Chris Bero

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Williams #1

Phenomenology of Eror

Williams introduces his paper by defining error as “a specific set of mistakes... with syntax and the mechanics and conventions of writing.” This is what we are taught errors to be, concrete breaches in the integrity of our writing that must be discovered and rectified. Contrary to the hours spent diagramming sentences and carefully purging extraneous punctuation, Williams explains errors in the light, or from the viewpoint, that they are a phenomenon. This means that errors whose nature are not severe enough to divert the attention of a peer may in fact become an interpretation of grammar on behalf of the author. They cease to reside on the laws set forth by textbooks and references, and instead lend to the individuality of the piece. I recall hearing lighthearted remarks from peers in middle school to the effect of “You’re a comma Jew.” Which was a result of my excessive reliance on commas in my writing. I would like to imagine that I have since fixed such an issue, but that is not the case. And although an overabundance of any punctuation is inappropriate for school papers, I feel it has made my writing more personal and lended itself to my unique autobiography of writing.