, communication no longer requires such strong ties between sender and receiver (Kaufer and Carley). The many of mass expression need share nothing but a remote wire. No assumptions need be made about social or spatial ties as a requirement of communication. Contemporary rhetoric (Farrell; Harris; C. Miller, "Idea") has, for this reason, focused on communities of divergent backgrounds, interests (Zappen, Gurak, and Doheny-Farina), and discourses (Bakhtin), where the right to speak (and be heard or read) is open to negotiation and interpretation.

Barriers have also lowered with respect to the entitlements required to participate in mass expression. In traditional rhetoric, participation relied upon speaker entitlements that gave access to a forum. These entitlements were accumulated in life as a precondition for public expression. A speaker's ethos in classical rhetoric was achieved, artistically, in the speech. But the speaker still relied upon claiming a material status in life (viz., lawyer, legislator) as a condition for displaying ethos in art. The speaker's capacity to create public expression was measured by the (prior) power to assemble a mass audience.

Under new media assumptions, by contrast, expression is taken for granted, irrespective of entitlements accumulated in life. Community groups, on- and off-line, participate in special interest discussions, where speakers self-select based on an expressed interest in a forum to speak. Whether the expression rises to public discourse is an act of legitimation left up to the community (Eberly). The competition to hold attention as a public discourse is fierce, as private interaction can exist in a cacophony of voices. The situation resembles that described by Zappen, Gurak, and Doheny-Farina: "seventeen 'voices' from different places all 'speaking'

at once in the same ‘place’ and ‘speaking’ in fragments rather than complete discourses” (400).

Mass expression, many-to-many communication, can as easily involve the instant messaging of teens as subsidized political speech. Modern technology severs the ancient tie between mass communication and institutional infrastructure. For reasons to be applauded, many contemporary rhetoricians have raised questions about how the lowering of barriers to mass expression can lead to collective democratic action. These questions involve delicate balances describable in many overlapping ways: balancing the communitarianism of collective action with individual rights and privacy; balancing the prudence to listen only to what is worthy with the egalitarianism to say (and listen to) what is available to hear, balancing deliberateness with the speed of spontaneous expression. The delicacies of these balances have occupied many rhetorical theorists investigating contemporary assumptions (Gurak; C. Miller; Harris, “Idea”).

Nonetheless, the outstanding problem this literature has yet to answer—and for which I confess no answer—is how to leap from the quantitative expansion of mass communication to the qualitative improvement of public communication in the sense of representative speech. Because an expansion of mass communication tempts, without guaranteeing, an expansion and improvement of public discourse, the path of one to the other becomes all the more problematic.

Conundrums Posed by the Technological Access to Mass Expression

When access to mass communication is so abundant today, even in the absence of strong ties, what do speakers and listeners readily share that still defines a community of interest in need of representatives? What makes your private expression representative of my own and others’ thoughts and beliefs? When, in the absence of so much shared physical context, does speaking *about* (ordinary reference) also become speaking *for* (public discourse)? What makes the expression that comes from my mouth worthy of shared attention—that is, worthy, necessarily, of my attention and the attention of others? When the many-to-many communities of interest to enter are so numerous, how does a single speaker or a single listener hold attention with any one?

While these questions are fundamental and predate technology, the fact that technology now (in principle) grants anyone both a printing press and a microphone to the world makes these questions especially

pressing today. As technology makes speech universally assessable in principle, it becomes necessary to seek other grounds, beyond cultural privilege, that make it public and representative. What are those grounds?

Representatives of the Personal: Personal Identity as a Rising Public Trope

My own lead on this question is to follow Elbow, Billig, Ritivoi, and other writers in rhetoric who, in various ways, have noticed that the personal has become an increasingly central trope of contemporary rhetorical behavior. In traditional rhetoric, a speaker seeking representative power had to have an ongoing story of identity to be predictive from past to future. A shaper of ethos, the identity story girded the speaker's call to judgment or action in a world of shared proximity. In contemporary rhetoric, marked increasingly by long-distance mass expression and weakened social ties and attention, the identity story has found its way more and more into the foreground of public expression. Because of the impact of contemporary mass expression, the common denominator left for us to notice and share, as a rhetorical resource, may be our very personhood. As a public trope, personhood is not just referencing a single life but telling life stories that claim to speak for others, to win adherents about a life that is worth learning from if not imitating.

A CASE STUDY: THE NEW YORK TIMES'S WRITERS ON WRITING SERIES

For the rest of this chapter, I use a case study to briefly illustrate my point, both of the rise of personal life stories as a rhetorical trope and their popularity in the culture. I analyze the *Writers on Writing Series*, published by the *New York Times* since 1997. The column regularly appears every other Monday on page 1 of section E of the *Times*. The series was the brainchild of the *Times*'s culture editor, John Darnton. A Pulitzer winner for fiction and a Polk Award winner for journalism, Darnton reports that he had struggled with his first novel and found himself endlessly curious to know the secrets of successful writers. He thus devised the *Writers on Writing* series to satisfy his own and what he expected to be the literate reader's curiosity about writing. At the time I was completing my analysis (July 2001), the series had accumulated some fifty-seven contributions, each between 1,300 and 2,000 words (see the appendix to this chapter). In the early summer of 2001, the *Times* also published a hardcover book edited and introduced by Darnton, containing the first forty-one entries.

The *Times's* series contributors feel under no pressure to create, or to spur the creation of, public discourse. They explain their personal craft through their subjective eyes. They speak only as individuals. They do not try to communicate truths from the authority of the other contributors. The authors never cross-reference one another. But, as I show, there are still traces of a collective perceptiveness and bids to win adherents about preferred life stories relative to learning or teaching writing.

The *Times's* Series Viewed as Personal Expression

Rather than encouraging the analyst in search of a tidy synthesis of public discourses, the assumptions of the contributors about literacy seem as individualistic and quirky as they are in the profession of English. I shall map out here, in more detail, the divided attention of the series, viewed as multiple individual expressions.

Some contributors in the series see the Western literary tradition as the *sine qua non* of literacy. The education of the writer, according to these contributors, properly includes Shakespeare, Wordsworth, Defoe (Goodman), Proust (Epstein), Joyce (Turow), Woolf, Eliot, and Pound (Howard), along with citizenship within an elite "Republic of Letters" (Bellow). Others emphasize a linguist's eye and ear for everyday language (Erdich; Salter), spoken and written, beyond the narrowly literary. Still others insist that writers of today need to understand writing as a form of media studies, noting that the visual media of the twentieth-century have profoundly influenced our current sense of the literary (Doctorow). Other contributors praise the dogged archival skills that draw writers not only to dusty library shelves but also to basements, attics, and garage sales (Proulx). Still others feature the teaching (Bernays; Delbanco) or study (Wolitzer; Vonnegut) of writing as an intellectual pursuit of its own.

The education of the writer portrayed in the series is wide-ranging and diverse. Yet the writer's formal education is only part of the divergence at issue. The series' contributors also have many divergent things to say about the life experiences shaping writers and their writing. Illness and suffering are notorious for cutting short a writing career. But some contributors single out these same factors as helping to inspire writing success (Hoffman; Stern). Other contributors emphasize the importance of the writer cultivating a cultural awareness of politics, history, and class

(Koning; Paretsky). In some contributions, this takes the form of urging writers to unearth from the culture interpretations that are poorly understood, misunderstood, or unknown among majorities. The Native American Ojibwe language taught Louise Erdrich how to notice relationships in nature that English conceals. Close observation of his dog, Colter, taught Rick Bass that the summons to hunt is a natural calling that others, perhaps less sensitive observers of their own pets, have too frequently failed to notice. The lack of explicit sex in so-called serious literature tantalized Barbara Kingsolver to explore, and break, this taboo in her own work.

The series' writers make clear that writers are nourished by personal obsessions. Yet, here again, the obsessions are diverse and fit no uniform pattern. Writers are obsessed with putting an order on life's disorder (Leavitt), with lives they wish to know (Howard), lives they wish to escape (Banks), and lives they wish to transform (Aciman). They are obsessed with current events in the popular culture (Hiassen) and with the characters they meet in daily life (Shields; Miller). The obsession intensifies when the characters are drawn from their own families (Aciman; Tan; Kincaid; Robinson). And, overall, the obsession spills over into a sense of love for the characters and the worlds they see coming alive on the page (Smiley).

Finally, the series calls attention to the fact that the sublime art of writing is always dependent on the mundane daily sustenance of the writer. Although writers need high-minded objects of attention to wield their craft, they also need the bare necessities, necessities that writers, one of history's most fragile occupational workers, seldom take for granted. Besides an income, these necessities involve a shelter to write in, tools to write with, and methods to write from.

There exists much variability about favorite shelters, tools, and methods. With respect to shelter, the writer must have a habitat. The habitat may be a room adjoining the kitchen (Rosen), a coal room in the basement (Haruf), or an attic with an old typewriter (Chute). It may be "the same chair" at "the same hour" (Mosley) or simply a "little room" (Kincaid). It may not be a permanent but an occasional habitat, like a table in a library surrounded by shelves of books (Goodman). The habitat need not be stationary nor even enclosed. It may involve moving feet, the writer as runner (Oates; Kincaid). Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley,

Thoreau, and Dickens regarded their long walks as part of their literary habitat (Oates).

The writer too must have equipment, whether a computer (Mosley) or a Waterman pen with black enamel and gold trim (Gordon). And the writer must have technique. It may be consulting one's internal muse (Smiley), turning off one's internal critic (Goodman), entering a reverie (Mosley), nocturnal dreaming (Fleming), or rereading what has been written before (Sontag). It may require turning on Bach's *Christ unser Herr zum Jordan kam* as background music to get going each morning (White). It may even require watching TV and goofing off, accumulating enough life experiences to decide when enough can be harvested to resume writing once again (Ford).

The *Times's* series calls up a set of divided themes surrounding the nature of literacy and its fundamental relationship to language, the literary, culture, class, media, politics, and everyday ritual. I want to be careful to distinguish *divided* objects of attention from *divisive* objects of attention. The attention of this series is deeply divided but not divisive. Most contributors enter different topics. And when they do enter the same topic, they seldom make observations that question the truth of other observations. The spirit of the series is pluralistic and nonagonistic, even when true disagreements are broached.

The *Times's* Contributors Viewed as Representatives of the Personal

I would now like to examine the *Times's* series from the other side of the private-public duality. We will now read for an interest in providing public representatives of the personal, models of a writer's personal life that can represent, speak for, and win the adherence of certain readers.

As a rhetorical theorist, I am struck by the fact that the series marks a common solicitation for roughly comparable accounts (about writing) and is addressed to a roughly common rhetorical situation: The *Times's* series invites market-proven authors to talk about their craft. What are the possibilities of responding to this rhetorical situation? In light of the fact that each respondent must produce a text of a relatively similar length and format (a short feature article), can we say something systematic about the choice points and the actual choices that underlie the rich variety of responses we can read? Let us then turn in more depth to the rhetorical situation the *New York Times* has defined and to the structure of the responses the *Times* has thus far elicited.

The writers invited to participate in the *Times*'s series are emblems of artistic and commercial success in letters. This is not insignificant to the mass readership of the *Times*. Textbook publishers put out hundreds of dry books on writing each year that never draw the mass reader. What draws *Times* readers to the *Writers on Writing* series is the ethos of the writers. Each of the contributors boasts success in a field where odds for success approximate the lottery. The mass-market reader is likely to construe the invitation to successful writers to discuss writing as also an invitation to discuss beating the odds. Like devoted concertgoers who come to hear a favorite artist's underground notes and back stories, readers of the *Times*'s series are drawn to understand the accounts of those who, against great odds, have "made it."

While aspiring artists might be expected to focus on a future still hoped for, established artists are challenged to address the startling fact of success when success is rare. The writers' accounts in this way are accounts of agency. Given the nonrandom barriers standing in the way of market success, readers will not accept an account that bases success solely on random accident. They will seek to find agency in the writers' accounts even if the writers themselves are reluctant to provide it. A writer claiming to be the beneficiary of dumb luck or a friendly muse will invigorate the mass reader to look for how the writer nevertheless managed, below the radar, to rein in luck or court the muse. No matter how much an account focuses on how a writer "fell into" success, mass-market readers, seeking agent-based explanations, will keep a watchful eye on what the writer relied upon to *make* his or her own success. The mass-market reader looks to the *Times*'s series for positive role models of writers, not simply arid explanations of writing.

One need not take my word to accept this analysis of the mass-market reader of fiction. Rosellen Brown reports running into such readers all the time, who complain to her when her characters are complex human beings rather than role models imagined for self-improvement books. She describes one encounter with a female lawyer who had hated one of her characters, also a female lawyer. The reader complained to her, saying:

"Well, look, I'm a lawyer, too, and a woman, like your character, but"—and her expression became urgent as if she had clamped her hand to my arm—"the book was no help to me. It didn't tell me how I should live my life." (Brown, as cited in appendix)

In addition to seeking potential role models, the mass-market reader also seeks out themes or lessons as specific points to learn from and follow. The image of the mass-market reader hungry for “themes” does not originate with me, but with Diane Johnson, who observes that the “themes” of a text are something readers of fiction are much keener to look for than authors are to spoon out. To illustrate the point, Johnson remembers the following tale:

In Seattle a man asked me what the theme of rescued cats and dogs in my books meant. I had to think about that, because I hadn't really noticed them there. Freud would say those cats and dogs are children, but that doesn't seem quite right to me. (Johnson, as cited in appendix)

Johnson cautions that a novelist too invested in themes may end up with a novel weighted down with more ideas than can be investigated through action. She suggests that themes are a reader's device for holding in memory some of the various layers of a layered text. Themes do readers more good than writers.

Returning to our rhetorical analysis, let us suppose that readers are drawn to the *Times's* series in part for role models and lessons about writing. Let us further suppose that the contributors to the series accepted the invitation to participate with some knowledge of this mass-market expectation. Each writer, that is, knows he or she has been selected as an example of success and has been asked to write for an audience that is likely to be interested in picking up some of the secrets behind that success. Each contributor may have chosen, of course, to meet this expectation to a greater or less extent. But the fact that the expectation lurks in the background of the invitation probably had some constraining effect on all the contributions.

The writers of the *Times's* series needed to adapt their writing to a common occasion and expectations. From the patchwork of texts we reviewed in the earlier part of this essay, we will be able to discern how the authors work systematically to portray themselves as public representatives of the personal.

The invitation to participate in this first person series is based on reputation. The writers know that readers want to learn about an “I” that has built a successful career from past to present. To let readers in on their secrets, the writers of the series will want to help readers consolidate their past and present selves into a single career image.

CONCLUSION

From traditional to contemporary rhetoric, we have witnessed a dramatic growth of the ordinary individual's access to a mass audience. This growth has spawned much conjecture about the relationship between increased individual access to technology and changes in public address, the language making bids to represent others and to form groups. I have restated the evidence that our increased access through technology has weakened the ties between ourselves as individuals and has further weakened our attention to one another's messages. I have conjectured that these weakenings themselves account for an increased focus on personal life stories in our public discourse. No matter where in the culture we are situated and no matter how fragmented our affiliations and attention, we are still persons invested in life stories that are told to us from the point of view of those we perceive as role models. In the second part of the chapter, I used the *New York Times's Writers on Writing* series as a case study to explore and to try to explain the popularity of this contemporary form of rhetorical behavior. For those of us grappling with the problem of defining democratic collective action in the face of the new technologies, we may be advised to start with the assumption that speakers and their audiences have, at least and perhaps at most, selves in common to bring to a public sphere of representation.

APPENDIX

THE WRITERS ON WRITING ARCHIVE USED IN THIS STUDY

- Aciman, A. (2000, August 28). A Literary Pilgrim Progresses to the Past. *New York Times*.
- Banks, R. (1999, December 6). Time Can Transform the Fantasies of Youth. *New York Times*.
- Bass, R. (2000, May 8). To Engage the World More Fully, Follow a Dog. *New York Times*.
- Bellow, S. (1999, October 11). Hidden Within Technology's Kingdom, a Republic of Letters. *New York Times*.
- Bernays, A. (2000, February 28). Pupils Glimpse an Idea, Teacher Gets a Gold Star. *New York Times*.
- Brown, R. (2001, January 1). Characters' Weaknesses Build Fiction's Strengths. *New York Times*.
- Cheuse, A. (2001, May 21). Literary Second Acts in American Lives. *New York Times*.
- Chute, C. (1999, September 27). How Can You Create Fiction When Reality Comes to Call? *New York Times*.
- Delbanco, N. (1999, June 21). From Echoes Emerge Original Voices. *New York Times*.
- Divakaruni, C. (2001, February 12). New Insights into the Novel? Try Reading 300. *New York Times*.
- Doctorow, E. L. (1999, March 15). Quick Cuts: The Novel Follows Film Into a World of Fewer Words. *New York Times*.
- Epstein, L. (2001, June 4). Returning to Proust's World Stirs Remembrance. *New York Times*.
- Erdrich, L. (2000, May 22). Two Languages in Mind, but Just One in the Heart. *New York Times*.
- Fleming, T. (2000, January 3). Instant Novels? In Your Dreams. *New York Times*.
- Ford, R. (1999, November 8). Goofing Off While the Muse Recharges. *New York Times*.
- Gen, G. (2000, December 4). Inventing Life Steals Time; Living Life Begs it Back. *New York Times*.
- Godwin, G. (2001, January 15). A Novelist Breaches the Border to Nonfiction. *New York Times*.
- Goodman, A. (2001, March 12). Calming the Inner Critic and Getting to Work. *New York Times*.
- Gordon, M. (1999, July 5). Putting Pen to Paper, but Not Just Any Pen or Just Any Paper. *New York Times*.
- Haruf, K. (2000, November 20). To See Your Story Clearly, Start By Pulling the Wool Over Your Eyes. *New York Times*.
- Hiassen, C. (2000, April 24). Real Life, That Bizarre and Brazen Plagiarist. *New York Times*.
- Hoffman, A. (2000, August 14). Sustained by Fiction While Facing Life's Facts. *New York Times*.
- Howard, M. (2000, February 14). The Enduring Commitment of a Faithful Storyteller. *New York Times*.
- Johnson, D. (2000, September 11). Pesky Themes Will Emerge When You're Not Looking. *New York Times*.

- Just, W. (2000, June 5). Sitting Down a Novelist, Getting Up a Playwright. *New York Times*.
- Kincaid, J. (1999, June 7). Those Words That Echo . . . Echo . . . Echo Through Life. *New York Times*.
- Kingsolver, B. (2000, March 27). A Forbidden Territory Familiar to All. *New York Times*.
- Koning, H. (2000, July 31). Summoning the Mystery and Tragedy, but in a Subterrean Way. *New York Times*.
- Leavitt, D. (2000, November 6). Comforting Lessons in Arranging Life's Details. *New York Times*.
- Leithauser, B. (2001, April 23). The Glory of a First Book. *New York Times*.
- Mamet, D. (2000, January 17). The Humble Genre Novel, Sometimes Full of Genius. *New York Times*.
- McBain, E. (1999, March 29). She Was Blond. She Was in Trouble. And She Paid 3 Cents a Word. *New York Times*.
- Miller, S. (1999, April 12). Virtual Reality: The Perils of Seeking a Novelist's Facts in Her Fiction. *New York Times*.
- Mosley, W. (2000, July 3). For Authors, Fragile Ideas Need Loving Every Day. *New York Times*.
- Oates, J. C. (1999, July 18). To Invigorate Literary Mind, Start Moving Literary Feet. *New York Times*.
- Paretsky, S. (2000, September 25). A Storyteller Stands Where Justice Confronts Basic Human Needs. *New York Times*.
- Piercy, M. (1999, December 20). Life of Prose and Poetry—an Inspiring Combination. *New York Times*.
- Proulx, A. (1999, May 10). Inspiration? Head Down the Back Road, and Stop for the Yard Sales. *New York Times*.
- Robinson, R. (2000, July 17). If You Invent the Story, You're the First to See How it Ends. *New York Times*.
- Rosen, J. (2001, May 7). A Retreat From the World Can Be A Perilous Journey. *New York Times*.
- Salter, J. (1999, September 13). Once Upon a Time, Literature. Now What? *New York Times*.
- Saroyan, W. (2000, October 9). Starting With a Tree and Finally Getting to the Death of a Brother. *New York Times*.
- Shields, C. (2000, April 10). Opting for Invention Over the Injury of Invasion. *New York Times*.
- Shields, D. (2001, April 9). Confession Begets Connection. *New York Times*.
- Smiley, J. (1999, April 26). The Muse: The Listener Also Instructs. *New York Times*.
- Sontag, S. (2000, December 18). Directions: Write, Read, Rewrite. Repeat Steps 2 and 3 as Needed. *New York Times*.
- Stern, R. (2001, March 26). Autumnal Accounting Endangers Happiness. *New York Times*.
- Tan, A. (2001, February 26). Family Ghosts Hoard Secrets that Bewitch the Living. *New York Times*.
- Turow, S. (1999, November 22). An Odyssey That Started With 'Ulysses'. *New York Times*.
- Updike, J. (1999, March 1). Questions of Character: There's No Ego as Wounded as a Wounded Alter Ego. *New York Times*.
- Vonnegut Jr., K. (1999, May 24). Despite Tough Guys, Life is Not the Only School for Real Novelists. *New York Times*.
- Walker, A. (2000, October 23). After 20 years, Meditation Still Conquers Inner Space. *New York Times*.

- West, P. (1999, October 25). Planting the Seeds of a Contemplative Life. *New York Times*.
- Westlake, D. (2001, January 29). A Pseudonym Returns From an Alter-Ego Trip, with New Tales to Tell. *New York Times*.
- White, E. (2001, June 18). Selecting Music for Writing. *New York Times*.
- Wiesel, E. (2000, June 19). A Sacred Magic Can Elevate the Secular Storyteller. *New York Times*.
- Wolitzer, H. (2000, January 31). Embarking Together on Solitary Journeys. *New York Times*.