THE WRITING EXPERIMENT

Strategies for innovative creative writing

Hazel Smith

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

First published 2005 by Allen & Unwin

Published 2020 by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN
605 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

National Library of Australia
Cataloguing-in-Publication entry:

Smith, Hazel, 1950- .
The Writing Experiment: strategies for innovative creative writing.

Bibliography.
Includes index.
ISBN 978 1 7411 4015 6

1. Creative writing. 2. Creative writing (Higher education).
3. Creative writing - Handbooks, manuals, etc. 4. English language - Writing. I. Title.

808.06

Set in 11/13 pt Minion by Midland Typesetters, Maryborough

ISBN-13: 9781741140156 (pbk)

Contents

Preface

The Writing Experiment is the culmination of my experience of teaching creative writing in the School of English at the University of New South Wales (UNSW) at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels from 1991 to 2001. It is dedicated with admiration and affection to the hundreds of students I taught during that period, and the breathtakingly good work they so often produced.

During my tenure at UNSW, I developed a method for teaching higher education students which combined three objectives: it theorised the process of writing; it was biased towards experimental approaches; and it was systematic and based on step-by-step strategies. As this method evolved, and as I transformed my teaching strategies in response to student and peer feedback, I felt that it would be valuable to document them in a book to make them more generally available. I also became aware that despite the heady and continuing rise of creative writing courses in American, Canadian, Australian and British universities during the last twenty years, there was a dearth of books in the area designed for specific use by higher education students, especially ones which also incorporated experimental and systematic strategies.

The book draws heavily on my own work as a writer, and my own interest in technique, experimental writing and analytical approaches to the creative process. I have engaged with nearly all the exercises in this book at one time or another, and many of them are central to my own creative practice. But the processes of writing and teaching have been symbiotic for me: my writing informed my teaching at every point, but teaching in turn took my writing into new areas. The book is also informed by my hybrid and intermedia approach to writing. My previous career as a professional

musician, my collaborations with artists and musicians, and my love of film, the visual arts and music mean that I have constantly extended my writing beyond the purely literary, and have encouraged my students to do the same.

I would like to thank my previous colleagues in the School of English at the University of New South Wales, many of whom have contributed directly or indirectly to this book. In particular I would like to thank Anne Brewster, with whom I had the privilege to work closely and harmoniously for three years in the creative writing area. Her stimulation, advice and erudition have been immensely important, and she has given invaluable advice on drafts of this book. I am also indebted to Suzanne Eggins with whom for several years I jointly taught the first-year course 'Factual and Creative Writing': her precise and penetrating lectures on professional writing encouraged me to think through the importance of systematic approaches to creative writing. My warm thanks also to my current colleagues in the School of Creative Communication, University of Canberra, for providing a friendly, stimulating and innovative environment in which to complete this book, and particularly to Maureen Bettle for reading and commenting painstakingly on a draft of the manuscript.

I would like to thank my publisher Elizabeth Weiss for her excellent advice and enthusiastic support of this project; also my editor Karen Gee and the rest of the team at Allen & Unwin for all their cheerful assistance. I would also like to thank Laura Brown and Lisa McCarthy for helping me to contact ex-students; Kate Fagan for giving information on Lyn Hejinian's work; Joy Wallace for her advice and encouragement; and Roger Dean for reading the manuscript and making numerous suggestions. I also want to express my gratitude to all those authors and students who generously gave me permission to quote from their work, and to the UNSW student union for allowing me to reproduce work by students published in the magazine *Unsweetened*. But most of all I would like to thank the huge numbers of students—both those who are represented here and those who are not—who have stimulated me, kept me on my toes and given me invaluable feedback. As I put this book together I was increasingly frustrated by the fact that I had not kept a good deal of the wonderful work which students had produced over the years, and also that I would not have enough space to reproduce most of the examples in my possession. But I remembered with the greatest pleasure the lectures and tutorials in which I had laboured with students over the challenges and joys of creative work. I am extremely thankful for this unique experience, and know that it is the main dynamic of this book.

Hazel Smith
School of Creative Communication
Sonic Communications Research Group
University of Canberra

Taylor & Francis
Taylor & Francis Group
http://taylorandfrancis.com

Introduction

Creative writing courses are an integral and indispensable part of university education, because they interconnect intellectual and creative exploration. *The Writing Experiment* is designed for university students enrolled in creative writing courses and for their teachers. Its aims are to suggest systematic strategies for creative writing, and to theorise the process of writing by relating it to the literary and cultural concepts which students encounter on other university courses. The book is based on the premise that creative writing can be systematically and analytically approached, and that successful work does not arise only from talent or inspiration. The following chapters attempt to *demystify* this process, and question many of the popular assumptions about the activity of writing.

A distinctive aspect of this book is that it breaks down complex tasks into easy-to-manage stages. Writers are taken through these steps—which are usually invisible in a finished text—by means of detailed examples and exercises. *The Writing Experiment* is based, therefore, on incremental strategies which recuperate, at a conscious level, the less accessible or unconscious aspects of the writing process.

This book has relevance to any kind of writing—from poetry to detective fiction. However, the strategies are biased towards explorative, innovative methods. The book avoids circumscribed technical advice about preconceived forms and suggests, instead, open-ended strategies with diverse outcomes. By adopting these, writers will learn how to explore alternative modes of working and find their own direction(s). The main take-home message from this volume is that it is possible to *work out* ways to write, and that experimentation is fundamental to creativity.

Although readers are advised to engage with the strategies provided, once they have finished the book they should also be able to devise their own.

As part of its experimental emphasis, this title also relates writing to other media and interweaves the verbal, visual and the sonic. Writing in the contemporary era needs to be redefined as a very broad category, which includes audiovisual projects, performance works, multimedia and hypermedia works, not just written texts. These kinds of creative endeavours are included, and encouraged, in this book.

The Writing Experiment is suitable for beginner and advanced writers, and is applicable both to undergraduate and postgraduate students. The opening six chapters (Part I) are particularly important for beginners, but advanced writers are likely to find many of the strategies in them helpful, or distinct from ones they normally use. The following six chapters (Part II) are more advanced and theoretical, and build on the strategies suggested in the first half. The book includes many examples of student work to demonstrate that it is based not only in theories about writing, but in the practice of teaching and learning in the university environment.

Although designed primarily for higher education students, this text can also be used by the more general reader. Such readers may wish to focus mainly on the exercises. They can skip over some of the more theoretical concepts if they wish, or increase their understanding of them with complementary reading.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The process of writing has traditionally been subject to extreme mystification. Secrecy has often been perpetuated by writers themselves, since published authors can be reluctant to reveal how they work—they may see this as giving away 'trade secrets'—and are often inarticulate about their writing methods. Many writers probably do not really know how they arrive at their texts, and mental events which occur during the creative process may be difficult to remember or describe. In addition, writers have historically had an ideological investment in the mystification of the creative process because it sustained a myth which was appealing to the public: that of the genius who is divinely inspired and individually endowed. However, this myth can be crippling to aspirant writers who feel helpless if they do not seem to have special talent, and cannot immediately match the work of their published peers.

In fact, writing does not arise out of a vacuum: there is always a process involved. Creative writers, at all stages of their careers, need to ask themselves questions about this process and the role of the author.

Some of these questions often initially include:

1. Do I have to have special qualities to be a writer?
2. Are there any rules or regulations which I must abide by when I am writing?
3. Will my writing be better if based on my personal experience?
4. Can I write if I don't have any good ideas, or any ideas at all?

These questions are all highly significant ones which are central to this book, and I will discuss each of them in turn.

1. Do I have to have special qualities to be a writer?

The popular belief is that writers have a special talent that is innate, that good writing is something that 'just happens', and that most aspects of the writing process are inaccessible both to the writer and to outsiders. However, this belief is fundamentally flawed, since talent partly arises out of the learning of particular skills, and awareness about the choices available in the process of writing. The main special qualities writers must have are perseverance, motivation, the willingness to search for methods which suit them, energy to push themselves out of their own comfort zones and avid reading habits. Failure to produce creative work is often due more to lack of stamina or insufficient commitment to the process, than a paucity of talent.

Self-awareness about the writing process is therefore crucial. Writers who develop this awareness will be able to intervene more effectively to develop their work or change direction. It is important to try a wide range of different techniques, since a writer who achieves average results with one technique may obtain excellent results with another.

2. Are there any rules I must abide by in writing?

There are no rules and regulations for creative writing, and no blueprints for a good piece of writing. Anyone who is looking for a formula for exciting work will not find it, and writers who rely on formulae usually produce dull results. However, strategies and techniques can be learnt: these are different from rules in that they set writing in motion rather than delineating correct methods. They are explorative and dynamic, and demonstrate a variety of means for generating and structuring material.

This book promotes experimental strategies rather than rules and regulations. Most broadly, an experimental approach to writing means retaining an open-ended and open-minded attitude, and pursuing new, diverse modes of textual exploration. As a consequence, experimental texts

usually work against and beyond familiar literary codes and conventions. To write experimentally is to adopt a subversive and transgressive stance to the literary, and to break up generic and linguistic norms. This formal transgression is significant because it can be a means to rethink cultural mores: for example, to shake up ideas about sexual identity, class or race. Experimental texts, because they loosen linguistic and formal conventions, also have the advantage of being highly **polysemic**: that is, they suggest many different meanings and encourage conflicting interpretations. Such an approach to writing allows the exploration of political, psychological and philosophical ideas without reducing them to the level of dogma, description or propaganda.

At the same time experimental work can also develop its own codes and conventions over time, and become part of a 'tradition of the new'—a term famously coined by American art critic Harold Rosenberg (1965). Some forms of experimental poetry and fiction have turned into recognisable ways of working with language and genre which subsequent writers consciously adopt. This paradox—that any mode of experimentation is initially an appeal to the new but can become conventional over time—is one that is negotiated throughout this book.

Many traditionally accepted ideas about writing have also been exploded by literary theory. For example, theory has undermined the idea that literature unproblematically reflects the world. Semiotics, stemming from the linguistic theories of Ferdinand Saussure, asserts that words have an arbitrary rather than a natural relationship with the things to which they refer. Words are signs which stand for objects, events or ideas, but have no necessary connection with them. Consequently language refers to the 'real' world, but also constructs, transforms and mediates it. Some types of literary text (particularly those which belong to the genre of realism) may be so powerful and 'lifelike' that we forget that they are artificial linguistic constructs, but this is illusory. We can challenge this illusion by exploring experimental forms of writing which do not present language as 'natural'.

Finally the book suggests strategies which are experimental, but the outcomes can be of any type. It encourages you to be eclectic. It does not suggest sole identification with one type of writing or another, but mediation between them, and openness to all possibilities.

3. Will my writing be better if based on my personal experience?

Many people are motivated to write because they want to speak about their own experiences, and many writers use autobiographical experience as material, either directly or indirectly. But writing does not have to be

based on personal experience, and frequently is not. To write is always to construct something, to create a fiction. There is a considerable difference between 'real life' and 'text life' though the two may be interconnected. Even where personal experience is used it is always mediated by language and sometimes transformed out of all recognition. Furthermore, it is arguable that success as a creative writer depends more on the ability to explore ideas and feelings through language, than on personal characteristics or experience. In fact, writing only autobiographically can be limiting, because it keeps us within the confines of our own particular world.

Many readers and writers automatically assume that a text is the expression of an author's personality. However, critical theory has tended to question the idea of the text as direct personal expression. Roland Barthes's essay, 'The Death of the Author' in *Image-Music-Text* (1977, pp. 142–8), asserts that texts are a result of what the authors have read rather than what they have experienced: the author's subjectivity is always diffused and transformed through language. Important here is the concept of **intertextuality**: the idea that any text is composed of other texts. Language always bears the traces of former uses, other contexts and discourses. In this sense language is never entirely personal and individual, but always has a public, social and political aspect.

Another prevalent belief is that a writer has a particular voice and style, and that learning to write is a matter of finding that voice as if it were pre-existent. In fact a writer does not have one voice but several, and these contrasting voices may emerge in different texts, at different times, or sometimes in the same text. One of the objectives of this book is to help writers extend their range by trying new approaches. Experimentation of this kind is very important because it is easy to write only in the way that seems to come most easily, and which does not require any extension of skill or outlook. However, without new approaches, writers are usually only utilising a very narrow part of their creativity. They will soon reach a limit in their work, a point beyond which it is difficult to develop.

4. Can I start to write if I don't have any good ideas, or any ideas at all?

It might seem that the only way to start writing is to have an idea to write about. Many would-be writers feel crippled because they think they do not have any good ideas: numerous aspirant writers have never written the great novel that they would like to write because they do not know how to begin. But in fact this does not have to be the case. Writing can start from an idea, but an equally valid way of approaching the activity is by playing with words on the page: as the words form patterns they suggest ideas.

Techniques of this kind are an important feature of this book. They can be a means of arriving at unusual ideas which might not arise by a more direct thematic approach.

At the same time you can stimulate your creativity by becoming aware of current intellectual debates and social issues, and participating in the world around you. Most interesting creative work is concerned with either psychological, political or philosophical issues, and in most cases the relationship between all three. Reading the newspaper, watching the television, surfing the Internet, and talking to friends—as well familiarising yourself with cultural theory and activity across the arts—can stimulate creative writing. In other words an active engagement with all aspects of the world around you should lead to a plethora of ideas for creative work.

CREATIVE WRITING, EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENTS

Creative writing used to be treated like the poor relation to literary studies within higher education. Literary texts were the prime object of attention, and students were given no opportunity to write such texts themselves. Even for the study of literature this was unfortunate, because it is possible to learn a great deal about literary texts by creating them. To understand the activity of writing is to appreciate more the way writers work, the choices they make and their use of language. Writing is often a means to becoming a more informed reader.

At the root of all the preceding questions are quite fundamental issues about writing, the role of the author, the way the writer engages with language, and the interface between real life and text life. These issues are explored in depth in literary theory in the work of such authors as Ferdinand Saussure, Roland Barthes, Jacques Derrida, Roman Jacobson and Julia Kristeva. This book makes a connection between the analytical ideas of some major literary theorists and the process of creative writing, and puts theory into practice. In this way it connects creative practice with a **poetics of writing**: that is, ways of analysing and theorising literature. The book also connects with many of the ideological and political issues at stake in the work of cultural theorists, such as Michel Foucault, Jacques Lacan or Michel de Certeau, and behind them the towering figures of Marx and Freud who have influenced so much intellectual thinking in the twentieth and 21st centuries. It is these thinkers who will help you to explore the psychological (through psychoanalytic theory) and the political (through cultural theory). *The Writing Experiment* sometimes engages with the work of these theorists implicitly rather than explicitly.

The aim of the book is not to expound the work of particular theorists, or to elucidate theoretical concepts in depth. Rather it is to show ways in which theoretical understanding might be adapted to the process of writing, and to help you develop a poetics of writing which you can apply to your own work.

The Writing Experiment also relates creative writing to the study of literature in higher education. It draws examples from contemporary Australian, British, American, New Zealand and Canadian writing, and non-English speaking and indigenous cultures. Writing and reading cannot be separated, and your own creative endeavours will help you understand the work of published writers you are studying on other courses, while extensive reading will help you to improve your creative work. In addition, *The Writing Experiment* connects with performance and hypermedia studies, since it emphasises off-the-page, as much as on-the-page, writing, and includes a chapter on the way writing is changing in response to new technologies. Again, because this is a book about *doing* writing, it does not give detailed accounts of literary movements, or individual writers, which can be found elsewhere.

More generally, the ability to think creatively is a very important part of academic work, and can complement analytical thinking. Some of the strategies in this book can also be used in academic work to generate ideas and forge connections between them. In expository, as well as creative, writing, analytical and creative thinking are intertwined and have a symbiotic relationship.

HOW TO USE *THE WRITING EXPERIMENT*

The book is divided into two sections. Part I, **Introductory strategies** consists of six chapters and explores basic approaches and techniques for writing. Readers are given the most help in this section, and the writing process is broken down into easy-to-manage and entertaining stages. Although these are introductory strategies, they can be used in the creation of sophisticated texts, and some challenging exercises are included which may be of equal interest and value to more advanced writers. Part II, **Advanced strategies**, also comprised of six chapters, explores more complex methods (or combinations of strategies learnt in the first section). It also includes background and historical information—particularly about the postmodern and experimental movements to which many of the exercises in the book relate. The book is written in a progressive and accumulative manner: an idea mentioned in passing in the first half is sometimes developed in much more detail, and theorised more extensively, in the

second half. The book will probably be most effective if read and used in order as each chapter builds on strategies and approaches of the previous chapter(s). However, some readers might want to scan the book and read sections that appeal to them, or seem particularly relevant, and some strategies in Part II can be introduced at an earlier stage if desired.

In Part I, Chapter 1 **Playing with language, running with referents** introduces two approaches which are fundamental to the book. They are language-based strategies which use words as a form of text generation, and referent-based strategies which enable writers to build texts on a particular subject, idea or theme. Chapter 2 **Genre as a moveable feast** stresses the flexibility and malleability of genre and its importance as a tool of representation. It shifts between the modes of realism, surrealism and satire, and also demonstrates how prose can be transformed into poetry. Chapter 3 **Working out with structures** focuses on the importance of structure and the notion of structuring principles, both formally and ideologically. It also contains a section on adapting cultural (non-literary) forms to literary texts. Chapter 4 **Writing as recycling** uses the concept of intertextuality to move through collage, found texts and the rewriting of classic texts. Chapter 5 **Narrative, narratology, power** experiments with narrative technique and theory. Through this process it suggests ways in which narration affects the ideological status and import of the narrative. Chapter 6 **Dialoguing** explores dialogue in prose, performance texts and poems. It includes realistic and non-realistic dialogue, dialogue as a form of communication and power struggle, polylogues and contemporary forms of dialogue. It also promotes collaboration as dialoguing.

In Part II, Chapter 7 **Postmodern f(r)ictions** focuses on aspects of the postmodern novel. It explores the subversion of plot and character, the rewriting of history, and the construction of new worlds. Chapter 8 **Postmodern poetry, avant-garde poetics** is in two parts: the first shows how the 'postmodern lyric' questions many of the premises of the traditional lyric; the second emphasises the importance of linguistic innovation in avant-garde poetry, and discusses its political and poetic objectives. It encourages readers to play with language in ways which overturn conventions of grammar, syntax, vocabulary and structure. Chapter 9 **The invert, the cross-dresser, the fictocritic** engages with postmodern reinventions and subversions of genre, including the synoptic novel, discontinuous prose, mixed-genre writing and fictocriticism. It also suggests the cultural consequences of such subversion. Chapter 10 **Tongues, talk and technologies** centres mainly on oral performance in a contemporary context. It includes strategies for speech-based and sonic poetry, and basic improvisatory techniques in performance. It also mobilises intermedia work, which combines text with image and sound.

Chapter 11 **New media travels** is dedicated to writing and new technologies. Readers become 'cyberwriters' who are initiated into the creative possibilities of hypertext, hypermedia, animation and codework. Chapter 12 **Mapping worlds, moving cities** introduces the concept of postmodern geography, and projects place as dynamic, multiplicitous and socially produced. It enters the city as a site of difference, and includes the walk poem and an exercise in time-space compression. The book ends with **The ongoing editor**, which questions the notion of editing as a necessarily discrete stage in the writing process, while suggesting that many of the approaches in the book can be applied as strategies to critique and polish work.

The exercises, which are the major focus of the book, are outlined in each chapter following the introduction. These exercises are quite broad, but detailed advice about how to approach them is given throughout the chapter where they are referenced again. Any new theoretical or technical terms which they contain are explicated as the chapter proceeds. In most cases the reader is taken through a number of stages in the creative process, and examples are given of published and student writing. Chapters 10 and 11 are supported by examples of performance and new media work which can be accessed from *The Writing Experiment* website at www.routledge.com/9781741140156. The website should be used in conjunction with reading the relevant chapters and working on the exercises. In other places website addresses are sometimes given for the work of interesting performers or web artists. Such addresses are, of course, subject to change, but if they move they can usually be found again at their new location through a Google search in an Internet browser.

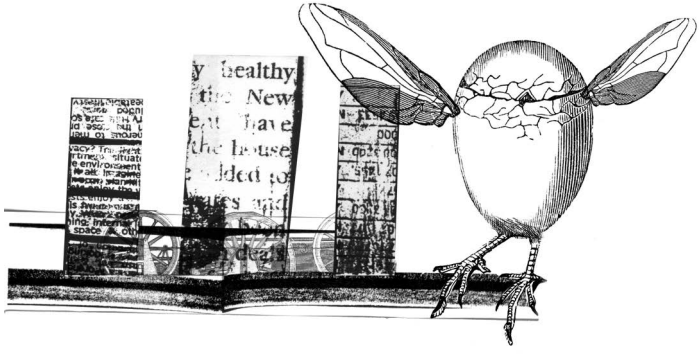
The Writing Experiment does not aim to cover all forms of writing or the creative process. It does not dwell a great deal on strategies which are thoroughly and effectively documented elsewhere, and can be used in conjunction with other stimulating books about writing, such as Lance Olsen's *Rebel Yell* (1999), John Singleton and Mary Luckhurst's edited volume *The Creative Writing Handbook* (1996) and Brenda Walker's edited volume *The Writer's Reader* (2002). However, *The Writing Experiment* does aim to inculcate a special way of thinking about writing which can be widely, even comprehensively, applied.

REFERENCES

Barthes, R. 1977, *Image-Music-Text*, Fontana, London.

Olsen, L. 1999, *Rebel Yell: A Short Guide to Writing Fiction*, 2nd edn, Cambrian Publications, San Jose, California.

Rosenberg, H. 1965, *The Tradition of the New*, McGraw-Hill, New York.
Singleton, J. and Luckhurst, M. (eds.) 1996, *The Creative Writing Handbook: Techniques for New Writers*, Macmillan, London.
Walker, B. (ed.), 2002, *The Writer's Reader: A Guide to Writing Fiction and Poetry*, Halstead Press, Sydney.



PART I
Introductory strategies

Taylor & Francis
Taylor & Francis Group
http://taylorandfrancis.com

CHAPTER ONE

Playing with language, running with referents

In the Introduction I emphasised that you do not have to have an idea to start writing, but can generate ideas by manipulating words. So this chapter initially encourages you to play with language, without necessarily having any particular idea or theme firmly in mind. When you play with language you are engaging with **language-based strategies**. The fundamental premise on which such strategies are based is that words suggest other words. Start with one word—any word—and it will lead you to many others, until you have formed a whole text. These methods invite you to explore the sounds and meanings of words as a way of finding ideas, rather than starting to write from a preconceived idea. If you soak up these approaches, you need never suffer from writer's block, because words will serve as automatic triggers for writing.

A very important idea in literary theory, on which language-based strategies are constructed, is that language creates the world rather than the other way round. Reality is not simply 'out there' independent of words and unchanged by them. Rather, the way we use language makes the world how it is. Playing with language allows us to construct our own world, and question some of the ways in which reality is normally perceived.

In talking about language-based strategies, I am distinguishing them from **referent-based strategies**. Referent-based strategies help you to 'run' with a particular subject, theme or idea you have in mind, and to build a text upon it. In the second half of this chapter we will take the mirror as a referent, and see how far we can run with it.

Language-based and **referent-based strategies** are the two most fundamental approaches to writing. All writing engages with one of them, and

most writing includes a combination. Here we explore them separately to show how each can be a powerful tool in your writing.

exercises

1. Play with language and build up three short texts using the following techniques in turn:
   a) word association
   b) phrase manipulation
   c) combining words from a word pool. You can add words such as 'is' or 'of' to combine the words into short phrases. Try to make your combinations unusual and striking.
2. Write a short creative text using one of the following referents: the mirror, the map or the machine.

PLAYING WITH LANGUAGE

Language-based strategies encourage you to think in ways which are non-linear, and to make unconscious connections. They coax the associative modes of thinking which are pivotal to creative endeavour. These exercises are fun to do, they play games with language, but they can also produce challenging and unusual texts.

It is essential to have some language-based strategies at your disposal, and all good writers do. Language-based strategies tend to be very fundamental; if you start with language you are immediately concentrating on the medium in which you have to express yourself. As you play with words, new lines of thought may begin to reveal themselves. If you start with an idea it still has to be converted into language, and that is the difficult part—because you can have the most amazing idea in the world, but it is not always easy to find the right words to express it or fully convey its complexity.

Language-based strategies sharpen your sensitivity to language and help you to be discriminating, imaginative and unconventional in the way you use it. Inexperienced writers sometimes fall back on clichés like 'his heart throbbed' or 'her eyes were full of tears': these exercises will help you avoid them. So even if you end up writing in a way which is very different from the style induced by these exercises, you will find them a useful technical resource.

Language-based strategies exploit the relation between the **signifier** and the **signified**. According to the linguist, Ferdinand Saussure, the signifier is the material form of the word—its visual and aural dimension, the way

it looks and sounds—and the signified is the concept, the meaning. In normal conversation we tend to concentrate on the signified rather than the signifier, but your writing, particularly poetry, can be enhanced if you stress the signifier as much as the signified. (For more explanation and detail about Saussure's ideas see *Structuralism and Semiotics* (Hawkes 1977), *Saussure* (Culler 1976), *Critical Practice* (Belsey 2002) and *The Theory Toolbox* (Nealon & Giroux 2003).

These exercises encourage you to take account of the sounds of the words. In them sound is used as a generative process (a way of making one word suggest another). The objective of the exercises, however, is not to encourage you to write traditional rhymed verse. This type of writing now seems somewhat anachronistic because it was mainly predominant in pre-twentieth century poetry, though it is retained in some popular forms such as rap. Rather, playing with language helps you to explore other ways of using sound. And since rhyming verse is a technique with which you are probably already familiar, I suggest that you avoid it completely for the moment, in order to widen your scope and steer your creativity in other directions.

WORD ASSOCIATION

The word association exercise (Exercise 1a) is a commonly used strategy, but my version of the exercise is different from others in the emphasis it puts on sound as well as sense. This exercise has many functions. First, it sensitises you to language, making you aware of its plasticity: the way language is like clay in your hands. Second, it can be used to develop strings of ideas. Writers often use word association to trigger thoughts on a particular topic, and it is a good way to dredge up unconscious connections through language. Third, it can result, with some care and manoeuvring, in an experimental text which is stimulating to read in itself. Such texts are often powerful because they are **polysemic**: that is, they have many different meanings and these fly out in several directions at once. In the following examples I break down the process of word association into several stages.

So let's take a word and see how we can spawn others from it by association. Our purpose here is to eventually produce a large block of words—half a page or more—combining different types of association. Examples of this kind of writing can be seen in Examples 1.6 to 1.10, but we will start with a breakdown of the process into preliminary strategies. You may want to try all these strategies in turn, either starting with the same word I have used or thinking up one of your own.

First, we will see what happens when we take one word and forge others from it which are similar to it in sound. In doing this I am playing with the signifier. In order to make it clear how all the words relate to that first word, I will repeat it each time.

Example 1.1: Association by sound (playing with the signifier)

green ghost	truth token
green grate	truth ruthless
green grist	truth truck
green guard	truth rucksack
green grain	truth roof
green real	truth suit
green read	truth soup
green needle	truth ute
green scene	truth time
green knee	truth tool
green agreeable	truth tower
green aggravate	truth uterus
green oversee	
green industry	

Here I have improvised pairs of words in which the second word always bears a sonic relationship to the first. To do so, I have employed strategies such as alliteration, assonance or half rhymes. The second word may be quite distant initially in meaning, but the meanings of the two words become related through sound. In this way connections between words can be produced by sound that would never occur by a primarily semantic route. As you can see, some of these combinations suggest unusual images, for example that truth is token or a soup.

Now let's see how I can produce word association by meaning:

Example 1.2: Association by meaning (playing with the signified)

green blue	truth falsehood
green sick	truth real
green grow	truth fiction
green inexperienced	truth language

Here I have generated each second word in the pair by meaning (even though a combination like 'truth falsehood' works by antithesis). And you

will notice how I am exploiting the different senses of the word 'green': the way we associate it with colour, or with naivety, or environmentalism.

Let's look now at two other strategies, dissociation and leapfrogging:

Example 1.3: Dissociation

green falsehood	truth nest
green milk	truth lamp
green impulse	truth petal
green puddle	truth bird

In this example I have generated words largely by dissociation, by writing down a second word which seemed to have no immediate connection with the first. But it is surprising how once you place unrelated words side by side a connection between them can suddenly be forged. You can see that there is some mileage in the notion of 'a nest of truths', or 'a bird of truth', or a 'green impulse'.

Example 1.4: Leapfrogging

greenpeace
peace talk
talkback
backdrop

In this group I am doing what I call leapfrogging: that is, making the end of one word the beginning of the next, and through this process building up new words.

So in all the above examples I am playing with the relationship between sound and sense, sometimes homing in more on the sound, sometimes more on the sense. I am also, in these examples, trying to divide the sound from the sense but, of course, the two often go hand in hand. If you say 'green grow' you arrive at a combination of words which is linked by sound, but also intimately connected by sense.

In the next example I have used a multisyllabic word. This gives more scope than a word of just one syllable. I have also employed a mixture of strategies here for generating the second word. Decide for yourself what strategies are at work here:

Example 1.5: Mixed strategies

energy synergy
energy generate
energy genesis
energy emphasis
energy gene

energy dynamism
energy exercise
energy electricity
energy aerobics
energy pen
energy light

Let's go further now: instead of confining ourselves to the first word we will keep breeding new words all the time by different forms of association or dissociation. For example, if we start with the word 'truth', instead of retreating back to it each time we can strike out with a whole stream of other words:

Example 1.6: Moving away from the first word
truth ruthless mucus mindplay playback falsehood hoodwink wisecrack crackdown whitewash cycle circle syntax tax free freedom phantom furtive fistful fightback backdown

You can see here how I have used a mixture of association, dissociation and leapfrogging to produce this passage. When you create such a text, you can keep referring back to the first word and use that as the basis for association. Or you can take each new word as the basis for association. Or you can go back to any previous word. One of the effects of the passage is to make truth, which we tend to think about as an absolute, a contested concept, since it is juxtaposed with such ideas as falsehood, hoodwink and whitewash. Moving away from the base word in this way is the mark of a fully-fledged word association.

You are now ready to try a word association of your own, combining these strategies. However, before you do so, it may be helpful to look at some examples of this approach in action by both students and published writers. The following example of word association, by student Elisabeth Crawford, is very effective because it draws on a wide range of different tactics to keep the surface of the language fresh, and doesn't overdo any particular approach. Here the author extends the technique by allowing some of the words to gather into phrases and familiar sayings, and then dissolve again into word association. The piece is also striking because playing with language allows Elisabeth to move through a range of disparate ideas which are nevertheless connected by their political relevance (including environmental concerns and queer politics). Her text therefore engages (but in a very flexible way) with current **ideology**—that is, beliefs about our society and the manipulation of those beliefs within the prevailing power structures and institutions:

Example 1.7

greengage plum apple eve mother earth ground zero green to smithereens Granny Smith baby smith Adam Smith USA AID LDC rainforest green revolution foreign debt IMF greenbacks green fronts greenpeace greenhouse green room All the world's a stage a part alone a mortgage green belt green lawn true blue lily white no yellowbellied reds blacks greenies blue for boys pink for girls girlies poofters faggots burn 'em at the stake barby tinny junky HIV AIDS AZT reprieve hope faith love God good evil right left forsaken my god my god why? there is a green hill valley shadow of death life limb bobby telly soapy sudsy squeaky clean lean mean machine sewing reaping crop harvest paddock damn just give me a home among the gum trees with lots of plum trees

'word association' (Crawford 1992)

In the next example, by student Michele Sweeney, word association conveys a short narrative, but one in which sensory impressions and feelings are more loosely connected, condensed and rapidly transforming than in a conventional narrative. Notice here how the impression of verbal speed created by the word strings (without the usual grammatical connectives) mimics the movement of travel, and the quick shifts of daydreaming and desire:

Example 1.8

Travel air bus cab plane to see sight see eyes sore feet walk climb rock mountain view sunset night lights dance move around the world bag port of call yell your name out and about what why am I here? There you get souvenirs tacky shopping duty free ride hitchhike and die in truck full of baggage empty inside hotel bed sleep awake to coffee Paris romance fall in love again on a Greek isle church roam around Spanish steps inside your mind wandering where to go to nearest embassy rules out Tokyo sukiyaki eat not in Bombay weave through crowds in London lost in a pickle yummy cakes patisserie puff like a balloon hot air plane glide through my dreams

'word association' (Sweeney 1993b)

It is important, however, to realise that this technique (or other closely related techniques) is also to be found in the work of published authors. The following extract is from a piece by Australian writer Ania Walwicz,

who was born in Poland and whose work shows considerable European influence. The text is not entirely driven by word association, but we can see that generating words through their connection in sound is an important element in the text—for example in the verbal string 'person parson ardent emperor wilhelm potsdam jesa jesus'. Look at the way word association also keeps the piece open: the meaning does not close itself off. The prose poem continuously extends itself, weaving together childhood memories and fantasies, fairytale utopias and (seemingly more adult) erotic desires:

Example 1.9

tips waves up big dipper fires wings lift me up roll out entry for prince of shiny press into me furbelows bows on tip toes cartwheels in lovely head lamp glower put on her dots dot in dot dotter dot dottie lain in finer blades naps cherubs i'm all wreathed in tulle tulle skirts fly up thighs tight wrap in tunnel of love need a belt please a chord bang in big peaks up top plaits comes along so fast to me on my lay press with holds but not against me at all let flow engaged embraced in carriage of gold to weddings of mine in ornate halls i'm bride bridely a merry mary she shouts in van makes me happy prince aloise la belle cadix i'm on my way to become somebody else relay to longest i'm fiancée of person parson ardent emperor wilhelm potsdam jesa jesus in yearn honeymoons caress one doesn't know who one has touch glory goddess of shining gold i can change places with any move through all orchid pearls arias top speed epic lushy lush ermines bares my breasts swell forth in my stream of pours from her in heady welcomen adored faithful prays and pardons my empress of roses mayerling pulses gives me so much to walk on flames at top powers

From 'wonderful' (Walwicz 1989, p. 249)

The second example employs word association much less consistently and only as one element amongst many others. But it is intriguing to see how, in Example 1.10, Christine Brooke-Rose, one of Britain's leading experimental novelists, incorporates word association into her idiosyncratic prose style. Interspersed with more formal sentence structure, it creates a highly evocative impression of an academic meditating on how she might lose her job because her expertise is considered redundant:

Example 1.10

I shall soon be quite redundant at last despite of all, as redundant as you after queue and as totally predictable, information-content zero.

The programme-cuts will one by one proceed apace, which will entail laying off paying off with luck all the teachers of dead languages like literature philosophy history, for who will want to know about ancient passions divine royal middle class or working in words and phrases and structures that will continue to spark out inside the techne that will soon be silenced by the high technology?

From *Amalgamemnon* (Brooke-Rose 1994, p. 5)

PHRASE MANIPULATION

Just as we can start to build a text from a word, we can also forge a piece of writing from a phrase. In Exercise 1b you are asked to generate a text through phrase manipulation. To do this you take a phrase as a starting point, and then make lots of other phrases from it. The initial phrase may have a verb in it, but it doesn't have to. The important point is that it is short and only has a few words in it.

A phrase contains more possibilities than a single word to grow and mutate. We can change the word order, substitute one word for another, subtract and add words. Let's have a look at these various strategies in turn.

Phrase permutation

Here the position of the words in relation to each other is changed within the phrase or short sentence, usually radically transforming the sense. For example:

Example 1.11
The death of the author
the author of death

Or:

Example 1.12
a rolling landscape
the landscape rolls away

You can see how effective this technique is in the following poem by Australian poet Myron Lysenko. Particularly important is the twist in the last stanza:

Example 1.13
They stood
under the big tree
and talked slowly

Under the tree
they stood
and slowly talked big

The big tree
stood slowly
and under they talked

They stood big
and slowly talked
the tree under

The big tree talked
and they slowly
understood

'Under The Tree' (Lysenko 1998, p. 27)

Substitution

Another way of changing the phrase is by substituting one word for another. In the following example either the word 'death' or 'author' is replaced by another word:

Example 1.14
the death of the author
the death of autumn
the death of the daughter
the death of the century
deleting the author
the author's orbit
death authorised
the demise of the orchestra

Most writers work with substitution as a way of improving on words which are linguistically weak. However I am attempting here not simply to find synonyms of the words, but to alter the sense of the phrase, to allow

language to lead the way. It's important when undertaking this kind of exercise not to stick with a preconceived meaning, but to allow the words themselves to offer new directions. Also do not expect the phrases to follow on from each other, or necessarily to make obvious sense. The idea of the exercise is to become absorbed in the process, not to arrive immediately at a finished product.

Addition and subtraction

Words can also be added or subtracted from the phrase, taking it in a new direction:

Example 1.15
reversing the death of the author
death in the fist of the author

In the next example, which works outwards from the more poetic phrase 'silence is a searchlight', a mixture of strategies is employed. The word searchlight is broken up as part of the linguistic play:

Example 1.16: Mixed strategies
silence is a searchlight
the light searches out the silence
the search for silence lights the day
daylight certifies our secrets
bright light reverses time
the silence wilts
the silence ignites
silence is litmus
silence plucks out its own eyes
silence is an island
lying is an island
lying is an enigma
lying trumps up a licence

Once you have generated your phrases you can, if you wish, order them into a persuasive succession. You can arrange the text as poetry or prose. Let's again look at two student examples of phrase manipulation which do this. The first is by Michele Sweeney:

Example 1.17

Travel is exciting
Excitement in travel
is there exciting travel?
Travel is titillating
Travel is tickets
To travel is to trek
Excitement is over-rated
Excitement is a word

To travel is unkind
To travel is wicked
To travel is a gum nut
To travel is a lie
To travel is insular
Travellers are hair nets
Shiny is new
Diamonds are forever.

'phrase manipulation' (Sweeney 1993a)

Note how in the first stanza Michele works by permutation of the phrase and then substitution. She returns to the idea of excitement at the end of the first section, but drops the idea of travel. Notice also how the assertions become wilder as the poem progresses. They take several new turns, and end with the familiar saying 'diamonds are forever', which seems quite far removed from the original travel. However, the last two phrases do relate to the rest of the piece, because they raise the question of whether the excitement of travel brings enduring value, or simply stimulates the need for novelty.

The second piece, written by another student, Canadian Gabrielle Prendergast—now a professional film scriptwriter—uses phrase manipulation to build a poetic meditation on the subject of time. The second section permutes the first by substituting, adding and subtracting words. Sometimes, as in the last line, permutation occurs by simply moving the position of a full stop, thereby changing the way the words are grouped and consequently the sense:

Example 1.18

Time
bends backward. clocks explode. coiled springs into sets of wings.
flying falling to another lover another life. elements burn soak bury

and chill the way. sadly brother time gives no clues but a shadow. celluloid rushes side by side, nature baptises back alley temples. trembling fingers and shivering flesh. coward! the truth is so steadfast and sharp. uphold me time. the enemy refuses to budge.

I'm
bending backwards. spine explodes. a coiled spring into white wing and falling flying to another life another lover. figments burn soak bury and chill my way. sister sadly I'm finding no clues but a shadow. celluloid rushes end to end. nature's baptism in back alley temple. trembling fingers touch shivering flesh. courage so sharp steadfast and true. uphold me. time the enemy is refusing to budge.

'White Christmas Eve' (Prendergast 1991)

Richard James Allen is a poet who has lived and worked extensively in both Australia and America. His prose poem, 'Interviews for the Freedom of Dreams' (of which an extract is given below), might also seem to be generated through phrase manipulation. Each phrase is a striking image, an evocative little world in itself. But all the phrases also network together to produce a panorama of ideas about history, language, society and identity: this would be difficult to achieve in a poem committed to a sharp but narrower focus. Notice how the phrases surge relentlessly forward, partly through substitution of some words and retention of others. Note also how sound, though used unobtrusively, is an important factor: 'bill' suggests 'bizarre', 'clearing house' suggests 'conspiracy'. This creates cohesion between the phrases and makes them seem less disparate:

Example 1.19

a beginning that now seems arbitrary, an end that will seem arbitrary. a bill of hope. a bill of tragedy. a bizarre series of countries we keep passing through like mirrors. a carnival of mixed messages. a clearing house for the emotions. a conspiracy of legs. a course in applied moods. a family of books. a flag flapping against the prose. a halo of history. a halo of words. a history of imagination. a history of sewerage. a history of thunderclaps. a hotel in the mouth. a magical connection to unhappiness. a mathematical land where the pieces add up. a memory of ladders. a peach in the road. a prolonged disassociation of the naming capacity. a revised history of paradise. a theory that includes itself. a walk through footage. a symphony of pure minds. a truly lonely book. an alphabet stairway. an encyclopedia of images. an

unadorned and unpropitious work. an uncomfortably colourful world. another concept of imagination. another crucifixion in terms. another day in this pretty world of ours. are we sharing the same century? at the end of character, what begins? battles across the marne, the toy soldier game, the uglinesses of his childhood coming back, little blotches of unsatisfied time, pockets of emptiness, an enormous gap to be filled, hours to cross like miles, he was searching for a mission, yes, a cause, and made a kind of cause of himself. bethlehem attachments. beware of angels. bizzare little prophets. casting memories. catapults of language. children vomiting in books out of jealousy because their national hero is not getting published. climbing out of the valley of the ordinary. competing for the thoughts of god. competing for the house of the past. copyright in paradise. courting fallen angels. dancing in the future. dead or a string quartet. do dreams have assets? does jimmie have boundaries? does jimmie think late night tv staves off death? dream images of a hundred white generals pulling an enormous black leg. dreaming about having sleep as a job. dreams with huge casts of strange, strange characters. each book only the beginning of what it is necessary to say. each step closer to the world, the more it blurs. erase all distinguishing marks.

From 'Interviews for the Freedom of Dreams' (Allen 1993, p. 29)

The following piece, an extract from a collaboration *Neither the One nor the Other*, between British poets Frances Presley and Elizabeth James, is again based on phrase manipulation: it employs many of the strategies already discussed to witty effect, using the initial sentence as a base but also working away from it. The technique allows the poets to take words closely related in sound (past, pastoral, aporia, parsnip, etc.) to produce meanings to do with history, language, religion and the environment. These accumulate in such a way as to effectively question (though not through linear argument or logical sequence) the supremacy of the pastoral tradition in literature:

Example 1.20

We need to approach the pastoral with care and remember that it's not a convenient utpoa

(out-take)

we need
we need to approach

we need to approach the past
to approach the past we need we need
to approach the pastoral
we need to approach the pastoral in a car
o approach the pastoral with care
we read to poach the pastor
to cart toward aporia
approach the waste and pare the weed to the core
to catch a parsnip

and remember that it's not
and remember that it's not a convent
and remember that it's a con

ut poesia pastoralis

From *Neither the One nor the Other* (Presley & James 1999, no pages)

WORD POOLS

Exercise 1c asks you to create a pool of words and then combine the words into unusual and striking combinations. The words that make up the pool do not necessarily have to relate to each other, in fact the exercise will probably work better if they are unconnected in meaning. Choose some verbs, nouns and adjectives which are colourful or strong. Begin by creating a pool of about 15–20 words:

Example 1.21: Word pool
Time

clock excrement
step vomit bicycle
word fidget
blood drift
mouth loss squat

sense wail ladder

Once you have done that, juggle the words into combinations which seem to be evocative, unusual and striking. By this I mean forge phrases such as 'time squats', or 'sense wails', which create a metaphorical effect. You may

use joining words such as 'of' or 'is' which bind the words together into a phrase, or employ the word 'like' to form a comparison. It often works well if you follow a noun with a verb but there are many alternatives:

Example 1.22: Combinations from the word pool
time squats
sense wails
sense vomits
blood words
the clock's drift
words fidget
time's excrement

As you move through these language-based exercises, you may find that a poem, or piece of prose, is emerging which leads you off on a tangent from the exercise. By all means do submit to this process as it may lead towards a really committed piece of writing. But also try, in other pieces, sticking strictly to the exercise, so that you develop expertise with that technique.

You may also want to combine two of the exercises, such as word association and phrase permutation. Again begin by keeping them separate, and then mix them if you wish.

RUNNING WITH THE REFERENT

So far we have been exploring language-based strategies, but sometimes you will want to start with a specific idea, or event, as the basis of your creative text. This is what I call a **referent-based** strategy (see Exercise 2). Referent here means the object or event to which the text refers. The referent for a creative text can be an object, event or mood on which the text is based. So if you write a poem about your unhappy love affair, you are using the love affair as a referent. Some different types of referent are:

- object
- event
- idea
- emotion
- political issue.

You can see from this that anything can be a referent, even the most mundane object. Once you realise this, it is very liberating because it means that anything, however ordinary, can form the basis for your

writing. You can then 'run' with the referent: that is, let it suggest all sorts of different directions, some of which you will follow, some of which you will discard.

Let us think about each kind of referent listed above in turn, though these categories in practice overlap (and referents will generally run into each other, like different coloured clothes which have been washed together). An object referent might be a tree or a book; an event, a quarrel or a lunch-party; an idea, the essence of time or the status of truth; an emotion, anger or joy; a political issue, environmental pollution or the treatment of refugees. And, of course, you might create a poem or fiction based on several referents. In fact a central issue in literary theory has been the notion that any text is intrinsically political, because it is always written from a particular ideological position. In other words, all texts—because they are ideological—have a political referent, even if it is not very overt.

Exercise 2 asks you to write a creative text based on the mirror, the map or the machine (all of which are object referents). Your creative text can be a poem, a description or a short sketch: the form you feel will most suit your ideas. This exercise is designed to show you that almost any referent can be milked for ideas. Of course, when you are running with a referent, you will also need writing technique to shape your text. As I said before, most writing is a combination of language-based and referent-based strategies. If you play with language it produces ideas which you can then consider, if you begin with an idea it has to manifest itself in language, so you may find yourself moving backwards and forwards between the two strategies. For example, you might come up with an idea and work with that on one page, and then you might play with language on another page, and then bring the two together.

THE MEDIUM IS THE MIRROR

The mirror is a powerful referent because it has many symbolic, cultural and philosophical resonances. We look in the mirror and see ourselves reflected back, but not always in a way we expect or want. There is a mismatch between ourselves and our mirror images: they are never identical to each other. This produces a 'split self', the implications of which are theorised in more detail in Chapter 8. The mirror also projects society's expectations of how we (women in particular) should look: expectations we can never fully meet. But the concept of the mirror is also influential much more broadly, for example, in the way we think about history, since different eras often reflect each other (though this mirror may also be a

distorting lens). And the mirror is haunted by the relationship between illusion and reality, since the image both reflects and intercepts the real. The mirror, then, has many different connotations, and any text may engage with several of these meanings at once.

Some possible aspects of the mirror you might want to emphasise could be:

- as a metaphor for identity
- the inversion of the image in the mirror
- body image
- looking in the mirror as a form of introspection
- a distorting mirror
- a room of mirrors
- memory as a series of mirrors
- history as a series of mirrors
- the gendered mirror
- working by association. Ideas related to the mirror such as shadows, echoes, reflections, twins and likenesses (you may be able to work outwards from the idea of the mirror into related concepts).

As you 'run' with the referent you might make a list of possible ideas you could follow up, or jot down phrases or words that come to mind, but still feel unable to cohere them into a creative text. Here are some of the ways that you can mobilise the ideas in broad outline:

- using the mirror as part of an incident
- describing the sensation of looking in the mirror
- using the mirror as a metaphor.

The referent can therefore be employed as a means of exploring psychological or political content. Through the mirror we might probe the fluid or unstable nature of identity; through the map, the complexities of migration; through the machine, the problems of mechanisation in contemporary society. The interest of the map or the mirror, in particular, is that they lend themselves to metaphor. The mirror, for example, can become a metaphor for subjectivity.

Let's look at some examples of using the mirror as a referent, firstly Rhyll McMaster's poem 'The Mirror'.

Example 1.23

I look into the mirror of my life
and see my mother.

She glares back at me
warningly.
She says, 'I'm bitterly disappointed.'

Then she says,
'You're lucky.'

I turn my eyes.
Even sideways I still catch glimpses
of clenched jaws, pursed lips
hurt senses.

'I'm most upset.
You can't survive,' she says
'without deep resentment.'

'The Mirror' (McMaster 1994, p. 121)

In this (fairly conventional but strong) poem the mirror is used as a way of thinking about identity and our genetic and familial heritage. The speaker looks into the mirror of her life hoping to see herself, but only finds the dominating presence of her mother and her own unwelcome likeness to her. The poem exploits the mirror image to convey the power struggle between mother and daughter, and to challenge the ideological assumption that such relationships are close and harmonious. But the mirror also symbolises the tension between the burden of our heritage and the potential of what we can achieve.

The mirror image often appears in novels. In the following extract from American writer Carson McCullers's *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter*, the mirror symbolises the ambivalence of memory, and Biff's reassessment of his identity, when the death of his wife ends their dull, limited yet secure marriage:

Example 1.24

Biff uncorked the bottle. He stood shirtless before the mirror and dabbed some of the perfume on his dark, hairy armpits. The scent made him stiffen. He exchanged a deadly secret glance with himself in the mirror and stood motionless. He was stunned by the memories brought to him with the perfume, not because of their clarity, but because they gathered together the whole long span of years and were complete. Biff rubbed his nose and looked sideways at himself. The boundary of death. He felt in him each minute that

he had lived with her. And now their life together was whole as only the past can be whole. Abruptly Biff turned away.

From *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter* (McCullers 1981, p. 198)

Here the mirror is integrated into the narrative with other symbolic elements, such as the scent of the perfume. The passage follows the sentence 'He seldom thought of her', and precedes a paragraph in which we are told how Biff has 'done over' the bedroom which before had been 'tacky and flossy and drab', and made it much more attractive, bright and modern, 'luxurious and sedate'. We are informed that 'in this room nothing reminded him of her', though at the same time Alice's scent bottle constantly brings back the past, and some of its more positive aspects, such as the period before they were married. Looking in the mirror symbolises the balance between commemorating the past and moving on from it.

American writer Don DeLillo's novel *The Body Artist* also deals with the relationship between death and self. In this passage the mirror image is a way of re-membering and re-embodying the mourned person. The passage also suggests that the mirror has a life of its own and that different mirrors present the same reality in their own distinctive way:

Example 1.25

When she could not remember what he looked like, she leaned into a mirror and there he was, not really, only hintingly, barely at all, but there in a way, in a manner of thinking, in some mirrors more than others, more than rueful reproduction, depending on the hour and the light and the quality of the glass, the strategies of the glass, with its reversal of left and right, this room or that, because every image in every mirror is only virtual, even when you expect to see yourself.

From *The Body Artist* (DeLillo 2001, pp. 112–13)

In British novelist Julian Barnes's novel *Love, etc*, Oliver contemplates a past incident involving his wife Gillian. He meditates, in his own effusive and exaggerated voice, on how useful it would be if we all had a rear-view mirror to keep track of the past and its impact:

Example 1.26

So there I was, two-wheeling out of your sight past glinting steel silos crammed with the crushed blood of the Minervois grape, while Gillian was doing a fast-fade in my rear-view mirror. A gauche

term, don't you find—rear-view mirror—so filled with plod and particularity? Compare the snappier French: *rétroviseur*. Retrovision: how much we wish we had it, eh? But we live our lives without such useful little mirrors magnifying the road just travelled. We barrel up the A61 towards Toulouse, looking ahead, looking ahead. Those who forget their history are condemned to repeat it. The *rétroviseur*: essential for not just road safety but the race's survival. Oh dear, I feel an advertising slogan coming on.

From *Love, etc*, (Barnes 2001, pp. 18–19)

In my own prose poem 'Mirror' the metaphor of the mirror keeps changing:

Example 1.27

The mirror hangs slightly crooked on the wall, thin and long like a mask. Sometimes it seems to be part of the wall, sometimes it seems to stand out from it. One day you look it in the eye. The next day you sit where you can avoid it.

There have been days when you have taken the mirror off the wall and carried it across your back like a cross, sagging under its weight. There have been times when the mirror seemed to dissolve and you dipped your hand in it and smeared it over you. These are the worst.

There is a man in the mirror who tries to speak but he cannot make sounds. There is only a fish mouth darting and hands frenetically gesticulating.

Once you hung a cloth over the glass as if it were in disgrace. And you often smooth over the edges trying to bend them. You try to teach your friend tricks, how to draw rabbits out of a hat. Or you play love games with her, putting your hand behind her neck and stroking her.

There are moments when the mirror is made of layers you can peel away, labels from their sticky backs. Sometimes you smear the sheet with blood, or toothpaste, or chalk words on it. You long to walk through the looking-glass, but you do not dare to take the risk.

You feel good when you move the magnet and it cannot move without you. But it can screen a stranger's thoughts or the mirror image of a dream.

Once you cut your finger on the uncompromising edge.

> Sometimes you turn the mirror to the wall, or you look into the mirror and see nothing, or you mistake a new reflection for your face.
>
> 'Mirror' (Smith 2000, p. 11)

Here the mirror is a way of exploring the tension between what we are and what we would like to be; the instability of identity (and gender); and the fusion of reality and illusion. The mirror is a fluid image and appears in the poem in various guises, for example as 'a glass', 'a magnet' and a 'cross'.

'Mirrors' by Australian writer Richard Lunn is an experimental short story about an upper-class, monied woman who is having an adulterous affair. The piece is written in sections, and realistic scenes are juxtaposed with highly symbolic passages about a mirror maze, in which the woman and her lover feel trapped, but which they also find erotically stimulating. When the man and woman try to fight their way out of the maze the man 'dies', and the woman is left to struggle on her own. At this point the text forcefully conveys the woman's confrontation with the mirrors, and her struggle to control the images which threaten to multiply, fragment and overpower her:

Example 1.28

> A slow, cold anger takes hold of her and hurls her like a stone through corridors of glass. A mirror crazes around her fist and breaks apart. Another follows, then another, but hunger and exhaustion too are fists, which beat inside her as she moves until, as if she were a shattering reflection amongst a host of shattering reflections, she stumbles to the floor. Unconscious hours pass in which her memories fragment and merge with fantasies, as multiple reflections might break apart and merge into reality. For when she wakes there is no past that she recalls, no thought or feeling but the anger that hurls her down the corridors. Emptied of memories, devoid of fear or regret, she marches through the gleaming chambers. Her images swagger beside her, raise bloodied arms and smash themselves to tinkling shards. She lies on floors in jagged puddles of reflections and rushes up glass tunnels in a headlong herd of selves. She feels at times as if she's nothing but a moving consciousness, a disembodied, many-bodied anger, nowhere and everywhere, conquering whole armies of herself. Her body streams with red medals. She lifts her fist to smash a mirror. It tinkles into splinters and reveals a man face down upon the floor.
>
> From 'Mirrors' (Lunn 1986, p. 9)

All these passages, then, explore different approaches to writing about the power of the mirror. Now try your own!

CONCLUSION

Playing with language and running with referents are fundamental approaches to writing, and can be used by beginners and more advanced writers alike. Although these strategies are introductory ones, they will form the bread and butter of your writing as it develops, and you will be able to add many more such techniques to your repertoire. You may use them to generate finished texts, or simply as ways of starting the process of writing. Over a period of time, they can be integrated into your writing with various degrees of complexity, for example a text will usually run with several referents at once, while language- and referent-based strategies are not mutually exclusive and will often be used together. This book builds on these fundamental strategies and they are implicit throughout, but sometimes return more directly. Chapter 8, for example, suggests many more exercises for playing with language, while Chapter 12 helps you to develop a particular referent, the city, in considerable depth.

REFERENCES

Allen, R. 1993, 'Interviews for the Freedom of Dreams', *Hope For a Man Named Jimmie & Grand Illusion Joe*, Five Islands Press, Wollongong, pp. 27–34.

Barnes, J. 2001, *Love, etc*, Picador, London. First published in 2000 by Jonathan Cape.

Belsey, C. 2002, *Critical Practice*, 2nd edn, Routledge, London. First published in 1980 by Methuen.

Brooke-Rose, C. 1994, *Amalgamemnon*, Dalkey Archive Press, Normal, Illinois. Originally published in 1984 by Carcanet Press, Great Britain.

Crawford, E. 1992, 'word association', unpublished.

Culler, J. 1976, *Saussure*, Fontana Press, London.

DeLillo, D. 2001, *The Body Artist*, Picador, London.

Hawkes, T. 1977, *Structuralism and Semiotics*, Methuen, London.

Lunn, R. 1986, 'Mirrors', *Transgressions: Australian Writing Now*, (ed.) D. Anderson, Penguin Australia, Ringwood, Victoria, pp. 3–11.

Lysenko, M. 1998, 'Under The Tree', *Winning and Losing*, Hit & Miss Publishers, Brunswick, Victoria.

McCullers, C. 1981, *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter*, Penguin, Harmondsworth, Middlesex. First published in 1943 by The Cresset Press.

McMaster, R. 1994, 'The Mirror', *Flying the Coop: New and Selected Poems 1972–1994*, Heinemann, Sydney.

Nealon, J.T. and Giroux, S.S. 2003, *The Theory Toolbox: Critical Concepts for the Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences*, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., Lanham, Maryland.

Prendergast, G. 1991, 'White Christmas Eve', unpublished.

Presley, F. and James, E. 1999, *Neither the One nor the Other*, Form Books, London.

Smith, H. 2000, 'Mirror', *Keys Round Her Tongue: Short Prose, Poems and Peformance Texts*, Soma Publications, Sydney.

Sweeney, M. 1993a, 'phrase manipulation', unpublished.

—— 1993b, 'word association', unpublished.

Walwicz, A. 1989, 'wonderful', *Boat*, Angus & Robertson, Sydney, pp. 249–52.

REFERENCES

Atwood, M. 1982, *Lady Oracle*, Virago Press, London. First published in 1977 by André Deutsch Limited, Great Britain.

Auster, P. 2002, *The Book of Illusions*, Henry Holt & Co., New York.

Barthelme, D. 1993, 'The Balloon', *60 Stories*, Penguin, Harmondsworth, Middlesex, pp. 53–8.

Belsey, C. 2002, *Critical Practice*, 2nd edn, Routledge, London. First published in 1980 by Methuen.

Carter, A. 1981, *The Magic Toyshop*, Virago, London. First published in 1967 by William Heinemann.

DeLillo, D. 1986, *White Noise*, Picador, London.

Dransfield, M. 1991, 'A Strange Bird', *The Penguin Book of Modern Australian Poetry*, (eds) J. Tranter and P. Mead, Penguin Books Australia, Ringwood, Victoria.

Grenville, K. and Woolfe, S. (eds) 1993, *Making Stories: How Ten Australian Novels Were Written*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney.

Plath, S. 1981, 'Words', *Collected Poems*, Faber & Faber, London.

Tan, A. 1998, 'Mirror', unpublished.

Williams, W.C. 1976, 'The Red Wheelbarrow', S*elected Poems*, Penguin, Harmondsworth, Middlesex.

REFERENCES

Brewster, A. and Smith, H. 2002, 'ProseThetic Memories', *Salt.v16. An International Journal of Poetry and Poetics: Memory Writing*, (ed). T.-A. White, Salt Publishing, Applecross, Western Australia, pp. 199–211.

Cohen, B. 1992, *Tourism*, Picador, Sydney.

Croggon, A. 1997, 'Pause', *The Blue Gate,* Black Pepper, North Fitzroy, Victoria.

Davies, H.S. 1964, 'Poem: "In the stump of the old tree . . ."', *Poetry of the Thirties*, (ed.) R. Skelton, Penguin, Harmondsworth, Middlesex.

Eagleton, T. 1996, *Literary Theory*, 2nd edn, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis.

Eliot, T.S. 1963, *Collected Poems 1909–1962*, Faber & Faber, London.

Gerrard, I. 1999, 'A World, A Girl, A Memory: act one', *Unsweetened*, (eds) R. Caudra and A. Phillips, UNSW Union, Sydney.

Haddon, M. 2003, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time*, David Fickling Books, Oxford.

Hawkes, T.S. 1977, *Structuralism and Semiotics*, Methuen, London.

Hejinian, L. 1987, *My Life*, Sun & Moon Press, Los Angeles.

—— 2003, *My Life in the Nineties*, Shark Books, New York.

Kumagai, Y.J. 1995, 'Untitled', *Her Space-Time Continuum*, University Editions, Huntingdon, West Virginia.

Lyons, G. 1996, '90s Market', unpublished.

McKemmish, J. 1985, *A Gap in the Records*, Sybylla Cooperative Press & Publications, Melbourne.

Perloff, M. 1991, *Radical Artifice: Writing Poetry in the Age of Media*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

Silliman, R. 1981, *Tjanting*, The Figures, Great Barrington, Massechusets.

—— 1986, 'I Meet Osip Brik', *The Age of Huts*, Roof Books, New York, pp. 76–8.

Tavallaei, M.N. 1996, 'School of English', *New Literatures Review*, vol. 32.

REFERENCES

Brewster, A. and Smith, H. 2002, 'ProseThetic Memories', *Salt.v16. An International Journal of Poetry and Poetics: Memory Writing*, (ed). T.-A. White, Salt Publishing, Applecross, Western Australia, pp. 199–211.

Carter, A. 1981, *The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories*, Penguin, London.

Coltheart, A. 1998, 'Untitled', unpublished.

Costello, M. 1994, 'Covering Letters (A Found Story)', *Small Ecstasies*, University of Queensland Press, St Lucia, Queensland.

Duggan, L. 1987, *The Ash Range*, Pan Books, Sydney.

Eliot, T.S. 1963, *Collected Poems 1909–1962*, Faber & Faber, London.

Mac Low, J. 1985, *The Virginia Woolf Poems*, Burning Deck, Providence.

Matterson, S. 1990, 'Contemporary and Found', *World, Self, Poem: Essays on Contemporary Poetry from the 'Jubiliation of Poets'*, (ed.) L.M. Trawick, The Kent State University Press, Kent, Ohio, pp. 187–95.

Phillips, T. 1980, *A Humument: A Treated Victorian Novel*, Thames & Hudson, London.

Rhys, J. 1966, *Wide Sargasso Sea*, W.W. Norton & Company, New York.

Stewart, A. 1998, '.romance (1981)', *I/T: Selected Poems 1980–1996*, Here & There Books/Split Records, Sydney, Book and CD.

Williams, W.C. 1983, *Paterson*, Penguin, Harmondsworth, Middlesex. First published in 1963 in one volume by New Directions Books.

Wolfreys, J. 2004, *Critical Keywords in Literary and Cultural Theory*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke, Hampshire.

Young, I. 1972, 'Poem Found in a Dime Store Diary', *Contemporaries: Twenty-Eight New American Poets*, (eds) J. Malley and H. Tokay, Viking Press, New York.

REFERENCES

Achilles, S. 1995, *Waste*, Local Consumption Press, Sydney.

Amis, M. 2003, *Time's Arrow or The Nature of the Offence*, Vintage, London. First published in 1991 in Britain by Jonathan Cape.

Atwood, M. 1994, *The Robber Bride*, Virago, London.

Barnes, J. 2001, *Love, etc*, Picador, London. First published in 2000 by Jonathan Cape.

Barthelme, F. 1989, 'Shopgirls', *Enchanted Apartments, Sad Motels: Thirty Years of American Fiction*, (ed.) D. Anderson, McPhee Gribble Publishers, Melbourne, pp. 49–62.

Barthes, R. 1974, *S/Z*, (trans.) R. Miller, Hill & Wang, New York.

Bhabha, H. 1994, *The Location of Culture*, Routledge, London.

Borges, J.L. 1970, 'The Shape of the Sword', *Labyrinths: Selected Stories and Other Writings*, Penguin, Harmondsworth, Middlesex, pp. 96–101.

Chatman, S. 1978, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York.

Coetzee, J.M. 2003, *Elizabeth Costello: Eight Lessons*, Knopf, Random House Australia, Sydney.

Currie, M. 1998, *Postmodern Narrative Theory*, Macmillan Press, Basingstoke, Hampshire.

Danaher, G., Schirato, T. and Webb, J. 2000, *Understanding Foucault*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney.

Faulkner, W. 1963, *As I Lay Dying*, New York, Penguin London. First published in 1930 in the United States.

Frame, J. 1989, 'Jan Godfrey', *Goodbye to Romance: Stories by Australian and New Zealand Women 1930s–1980s*, (eds) E. Webby and L. Wevers, Allen & Unwin, Wellington, pp. 122–6.

Hawking, S.W. 1988, *A Brief History of Time: From the Big Bang to Black Holes*, Bantam Press, London.

King, N. 2000, *Memory, Narrative, Identity: Remembering the Self*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh.

Malouf, D. 1986, 'The Empty Lunch-Tin', *Transgressions: Australian Writing Now*, (ed.) D. Anderson, Penguin, Ringwood, Victoria, pp. 97–103.

Maso, C. 1995, *The American Woman in the Chinese Hat*, Plume, New York.

Middleton, P. and Woods, T. 2000, *Literatures of Memory: History, Time and Space in Postwar Writing*, Manchester University Press, Manchester and New York.

Morrison, T. 1988, *Beloved*, Picador, London.

Ozick, C. 1998, *The Puttermesser Papers*, Vintage International, New York.

Rhys, J. 1966, *Wide Sargasso Sea*, W.W. Norton & Company, New York.

Rimmon-Kenan, S. 1983, *Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics*, Methuen, London and New York.

Trezise, B. 2000, 'An All-time Favourite Motto', *Unsweetened*, (eds) S. O'Leary, A. Lucas and S. Yip, UNSW Union.

Vine, B. 1998, *The Chimney Sweeper's Boy*, Penguin, London.

REFERENCES

Albee, E. 1965, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, Penguin, London.

Amis, M. 2003, *Time's Arrow or The Nature of the Offence*, Vintage, London. First published in 1991 in Britain by Jonathan Cape.

Barthelme, D. 1987, *Paradise*, Penguin, New York.

Brewster, A. and Smith, H. 2002, 'ProseThetic Memories', *Salt.v16. An International Journal of Poetry and Poetics: Memory Writing*, (ed.) T.-A. White, Salt Publishing, Applecross, Western Australia, pp. 199–211.

Bronte, C. 1985, *Jane Eyre*, Penguin, London. First published in 1847.

Burton, D. 1980, *Dialogue and Discourse: A Sociolinguistic Approach to Modern Drama Dialogue and Naturally Occurring Conversation*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London.

Chernoff, M. 2000, 'The Sound', *The Prose Poem: An International Journal*, vol. Web Issue 5, http://www.webdelsol.com/tpp/tpp5/tpp5_chernoff.html.

Danaher, G., Schirato, T. and Webb, J. 2000, *Understanding Foucault*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney.

Foreman, R. 1977, 'Pandering to the Masses: A Misrepresentation', *The Theatre of Images*, (ed.) B. Marranca, Drama Book Specialists, New York, pp. 1–36.

Haddon, M. 2003, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time*, David Fickling Books, Oxford.

Hejinian, L. and Scalapino, L. 2000, *Sight*, Aerial/Edge, Washington.

Holquist, M.J., (ed.), 1981, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays by M.M. Bakhtin*, (trans.) by Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist, University of Texas Press, Austin.

Johnstone, K. 1981, *Impro: Improvisation and the Theatre*, Methuen, London and Boston.

Kinsella, J. and Hull, C. 2000, *Zoo*, Paper Bark Press, Sydney.

Miller, A. 1985, *Death of a Salesman*, Penguin, Harmondsworth, Middlesex.

Pinter, H. 1990, 'Last to Go', *Complete Works: Two*, Grove Press, New York, pp. 245–8.

Presley, F. and James, E. 1999, *Neither the One nor the Other*, Form Books, London.

Wilson, R. 1977, 'A Letter For Queen Victoria', *Theatre of Images*, (ed.) B. Marranca, Drama Book Specialists, pp. 37–110.

REFERENCES

Auster, P. 1988, 'City of Glass', *The New York Trilogy*, Faber & Faber, London, pp. 3–132.

Barnes, J. 1990, *A History of the World in 10½ Chapters*, Picador, Oxford.

Barth, J. 1987, *Giles Goat-Boy or, The Revised New Syllabus*, Doubleday, New York.

Calvino, I. 1978, *Invisible Cities*, Harcourt Brace & Company, New York and London.

—— 1993, *Cosmi-Comics*, Picador, London.

Coover, R. 1989, 'The Elevator', *Pricksongs and Descants*, Minerva, London.

DeLillo, D. 1989, *Libra*, Penguin, New York and London.

Doctorow, E. 1982, *The Book of Daniel*, Picador, London.

Ellis, B.E. 1991, *American Psycho*, Picador, London.

Fowles, J. 1987, *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, Pan, London. First published in 1969 in Great Britain by Jonathan Cape.

Gearhart, S.M. 1979, *The Wanderground: Stories of the Hill Women*, Persephone Press, Watertown, Massachusetts.

Gibbs, A. and Tilson, A. (eds), 1983, *Frictions: An Anthology of Fiction by Women*, 2nd edn, Sybylla Cooperative Press and Publications, Melbourne.

Gibson, W. 1984, *Neuromancer*, Ace Books, New York.

Hawking, S.W. 1988, *A Brief History of Time: From the Big Bang to Black Holes*, Bantam Press, London.

Hoban, R. 1982, *Riddley Walker*, Picador, London. First published in 1980 by Jonathan Cape.

Hutcheon, L. 1988, *A Poetics of Postmodernism: History, Theory, Fiction*, Routledge, London.

Imamura, S. 1983, *The Ballad of Narayama*, Home Vision.

Ishiguro, K. 1996, *The Unconsoled*, Faber & Faber, London.

LeGuin, U. 1981, *The Left Hand of Darkness*, Futura, London. First published in 1969 in Great Britain by Macdonald and Co.

McHale, B. 1989, *Postmodernist Fiction*, Routledge, London and New York.

Morrison, T. 1988, *Beloved*, Picador, London.

Olsen, L. 1999, *Rebel Yell*, 2nd edn, Cambrian Publications, San Jose, California.

Raine, C. 1982, 'A Martian Sends a Postcard Home', *The Penguin Book of Contemporary British Poetry*, (eds), B. Morrison and A. Motion, Penguin, Harmondsworth, Middlesex.

Rimmon-Kenan, S. 1983, *Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics*, Methuen, London and New York.

Rushdie, S. 1995, *Shame*, Vintage, London. First published in 1983 in Great Britain by Jonathan Cape.

Smith, H. 2000a, *Hyperscapes in the Poetry of Frank O'Hara: Difference, Homosexuality, Topography*, Liverpool University Press, Liverpool.

—— 2000b, 'Viola's Quilt', *Keys Round Her Tongue: Short Prose, Poems and Performance Texts*, Soma Publications, Sydney.

Swift, G. 1992, *Waterland*, Picador, London. Revised edn.

REFERENCES

Allnutt, G., D'Aguiar, F., Edwards, K. and Mottram, E. (eds), 1988, *The New British Poetry: 1968–88*, Paladin, London.

Bernstein, C. 1983, 'The Klupzy Girl', *Islets/Irritations*, Roof Books, New York, pp. 47–51.

—— 1991, 'Of Time and the Line', *Rough Trades*, Sun & Moon Press, New York.

—— 1992a, *A Poetics*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

—— 1992b, 'State of the Art', *A Poetics*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, pp. 1–8.

—— 1999a, 'A Defence of Poetry', *My Way: Speeches and Poems*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

—— 1999b, *My Way: Speeches and Poems*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

Bok, C. 2001, *Eunoia*, Coach House Books, Toronto.

Brennan, M. and Minter, P. 2000, *Calyx: 30 Contemporary Australian Poets*, Paper Bark Press, Sydney.

Calvino, I. 1992, *If on a Winter's Night a Traveller*, (trans.) W. Weaver, Minerva, London. First published in 1981 in Great Britain.

Clark, T. 1994, ' "Like Musical Instruments . . ." ', *Postmodern American Poetry: A Norton Anthology*, (ed.) P. Hoover, W.W. Norton & Company, New York.

Clarke, S. 2002, 'Bent', *Unsweetened*, (eds) M. Armour, S. Scroope and S. Shamraka, UNSW Union, Sydney.

Coleman, W. 1994, 'the ISM', *Postmodern American Poetry: A Norton Anthology*, (ed.) P. Hoover, W.W. Norton & Company, New York.

Culler, J. 1975, *Structuralist Poetics: Structuralism, Linguistics and the Study of Literature*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London.

—— 1981, *The Pursuit of Signs: Semiotics, Literature, Deconstruction*, Cornell University Press, New York.

de Wit, J. 1986, 'I Am Told', *Rose Poems*, Actual Size, Colchester, Essex.

Evans, S. 2004, 'Left', *Taking Shape*, Five Islands Press, Wollongong.

Garcia, B. 2000, 'Jouissance', unpublished.

Hampson, R. and Barry, P. 1993, *New British Poetries: The Scope of the Possible*, Manchester University Press, Manchester.

Hejinian, L. 1987, *My Life*, Sun & Moon Press, Los Angeles.

Hoover, P. (ed.) 1994, *Postmodern American Poetry: A Norton Anthology*, W.W. Norton & Company, New York.

Huang, Y. 1996, 'Tofu Your Life', *Tinfish*, vol. 4.

Kristeva, J. 1986, 'Revolution in Poetic Language', *The Kristeva Reader*, (ed.) T. Moi, Basil Blackwell, Oxford.

Kumagai, Y.J. 1995a, 'In Parallel', *Her Space-Time Continuum*, University Editions, Huntingdon, West Virginia.

—— 1995b, 'Untitled', *Her Space-Time Continuum*, University Editions, Huntingdon, West Virginia.

Lew, E. 1997, 'Holes and Stars', *The Wild Reply*, Black Pepper, North Fitzroy, Victoria.

Lucas, J. 1999, 'Poem: i.m. John Forbes', *Cordite*, vols 6 and 7.

Mathews, H. and Brotchie, A. 1998, *Oulipo Compendium*, Atlas Press, London.

Messerli, D. (ed.) 1994, *From The Other Side of the Century: A New American Poetry 1960–1990*, Sun & Moon Press, Los Angeles.

Monk, G. 1988, 'Make-Up', *The New British Poetry: 1968–88*, (eds) G. Allnutt, F. D'Aguiar, K. Edwards and E. Mottram, Paladin, London.

Motte, W.F. Jr. (ed.) 1986, *Oulipo: A Primer of Potential Literature*, University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln and London.

Murphy, P. and PiO (eds.) 1981, *Missing Forms: Concrete, Visual and Experimental Poems*, Collective Effort, Melbourne.

Murray, D. 1989, 'Unity and Difference: Poetry and Criticism', *Literary Theory and Poetry: Extending the Canon*, (ed.) D. Murray, Batsford, London, pp. 4–22.

O'Sullivan, M. 1996a, 'A Lesson from the Cockerel', *Out of Everywhere: Linguistically Innovative Poetry by Women in North America & the UK*, (ed.) M. O'Sullivan, Reality Street Editions, London.

—— 1996b, (ed.) *Out of Everywhere: Linguistically Innovative Poetry by Women in North America & the UK*, Reality Street Editions, London.

Perec, G. 1996, *Life A User's Manual*, (trans.), D. Bellos, The Harvill Press, London.

Perelman, B. 1996, *The Marginalization of Poetry: Language Writing and Literary History*, Princeton University Press, Princeton.

Perloff, M. 1991, *Radical Artifice: Writing Poetry in the Age of Media*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

—— 1998, *Poetry On & Off the Page: Essays for Emergent Occasions,* Northwestern University Press, Evanston, Illinois.

Plath, S. 1981, 'Stillborn', *Collected Poems*, Faber & Faber, London.

Porter, D. 1991, 'P.M.T.', *The Penguin Book of Modern Australian Poetry*, (eds) J. Tranter and P. Mead, Penguin, Ringwood, Victoria.

Riley, D. 1998, 'Shantung', *The Penguin Book of Poetry from Britain and Ireland since 1945*, (eds.) S. Armitage and R. Crawford, Viking, London.

Rothenberg, J. and Joris, P. 1998, *Poems for the Millennium: The University of California Book of Modern & Postmodern Poetry. Volume Two: From Postwar to Millennium*, Berkeley, University of California Press.

Schultz, S.M. 2000, 'Crossing the Bar', *Aleatory Allegories*, Salt Publishing, Cambridge, UK.

Silliman, R. 1986a, 'I am Marion Delgado', *The Age of Huts*, Roof Books, New York, pp. 69–75.

—— 1986b, *In the American Tree*, National Poetry Foundation, Orono, Maine.

—— 1986c, 'Sunset Debris', *The Age of Huts*, Roof Books, New York, pp. 11–40.

—— 1987, *The New Sentence*, Roof Books, New York.

Smith, H. 2000a, *Hyperscapes in the Poetry of Frank O'Hara: Difference, Homosexuality, Topography*, Liverpool University Press, Liverpool.

—— and Dean, R. 1996, 'Nuraghic Echoes', Rufus, CD, RF025, Sydney.

Smith, H. 2000b, 'The Riting of the Runda' *Keys Round Her Tongue: Short Prose, Poems and Performance Texts*, Soma Publications, Sydney.

Vickery, A. 2000, *Leaving Lines of Gender: A Feminist Genealogy of Language Writing*, Wesleyan University Press, Hanover and London.

Wildman, E. (ed.) 1970, *Anthology of Concretism*, 2nd edn, The Swallow Press, Chicago.

REFERENCES

Baranay, I. 1988, 'Living Alone: The New Spinster (Some Notes)', *Telling Ways: Australian Women's Experimental Writing*, (eds.) S. Gunew and A. Couani, –Australian Feminist Studies Publications, Adelaide.

Bernstein, C. 1992, 'Artifice of Absorption', *A Poetics*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, pp. 9–89.

Brewster, A. 1996, 'Fictocriticism: Undisciplined Writing', *First Conference of the Association of University Writing Programs*, (eds). J. Hutchinson and G. Williams, University of Technology Sydney, Sydney, pp. 29–32.

—— 1998, 'sucking on remembrance: encounters with the vampire and other histories of the body', *The Space Between: Australian Women Writing Fictocriticism*, (eds). H. Kerr and A. Nettelbeck, University of Western Australia Press, Nedlands, Western Australia, pp. 209–16.

Cha, T.H.K. 2001, *Dictee*, University of California Press, Berkeley. Originally published in 1982 by Tanam Press.

Costello, M. 1999, 'Learning to Drive: Reading the Signs', *Meanjin*, vol. 58, no. 3, pp. 22–32.

Danielewski, M.Z. 2001, *House of Leaves*, 2nd edn, Doubleday, London.

DuPlessis, R.B. 1990, *The Pink Guitar: Writing as Feminist Practice*, Routledge, New York.

Kerr, H. and Nettelbeck, A. (eds) 1998, *The Space Between: Australian Women Writing Fictocriticism*, University of Western Australia Press, Nedlands, Western Australia.

Lobb, J. 1994, 'synoptic novel', unpublished.

Moorhead, F. 1985, 'Novel in Ten Lines', *Quilt: A Collection of Prose*, Sybylla Co-operative Press & Publications, Melbourne.

Smith, H. 2001, 'The City and The Body', *Meanjin: Under Construction*, vol. 60, no. 1, pp. 170–5.

Smith, H., Dean, R.T. and White, G. K. republished, 'Wordstuffs: The City and The Body', Multimedia work. www.allenandunwin.com/writingexp. Originally published in 1998 and also available at http://www.abc.net.au/arts/stuff-art/stuff-art99/stuff98/10.htm.

Stern, L. 2001, *The Smoking Book*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

Wallace, D.F. 2001, 'A Radically Condensed History of Postindustrial Life', *Brief Interviews With Hideous Men*, Abacus, London, p. 0.

REFERENCES

Allen, R. J. and Pearlman, K. 1999, *Performing the UnNameable: An Anthology of Australian Performance Texts*, Currency Press, Sydney.

Amirkhanian, C. republished-a, *Church Car, Version 2*, Sound recording. (P) (C) 1981 Arts Plural Publishing (BMI). All Rights Reserved. www.allenandunwin.com/writingexp.

—— republished-b, *Dot Bunch*, Sound recording. (P) (C) 1981 Arts Plural Publishing (BMI). All Rights Reserved. www.allenandunwin.com/ writingexp.

Antin, D. 1976, *Talking at the Boundaries*, New Directions, New York.

—— 1984, *Tuning*, New Directions, New York.

—— Ongoing, http://epc.buffalo.edu/authors/antin/.

Benson, S. 1989, 'Back', *Reverse Order*, Potes & Poets Press, Elmwood, Connecticut.

Bergvall, C. 1999, 'Speaking in Tongues: John Stammer talks to Caroline Bergvall', *Magma 15*. http://magmapoetry.com/Magma15/bergvallInterview.html.

Bernstein, C. 1976, My/My/My, Sound recording. http://www.ubu.com/sound/bernstein.html.

—— (ed.) 1998, *Close Listening: Poetry and the Performed Word*, Oxford University Press, New York and Oxford.

Bok, C. republished, 'Motorised Razors' and 'Mushroom Cloud' from *The Cyborg Opera*. Sound recording. www.allenandunwin.com/writingexp. Also on UbuWeb, http://www.ubu.com/sound/bok.html.

Bulatov, D. (ed.) 2001, *Homo Sonorus: An International Anthology of Sound Poetry*, National Centre for Contemporary Art, Kaliningrad, Russia. 4 CDs and book.

Butler, J. 1990, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, Routledge, New York and London.

Flea, R. 1996, *Virtual Fleality*, Hawaii Dub Music, Honolulu. CD with accompanying chapbook published by Tinfish Net\work.

Giorno, J. 1972, *Vajra Kisses*, Sound recording. http://www.ubu.com/sound/giorno.html.

—— 1978, *Grasping at Emptiness*, Sound recording. http://www.ubu.com/sound/giorno.html.

Gray, S. 1987, *Swimming to Cambodia: The Collected Works of Spalding Gray*, Picador, London.

—— 1991, *Monster in a Box*, Pan Books, London, Sydney, Auckland.

Gysin, B. 1962a, *Junk is No Good Baby*, Sound recording. http://www.ubu.com/sound/gysin.html.

—— 1962b, *No Poets*, Sound recording. http://www.ubu.com/sound/ gysin.html.

Knoebel, D. republished, *How I Heard It*, Multimedia work. www.allenandunwin.com/writingexp. Previously published in *Cauldron and Net* vol. 3. http://www.studiocleo.com/cauldron/volume3/contents/index.html.

Koch, K. 1980a, 'Coil Supreme', *Scenarios: Scripts to Perform*, (ed.) R. Kostelanetz, Assembling Press, Brooklyn, New York.

—— 1980b, 'Mexico City', *Scenarios: Scripts to Perform*, (ed.) R. Kostelanetz, Assembling Press, Brooklyn, New York.

Kostelanetz, R. (ed.) 1980, *Text-Sound Texts*, William Morrow & Co., New York.

Leonard, T. 1984, *The Six O'Clock News*, Print version and sound recording. http://www.tomleonard.co.uk/sixoclock.htm.

Lora-Totino, A. (ed.) 1978, *Futura Poesia Sonora: Critical-Historical Anthology of Sound Poetry*, Cramps Records, Milan.

Mac Low, J. 1977–78, *A Vocabulary Gatha for Peter Rose*, http://www.thing.net/~grist/l&d/jmlpr.htm. Also published in J. Mac Low 1986, *Representative Works: 1938–85*, Roof Books, New York.

—— 1986, *Representative Works: 1938–1985*, Roof Books, New York.

Mali, T. republished, *Undivided Attention*, www.allenandunwin.com/writingexp. Sound recording. Also at www.taylormali.com. Poem published in 2002 in T. Mali, *What Learning Leaves*, Hanover Press, Newtown, CT.

Morris, A. (ed.) 1997, *Sound States: Innovative Poetics and Acoustical Technologies*, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill and London.

Nichol bp 1972, *Pome Poem*, Sound recording. http://www.ubu.com/sound/nichol.html.

Smith, H. 1991, *Abstractly Represented: Poems and Performance Texts 1982–90*, Butterfly Books, Sydney.

—— 1999, 'Sonic writing and sonic cross-dressing: gender, language, voice and technology', *Musics and Feminisms*, (eds.) S. Macarthur and C. Poynton, Australian Music Centre, Sydney, pp. 129–34.

—— republished, *the writer, the performer, the program, the madwoman*, Sound recording. www.allenandunwin.com/writingexp. Previously published in 2004 in *HOW2: Contemporary Innovative Writing by Women* 2004, vol. 2, No. 2 at http://www.departments.bucknell.edu/stadler_center/how2/current/multimedia/index.shtm.

Smith, H. and Dean, R.T. republished, *Poet Without Language* (extract), www.allenandunwin.com/writingexp. From H. Smith with austraLYSIS, *Poet Without Language*, 1994, Rufus, CD, 005.

Smith, H. and Dean, R.T. 1997, *Improvisation, Hypermedia and the Arts Since 1945*, Harwood Academic, London and New York.

—— 2003, 'Voicescapes and sonic structures in the creation of sound technodrama', *Performance Research*, vol. 8, no. 1, pp. 112–23.

Smith, H., Karl, S. and Jones, G. 1990, *TranceFIGUREd Spirit*, Soma, Sydney/London.

Smith, H. with austraLYSIS 1994, *Poet Without Language*, Rufus, CD, 005, Sydney.

Stewart, A. republished, *.romance (1981)*, Sound recording. www.allenandunwin.com/writingexp. Previously published in 1998 in *I/T: Selected Poems 1980–1996*, Here & There Books/Split Records, CD and Book.

Swift, T. and Norton, P. 2002, *Short Fuse: The Global Anthology of New Fusion Poetry*, Rattapallax Press, New York.

The Wordsmith Press Ongoing, http://www.thewordsmithpress.com/content/poets.php.

Tuma, K. (ed.) 2001, *Anthology of Twentieth-Century British and Irish Poetry*, Oxford University Press, New York and Oxford.

UbuWeb Ongoing, http://www.ubu.com.

Walwicz, A. 1989, 'bells', *Boat*, Angus & Robertson, Sydney.

Wishart, T. 2001, 'Tongues of Fire', *Homo Sonorus: An International Anthology of Sound Poetry*, (ed.) D. Bulatov, National Centre for Contemporary Art, Kaliningrad, Russia. 4 CDs and book.

Woods, S. republished, *Elevator Dreams*, Sound recording. www.allenandunwin.com/writingexp. Also on the Wordsmith Press Ongoing at http://www.thewordsmithpress.com/content/poets.php.

REFERENCES

Alt-X Ongoing, http://www.altx.com/.

Amerika, M. 2003, *Filmtext*, Multimedia work. http://www.altx.com/mp3/filmtext.html.

Beehive Ongoing, http://beehive.temporalimage.com/.

Breeze, M.-A. (mez) 2001, Interview with Josephine Bosma, http://www.hotkey.net.au/~netwurker/jbinterview.htm.

—— republished, *_][ad][Dressed in a Skin C.ode_*, Multimedia work. www.allenandunwin.com/writingexp. Also available at http://www.cddc.vt.edu/host/netwurker/.

Cauldron and Net Ongoing, http://www.studiocleo.com/cauldron/volume4/index1.html.

Cayley, J. Ongoing, http://www.shadoof.net/.

Dean, R.T., Brewster, A. and Smith, H. republished, *soundAFFECTs*, Multimedia work. www.allenandunwin.com/writingexp.

Electronic Literature Organisation Ongoing. http://directory.eliterature.org/.

Glazier, L.P. 1998, *(Go) Fish*, Multimedia work. http://www.ubu.com/contemp/glazier/glazier.html.

—— 2002, *Digital Poetics: The Making of E-Poetries*, The University of Alabama Press, Tuscaloosa and London.

infLect Ongoing, www.ce.canberra.edu.au/inflect.

Jackson, S. 1995, *Patchwork Girl*, Hypertext Fiction. Eastgate Systems, Watertown, Massachusetts.

Joyce, M. 1990, *Afternoon: A Story*, Hypertext Fiction. Eastgate Systems, Watertown, Massachusetts.

Landow, G.P. (ed.) 1994, *Hyper/Text/Theory*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore and London.

Larsen, D. 1996, *Samplers: Nine Vicious Little Hypertexts*, Hypertext Fiction. Eastgate Systems, Watertown, Massachusetts.

Memmott, T. 2000, *From Lexia to Perplexia*, Multimedia work in *The Iowa Review Web* at http://www.uiowa. edu/~iareview/tirweb/hypermedia/talan_memmott/.

Nelson, J. republished-a, *this will be the end of you: play6: four variable creation*, Multimedia work. www.allenandunwin.com/writingexp. Previously published in 2003 in *infLect* at http://www.ce.canberra.edu.au/inflect/01/jsonend6/ending6.swf.

—— republished-b, *this will be the end of you: play9: curious to know*, Multimedia work. www.allenandunwin.com/writingexp. Previously published in 2003 in *infLect* at http://www.ce.canberra.edu.au/inflect/01/jsonend9/ending9.swf.

Poems That Go Ongoing, http://www.poemsthatgo.com/.

Raley, R. 2003, 'Interferences: [Net.Writing] and the Practice of Codework', http://www.electronicbookreview.com/v3/servlet/ebr?command=view_essay&essay_id=rayleyele.

Sheffield Sanford, C. republished, *The Roots of Nonlinearity: Toward a Theory of Web-Specific Art-Writing*, Multimedia work. www.allenandunwin.com/writingexp. Previously published in 2000 in *Beehive* vol. 3 issue 1 at http://beehive.temporalimage.com/archive/31arc.html.

Smith, H., Dean, R.T. and White, G.K. republished, *Wordstuffs: The City and The Body*, Multimedia work. www.allenandunwin.com/writingexp. Originally published in 1998 and also available at http://www.abc.net.au/arts/stuff-art/stuff-art99/stuff98/10.htm.

Stefans, B.K. republished, *The Dreamlife of Letters*, Multimedia work. www.allenandunwin.com/writingexp. Originally created in 1999 and also available on UbuWeb at http://www.ubu.com/contemp/stefans/stefans.html.

UbuWeb Ongoing, http://www.ubu.com.

Wardip-Fruin, N. and Montfort, N. 2003, *The New Media Reader*, MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Zervos, K. republished-a, *beer*, Multimedia work. www.allenandunwin.com/writingexp. Also available at http://www.griffith.edu.au/ppages/k_zervos/.

—— republished-b, *u cannot be programmed*, Multimedia work. www.allenandunwin.com/writingexp. Also available at http://www.griffith. edu.au/ppages/k_zervos/.

REFERENCES

Achilles, S. 1995, *Waste*, Local Consumption Press, Sydney.

Atwood, M. 1990, *Cat's Eye*, Virago, London.

Auster, P. 1988, 'City of Glass', *The New York Trilogy*, Faber & Faber, London, pp. 3–132.

Bellear, L. 1996, 'Taxi', *Dreaming in Urban Areas*, University of Queensland Press, St Lucia, Queensland.

Bridge, G. and Watson, S. (eds) 2003, *A Companion to the City*, Blackwell, Oxford.

Calvino, I. 1978, *Invisible Cities*, Harcourt Brace & Company, New York and London.

Cohen, B. 1992, *Tourism*, Picador, Sydney.

de Certeau, M. 1984, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, (trans.) S. Rendall, University of California Press, Berkeley.

DeLillo, D. 2003, *Cosmopolis*, Picador, London.

Drewe, R. 1997, The Penguin Book of the City, Penguin Books Australia, Ringwood, Victoria.

Ellis, B.E. 1991, *American Psycho*, Picador, London.

Grosz, E. 1995, S*pace, Time and Perversion: The Politics of Bodies*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney.

Harvey, D. 1990, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change*, Blackwell, Oxford UK and Cambridge USA.

Kinsella, J. 1997, *Genre*, Fremantle Arts Centre Press, South Fremantle, Western Australia.

Kureishi, H. 1990, *The Buddha of Suburbia*, Faber & Faber, London.

Lehan, R. 1998, *The City in Literature: An Intellectual and Cultural History*, University of California Press, Berkeley.

Massey, D. 1994, *Space, Place and Gender*, Polity Press, Cambridge.

O'Hara, F. 1979, 'A Step Away From Them', *Collected Poems*, (ed). D. Allen, University of California Press, Berkeley.

Roy, A. 1998, *The God of Small Things*, Flamingo, London.

Smith, H. 2000, 'Secret Places', *Keys Round Her Tongue: Short Prose, Poems and Performance Texts*, Soma Publications, Sydney.

—— Ongoing, www.austraLYSIS.com.

Smith, H., Dean, R.T. and White, G.K. republished, *Wordstuffs: The City and The Body, Multimedia work*, www.allenandunwin.com/writingexp. Originally published in 1998 and also available at http://www.abc.net.au/arts/stuff-art/stuff-art99/stuff98/10.htm.