

Why I Write
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I write to have a voice, one that is entirely mine,
that is free to be as stable or changing as I am.
My voice and I are one, united
together through growing up and
growing knowledge. We are one whether
we discuss certainties or uncertainties,
research or heartbreak.

So much else requires consistency
but my voice is free. So free that one hour
I'm writing theses on the paragone of painting
and sculpture, the next hour a short story-
what if this snow never stopped?

Changing genres, changing audiences, changing purpose,
but it is always my voice. Starting with a research paper
then repurposed into a Time Magazine opinion article then
remediated into a series of cartoons. Different formats,
different publications but the same argument
against sexist dress codes and
enforcement of those dress codes.

Three different ways to say the same thing.
There aren't three right answers in a biology report,
there are not three correct definitions for the
theory of relativity. Writing might be
the only place where different approaches
to get the same result are correct and encouraged.

I can't change my class schedule or exam grades but
I can change a metaphor in a poem about the fall.
I can't change the way my mom irritates me, but
I can correct her flaws in a story about where I grew up.
Everything else is subject to contamination but my
voice in my writing comes from my brain alone.

My imagination, my knowledge, my hopes combine
to form the voice that is my writing. It changes,
I change, but we're supposed to.
We grow together, we make mistakes together,
we are bold together, we are obscure together.

The same cannot be said for my calculus exam.
I don't grow with calculus. Nothing is left
to be discovered in calculus. My mistakes
are not mathematics' mistakes. Math is not wrong,
I am wrong. There is no boldness in math as there is
in writing. It is evident and explainable in a way
that can never be as bold as "It was the best of times,
it was the worst of times." There are no obscurities
in math, or science, while writing can be
pleasingly difficult. $Y=mx+b$ has one unchanging meaning
but what does Frost mean with "Earth's the right place for love."

There is no changing in math the way there is
in writing. A change in math is a mistake, $2+2$ will always
equal 4, but a change in writing is revealing. Signaling
a new mood, or foreshadowing, or the
point of view of a different character,
or a different purpose, or a change in the writer.

The impact of change on a writer is everything.
Significant life changes, family additions, or losses,
knowledge gained. If nothing ever changed for me,
I could not exist, my voice could not exist.
No voices could exist.
That claim could never be made.

But like the possibilities sprung from everything
that is changeable, the reasons for why I write
are endless. The reasons behind my voice
change with the minute. I write to figure out why
while I am thinking about why.
Thinking about writing, writing about thinking.
Trapped because there is no end.

There is no definite answer,
there is no one reason why, or how.
My voice and I are always moving, but
moving in a circle. Kind of stagnant, kind of not.
What I like so much about the opportunities
is also what I feel most challenged by.
What I feel challenged by
is also what benefits me the most.