Noise From The Writing Center

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Writing this book has often felt, to use Annie Lamott’s delicious phrase, “like putting an octopus to bed.” Like noise, a flailing limb is a signal, a sign frequently of distress, but also an expression of hope, of possible freedom and of rescue.

I have experienced all of this while putting these ideas on paper, and it is here that I wish to acknowledge those people who have rescued me, in all sorts of ways, during the time I’ve spent thinking, writing, and living. Though this list may seem long to those who read it, it is short to me, knowing as I do how many others, whose names do not appear here, have also sustained me.

Thanks to my friends and colleagues on Wcenter, in the International Writing Centers Association, and in the Northeast Writing Centers Association, who brought me into the writing center fold as a graduate student and whose dedication, humor, and commitment to this work I value especially.

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To Meg Carroll, for Zuka Juice, surf ‘n’ turf, bug zappers, and Water Fire. But mostly for her amazing program at Rhode Island College, as well as for unrestricted access to her copious notes, books, journals, tutors, laptops, videos, and mind.

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To my phantom limbs, the people in my life whose daily presence I miss most: Cristina Parsons and Geoff Sanborn, two former Fairfield colleagues and two of the dearest, smartest, funniest, most irreverent people I know; and my parents, my brother and his family—would that I could shrink the world.

To my husband, Dan Bedeker, for gently coaxing my sleeping limbs back to life. I promise longer bike rides and more frequent paddles through the marsh. Phew!

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Despite all this assistance, there remain many shortcomings in this book. These are, of course, entirely my own.
“People ask me what music I listen to.  
I listen to traffic and birds singing and people breathing.  
And fire engines.  
I always used to listen to the water pipes at night when the lights were off,  
and they played tunes.  
Half the musical ideas I’ve had have been accidental.”

John Lennon  
(qtd. in Marzorati 31)