



PROTEST · RESIST · LITERATURE

PARAGON JOURNAL

DECEMBER 2017 · SPECIAL ISSUE

SEVEN FORBIDDEN WORDS

THE NEW WAY OF PROTESTING

· Fetus · Diversity · Entitlement · Transgender · Vulnerable ·

· Science-Based · Evidence-Based ·

THE PARAGON

JOURNAL

SEVEN FORBIDDEN WORDS: SPECIAL ISSUE

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THE PARAGON JOURNAL

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LETTER FROM *the editor*

Attn: President Donald J. Trump, Vice President Mike Pence, Speaker of the House Paul Ryan, and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell.

In the past few weeks, reports leaked that the Trump Administration pressured the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to censor the words “transgender,” “evidence-based,” “science-based,” “vulnerable,” “entitlement,” “diversity,” and “fetus” in all 2018 budget documents. The director of the CDC tweeted that she “want[ed] to assure [us] that there are no banned words at [the] CDC.”

Instead, several sources have tried to clarify that the language changes were merely suggestions to help make the agency’s budget more palatable to the general Republican population and its ease of passage through Congress.

The news of the banned words spread like wildfire when *The Washington Post*, stated that the Trump administration had outright prohibited the CDC from using the above listed seven words from their official budget documents. In some cases, CDC policy analysts were given alternate words that they were allowed to use. For instance, instead of “science-based,” the agency could write: “CDC bases its recommendations on science in consideration with community standards and wishes.”

The CDC, which is part of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), was not the only agency to get such a list, according another report by *The Washington Post*. Another HHS agency was banned from using “entitlement,” “diversity,” and “vulnerable” and was told to use “Obamacare” instead of “ACA”. Meanwhile State Department documents now refer to sex education as “sexual risk avoidance.”

In a media statement, the HHS said: “The assertion that HHS has ‘banned words’ is a complete mischaracterization of discussions regarding

the budget formulation process. HHS will continue to use the best scientific evidence available to improve the health of all Americans. Unnamed officials told *The New York Times* that the language changes were not bans but recommendations to basically “ease the path toward budget approval by Republicans. One unnamed federal official stated in *The New York Times* that:

It’s absurd and Orwellian, it’s stupid and Orwellian, but they are not saying to not use the words in reports or articles or scientific publications or anything else that the CDC does. They are saying not to use it in your request for money because it will hurt your chances. It is not about censoring what the CDC can say to the American public but more of a way to gain a fuller budget.

Others worried that even sliding language in a budget document could push the activities of the HHS overall. Dr. Ashish Jha, director of the Harvard Global Health Institute stated that:

So of course, the administration and its defenders are going to argue that this is only about what goes into the budget. But we know that the signal to the agency is stronger than that. And it is going to change behavior of people who work there. And that’s much more damaging than any direct censorship.

As we have seen before the CDC has a history of changing its activities ostensibly in accordance with politics, including abruptly canceling a scientific conference on climate change and health shortly after Donald Trump’s election.

Whether it is a “language style guide” or a “ban” the implications are clear: Center for Disease Control officials are concerned that certain words will trigger Republicans in Congress, leading to budget cuts. This is what the influence of extreme and dangerous ideology looks like.

Best,

Austin Shay

transgender, *adj.* and *n.*

Pronunciation: Brit. /tranz'dʒɛndə/, /trɑ:nz'dʒɛndə/, /trans'dʒɛndə/, /trɑ:ns'dʒɛndə/, U.S. /,trænz'dʒɛndər/, /,træn(t)s'dʒɛndər/

1. Of, relating to, or designating a person whose identity does not conform unambiguously to conventional notions of male or female gender, but combines or moves between these; transgendered.

1974 D. CORDELL in *Rep. First National TV.TS Conf.* 16 There is a tendency among trans-genderpeople to encourage each other. This precludes the very careful self-analysis which must take place in everyone who is proposing to undergo this therapy.

1983 K. E. STUART *Uninvited Dilemma* iii. 25 Gender conditions are quite different from sexual conditions or sexual preferences. The word transsexual is somewhat misleading, because the word sexual is incorporated into the term. Perhaps the word 'transgender' would have been a more suitable term.

1984 *News* (Portsmouth) 6 Aug. 1/4 Transgender model Bruce Laker's plans for a white wedding have been dashed.

1990 *Rouge* Winter 17/1 'Gender Dysphoria' ..is a blanket term covering the range of transgenderphenomena.

1996 F. M. SHAVER in B. Schissel & L. Mahood *Social Control in Canada* ix. 217 Male hustlers run less risk from on-the-job hazards than do either women or transgender prostitutes.

2000 *Ralph* 7 July 66/2 I assume people know I'm transgender.

Tawny Kitten | Tina L Bubonovich

Tawny Kitten is a 190-pound black lady who wears his grandmother's vintage orange lipstick when she does his Rihanna act. While she looks more like a 1960s version of Aretha Franklin with thick black eyeliner, people forget the old lead based orange glow from her lips when she sings "Diamonds" from his small Baychester chaotic studio apartment on Youtube.

Tawny is a woman who works the Gay Pride Parade each year, not to celebrate the diverse LGBT community, but to make \$200 an hour for his year's supply of clothing and Smart Cover Cosmetics to camouflage years of various abuses.

Even though Tawny's outward appearance needs a more feminine touch, it is the voice from his soul that denotes a gender binary to which most people adhere.

Now in his late twenties, Tawny is always that child wanting to sing gospel in his uncle's Grace Gospel Church on Madison Avenue. Although he can sing, his cousins take him away from church to the Starlets Strip Club down the street for "Sunday brunch" instead. He might have been only six, but his cousins do not seem to notice his age when he wears Bambi's orange studded shoes with very tall heels, rather than drool over her natural DD fun bags.

Do not get Tawny wrong; Bambi is hot for a girl of fifteen pretending to be eighteen. Although she is a teenager who lives in secret at Baychester Apartment number 532; he knows she never attends high school because his uncle is paying her \$20 an hour to play with him in the boiler room at the Grace Gospel Church.

Everybody at the Baychester knows his uncle is paying Bambi to play with him in the boiler room; except for his grandma. Monnie. Kitten's Monnie loves Jesus. While she may have been eyeless to her surrounding devil, she is always praising God's minister son every second she can get. Even when her family is eating Sunday's fried up chicken, pork chops, and chicken fried steak, she is flattering her "holy" son for the meal instead of damming him for what he is doing to her daughters in the other room.

Although she is naïve to her son's surrounding misuses, she doesn't think twice to promote Tawny Kitten's gender expression as they sing and dance to Aretha's, "Respect", before bed each night.

She is Monnie. Even though she is clueless, you can bet she is sharp by showing more love to Tawny's identity than to anyone else in the family; always allowing him alone to use her makeup vanity chair.

Not exclusive, but a third gender by nature.

On Youtube, even though everyone can see the abuses that surround him, it is when Tawny Kitten sings "Diamonds", that you can almost feel Monnie coming through that old orange lipstick by singing, "all I'm askin' for is a little respect".

I Am Forbidden | Autumn Slaughter

I am no longer allowed
to be vulnerable. To be
helped. My vulnerability taken
into account. Worked with
through the use of science
based, evidence based
measures. Will have to rely
on magic and fairy dust and
old wives-tales though many
of those wives would have
cleansed my mother of her
fetus had they known it would
cut across sexual identities, be
transgender. Those wives did
not believe in diversity. They
preferred instead to burn what
was different at the stake, and
now generations later, my people
look at back at those times and
say they were entitled to that
opinion. But I am not entitled
to my body.

vulnerable, *adj.*

Pronunciation: Brit. /ˈvʌln(ə)rəbl/, U.S. /ˈvəlnər(ə)bəl/

Etymology: late Latin vulnerābilis wounding

2. That may be wounded; susceptible of receiving wounds or physical injury.

a1616 SHAKESPEARE *Macbeth* (1623) v. x. 11 Let fall thy blade on vulnerable Crests, I beare a charmed Life.

1696 E. PHILLIPS *New World of Words* (new ed.) *Vulnerable*, that may be wounded.

1791 W. COWPER tr. Homer *Iliad* in *Iliad & Odyssey* I. IV. 606 Turn, turn, ye Trojans! face your Grecian foes. They, like yourselves, are vulnerable flesh, Not adamant or steel.

1796 J. MORSE *Amer. Universal Geogr.* (new ed.) I. 217 [Alligators having] plates or scales, said to be impenetrable..except about their heads and just behind their fore legs, where they are vulnerable.

1810 R. SOUTHEY *Curse of Kehama* ix. 91 Thrice through the vulnerable shade The Glendoveer impels the griding blade. The wicked Shade flies howling from his foe.

1867 J. B. ROSE tr. Virgil *Aeneis* 151 The vulnerable heel Of dread Æacides.

"American Dream 2" | Ann Malaspina
(After Robert Bly)

Politicians huddle in the chamber like rats,
Plotting a future that leads to their own cheese.
A lobbyist whispers harsh-nothings in their ears,
warning of plugs pulled if the vulnerable are saved.

A dreamer studies for days inside the library
when she's not at her job.
There are warnings painted red
on the streets of Newark and Elizabeth.
ICE is planning more raids
To stave off mercy at all costs.

The dreamers at night do not dream:
Instead they wake to work round and round—
Young warships refusing to drown in our rain.

Thin Skin | Jocelyn White

They thought they could erase us,
as if banning seven words would make us silent.
For every word they try to take away
we come back with a hundred more.
We could go on for eons with the knowledge we know
and we know their agenda.
They only care when you're a fetus
because you're not yet a person.
Just a concept, an idea, a moral to push.
Life is precious, unless it's soaked in diversity.
They fight with loaded policies
because they are vulnerable.
They're made weak by their false vision and entitlement.
They couldn't walk on their own two legs
so they stole yours, mine, our brothers and sisters.
They made mile-high thrones
made from our blood, teeth and bones.
They puffed up their thin-skin chests
high off the fumes of their delusion of grandeur
and tricked themselves into thinking
we are the weak ones;
us, we the people, the fighters,
the science-based scholars, the evidence-based debaters.
They try to squanch us out,
too afraid our passion would melt their snowflake army.

Seven Years Bad Luck | Rebecca Barnstien

I see your mouth open
why is my passport inside?
who gave you permission
to travel in my body?

[body]
[ody]

[too much body]

you turn my lips into limp salmon,
overfished
my arms into dragonflies with all the scales
rubbed off
the backs of my knees become bowls of shame
you make me hate each spoonful

[too much **body**]

I see your mouth open
why is my name torn up inside?
you will colonize this language
hold a crusade between “me” and “mirror”
until I die turning over
gently cut in half

[**body**]
[[ody]

[so much body]

you put your hands inside to make me vulnerable

I see my gin mouth, painted in your colors
I wipe the stains on my hands
put my palms on real things
my cow belly
my killer whale thighs
I want to talk to the regrets in the toilet
I want to say to you

no, beautiful

and save your life of mine

Don't Be A Pussy | Ivan Seinders

I remember the first time I really felt vulnerable —
like I was alone and cold and unlovable and empty —
I remember that so well. I was alone, stripped, used
by a man I'd known for too long who wouldn't stop until
my asshole bled.

Here's the deal, you want the facts, right? Gotta get your
story straight. Everything's gotta be
straight.

I'm 5'11", I weigh 145 pounds, I have green eyes,
I'm Caucasian, I'm Cherokee, and here's the truth:
all 71 inches of me disappeared when a 73-inch-man
swallowed them whole except the two or three he
spat back at me.

All 145 pounds of me were flattened by this sort-of idea,
this idea that men are above everything. That I was above
asking for help because I have a dick between my legs,
but here's the fucking deal, alright?

I am vulnerable. I was vulnerable. I was fucking weak.

I felt like a goddamn child, you know why?

Because I was nothing but a naked body in the backseat of an FJ cruiser
slammed against the leather, afraid to scream out because
if President Trump was there, he'd say "he can take more, don't be a
pussy."

entitlement, *n.*

Pronunciation: Brit. /ɪnˈtʌɪtl̩mənt/, /ɛnˈtʌɪtl̩mənt/, U.S. /ɪnˈtɑɪdl̩mənt/, /ɛnˈtɑɪdl̩mənt/

Origin: **Formed within English, by derivation.**

1. A legal right or just claim to do, receive, or possess something. Also as mass noun. Frequently with *to*.

1782 *Morning Herald & Daily Advertiser* 18 Mar. 2/4 A military order, it is also added, is established, to reward (without entitlements of rank, interest, or other recommendation) the heroes who may fortunately signalize themselves in the conflicts of war.

1789 *Public Advertiser* 10 July 2/1 The entitlement of a man to this choice cannot be disputed.

1860 *Morning Chron.* 18 Apr. 4/6 If success be a criterion of entitlement to eminence of position, Herr Lubeck has won his way already to the front rank.

1896 *Biloxi (Mississippi) Herald* 29 Aug. 1/3 The people of the South are entitled to self-government, and any invasion of this entitlement is a denial of the principle of government under which they live.

1938 *Atlanta Constit.* 6 Aug. 5/7 In most opposition there is room for fair play and a certain gallantry between opponents that permits recognition of rights and entitlements.

1968 *Brit. Jnl. Psychiatry* **114** 919/2 Those responsible for fixing salary scales would probably wish to reconsider the entitlement of psychiatrists to be graded as medical specialists.

1998 I. HUNTER *Which? Guide to Employ.* vi. 117 The right to return is an entitlement to return to the job in which the worker was formerly employed.

2008 C. WATTERS *Refugee Children* vii. 157 The question as to whether refugee children have entitlement to a particular service, for example, education or health care, can be answered by reference to bodies of official literature.

Groundwater | Rebecca Barnstien

How do you kill a mountain girl?

Ruin her mountain body,
but it can't be only sex.
You need to be a virus
or radiation:
make her tunnels glow, seep
into her natural spring.

Or you could take her base,
the bone of the stone
itself, dissolve it in acid.

You think you know entitlement
but if you start this chain reaction
calculate your half-lives with care:
dirt lives longer than you will.

Damn Conquistador, | Rebecca Barnstien

you leave smallpox on the blankets
when you come to raid my uterus
peel my sopping bandages
looking for gold in my tangled circulation

too many milligrams in my mouth
strangle me in therapy
put braces around my tongue
you think you can make excuses to diversity
pump my stomach like the Hoover Dam
you think my bile is a river you can yolk

you build railways to connect my moles
use surgery to tunnel through my buttocks
make national parks out of my breasts
you think I cannot survive this genocide

these roads are mine tonight
without permission you come inside
I will not spit you out

diversity, *n.*

Pronunciation: dɪ'vɜːsɪti/

Etymology: Old French *diverseté*

1. The condition or quality of being diverse, different, or varied; difference, unlikeness.

a1340 R. ROLLE *Psalter* cl. 4 Þai sown all samyn in acordandist dyuersite.

c1386 CHAUCER *Man of Law's Tale* 122 Ther was swich diuersitie Bitwene hir bothe lawes.

c1400 *Lanfranc's Cirurg.* 32 Alle þese ben dyverse, after þe dyverste of here cause.

a1513 R. FABYAN *New Cronycles Eng. & Fraunce* (1516) I. xlv. f.

xv^v The dyuersytie of that one from y^e other.

1530 J. PALSGRAVE *Lesclarcissement* 76 Dyversite of gendre is expressed onely in pronownes of the thirde persone.

1614 W. RALEIGH *Hist. World* I. II. xxii. §9. 554 Diuersitie of circumstance may alter the case.

1628 T. SPENCER *Art of Logick* 240 A discrete Axiome is then framed according to Art, when the partes of it doe dissent by diversitie, not as opposites.

1697 tr. F. Burgersdijck *Monitio Logica* I. xxi. 81 Diversity is that affection by which things are distinguished one from the other. And is either real, rational, or modal.

1790 E. BURKE *Refl. Revol. in France* 51 Through that diversity of members and interests, general liberty had as many securities as there were separate views in the several orders.

1882 F. W. FARRAR *Early Days Christianity* I. 247 Unity does not exclude diversity—nay more, without diversity there can be no true and perfect unity.

Theme of Us | Timothy Tarkelly

Trace the steps
from an oval office tirade
to the intern's dictation
strapped inside a briefcase
that cost more than my rent.
How many slave-labor jackets
shrugged when they heard:
"Freedom of speech is nice and all,
but fighting seems to stop
if the enemy speaks our language,
and dances to our music."
Afterall, isn't diversity "their" word,
a variation on a theme of us,
but not as good? Surely,
they don't actually want to be different.

Zonkey | Simon Nader

Like, Seriously.

Look it up dude!
It exists, don't be rude.
Calling me crazy? Yeah?
I heard ya, now listen! Be fair.

I'm in Brooklyn right now,
Where weirder things make ya go "WOW"
A Zonkey is as real as me and you,
Hybrid Zebra and Donkey too!

So look around wherever ya sit,
You'll find mixes both weird and legit,
'Cause variety is the spice a' life,
And tribal bullshit just causes strife.

How much better is the world,
When we're all mixed up in genetic whirls,
Borders and bigotry keep things simple,
But that includes minds ugly as pimples.

Try to build walls to keep things out,
Wave your small hands as ya pucker and pout,
President Trump - I'm referring to you,
Current head keeper of the American zoo.

Already she's a big melting pot,
Immigrants all, so why would ya stop,
Natural diversity wanting to build,
New lives, communities, societies, guilds.

One day imagine (as said John Lennon)
All the people, (wait rhyme needed: LEMON!)
(No reason), living life in peace,
As friendly as Forrest's carrots and peas.

So think about Zonkey in this manner:
If his parents couldn't share the Savannah,
The world would be much too poor,
Delicious diversity brings so much more.

When we're all mixed, walls won't much matter,
Homo-Sapiens genes were meant to be scattered.
So why not share the globe and your bed,
With whoever ya want or we'll all end up dead!

Better for everyone to just be as one,
Then temptation for war might just be gone,
No more fear of strangers, fear of "the other"
A whole new age we're yet to discover.

The Song | Sydney Watson

Within the Earth is a story
A story we've long forgotten
A story told and told and now untold
By purple tongues and wallet rot

A story of faces, each and every one
A different color, a different creed
But the same song in every throat
Of purple mountains' majesty

The stars above have not forgotten
As the stars in our own flag have
The time when our blood in our veins thrummed like strings of a heavenly cello
And our footsteps pounded like a thousand drums

A song, composed together, for another color's rainbow
For the love of one's brother, for the caring of our mothers
For freedom to be, no matter how or where, a family united in these states
A song to which we have forgotten the words

Tell me now when we will sing again
The song we once shared that still rings in old one's ears
And hear again the voices raised
Of our brothers and sisters, fathers and mothers

Our family, though they are not all the same color
Though they march with different feet and sing in different tongues
Feel our hearts beat in their chests as theirs beat in ours
Feel our voices in their throats as we raise theirs to sing

Our blood, from many veins, has spilled on this land, in this land's name
That blood, now considered a stain
And this we have forgot, and why?
Cowardice, sheer cowardice, and nothing else

Cowardice that has severed the thread weaving us into a singing tapestry
Ending our history
A history of independence yet togetherness, of difference and yet sameness
And ending, perhaps, our nation? Ourselves?

Diversity, a song of sameness and saneness
Every verse thrumming with the colors of the rainbow, God's promise
A song straining to be sung
Pulling at the shackles on it

Diversity, sing of it!

Lazarus taxon | Jude Hoffman

Lazarus taxon

in paleontology, it's an animal that disappears from the fossil record only to reappear later.
It's a species thought to be extinct,
only to be later rediscovered.

It comes from the Gospel of John in which Christ raises Lazarus from the dead.
Single-handedly pushing death backwards.

The coelacanth was a fish thought to be extinct 66 million years ago.
In 1938, it was found happily swimming in the waters off the East Coast of Africa.

The midwife toad was discovered in 1979 after we thought they were wiped from the planet.
The toad, apparently,
had different plans.

My favorite, the mountain pygmy possum,
which is objectively the cutest of all of Australia's hibernating marsupials,
was discovered in 1966, after what I'm sure was an extended mourning period for its supposed
death and extinction.

Pitt Island longhorn beetle.
Lord Howe Stick insect. B
one skipper fly.
Armoured frog.
Painted frog.
Northern Tinker frog.

Every single one was written into the history books as dead,
before they raised their heads,
let out a ribbit or chirp or whatever sound stick insect make,
and showed the world that,
gosh darnit,
they were alive!

And it only took some Safari Sam white scientist to tell the world about them.

Lophura edwardsi is a Vietnamese bird thought to be extinct by everyone...
except the Vietnamese people who saw it every day.
Scientists refused to believe villagers stories about the bird,
and continued to say there was no way it could still be alive,
until they found it
and subsequently named it after a French ornithologist –
Alphonse Milne-Edwards.

The lesson here is that,
regardless of what you've found,
or who saw it first,
once you name it loud enough for the world to hear,
you get to keep it.
You can call it your own blood.

Say it came from you,
and single-handedly push death backwards.

The lesson here is that there are some things
that we've been pretending are extinct.
Our history books told us
the brush-turkey was dead.
The Bengai crow was no more.
That Nazis were defeated.
The KKK wasn't notable anymore.
The fire hoses got turned off,
and the white people holding them moved past racism.
Their children certainly didn't grow up to be holding
gavels or schoolbooks or handcuffs or pulpits.
The white history books told everyone
that,
despite what people were saying about their experiences,
racism is just something in the fossil record.

But now it has apparently risen from the dead,
sudden and surprising.
The cultural *Lazurus taxon*.

Great white explorer of cultures,
where were you when this was being spoken of?
Why did you think it was extinct if the bones were rattling the whole time?
Or were you hoping it would die off before anyone could name it after you?
Did you not learn the lesson from the great white scientists before you?

If you finally found it,
have the courage to name it after yourself.
Not protest or misguided.
Not far right or a phase.
The diversity wears your name over its face.
It's white supremacy.
It comes home to nest in the chest of its owner.
In the house they had been building for it.

Don't abandon what you've found now.

Call it home.

Call it you.

You have found this.

It's not extinct,

and now it's yours to own.

fetus, *n.*

Pronunciation: Brit. /'fi:təs/, U.S. /'fidəs/

Origin: a borrowing from Latin

Etymology: classical Latin *fetus*

1. Originally: the offspring of a human or other animal during its development within the uterus or egg. In later use: *spec.* the developing offspring of a human or other viviparous animal in the period after the major structures of the body have been formed. Cf

a1398 J. TREVISA tr. Bartholomaeus Anglicus *De Proprietatibus Rerum* (BL Add. 27944) (1975) II. xviii. li. 1202 And is propreliche ycleped *fetus* while it is in þe wombe in þe whiche it is susteyned and ynorisched and ybrought to parfyte schap of lymes and to lyf.

a1450 tr. Guy de Chauliac *Grande Chirurgie* (Caius 336/725) (1970) 32 Of extraccioun of þe fetus.

1610 S. H. tr. Hippocrates *Whole Aphorismes* 102 If the monthly purgations doe keepe their course to a woman with child, it is impossible that the *fætus* should be in health.

1653 W. HARVEY *Anat. Exercitations* xiii. 75 Hence it cometh to pass, that some egges are quickly altered, and after three dayes of Incubation discover some rudiments of a fœtus.

1690 J. LOCKE *Ess. Humane Understanding* III. vi. 217 If several Men were to be asked, concerning some odly-shaped *Fætus*, as soon as born, whether it were a Man, or no.

1720 tr. H. Boerhaave *De Viribus Medicamentorum* xxxi. 224 The most forcing Medicines are the Abortives, which open the Uterus, and expell the Fœtus.

1774 *Philos. Trans.* (Royal Soc.) 64 468 He opened a very large Torpedo..., and discovered floating in the left matrice nine fetuses quite formed.

1819 BYRON *Let.* 26 May (1976) VI. 141 I was not the father of the foetus for She was three months advanced before our first Passade.

1841 T. R. JONES *Gen. Outl. Animal Kingdom* xxx. 710 We have yet to learn how the fetus is matured after the exhaustion of this supply.

1915 D. H. LAWRENCE *Let.* 8 Dec. (1962) 394 If a lizard falls on the breast of a pregnant woman, then the blood-being of the lizard passes with a shock into the blood-being of the woman, and is transferred to the foetus.

1967 *Canad. Med. Assoc. Jnl.* 8 July 78/2 A spur-like projection of tissue at the aortic end was seen..in a number of guinea-pig fetuses.

2008 *Guardian* 5 Apr. (Review section) 10/4 Carl Honoré takes us into a world in which playing classical music to the foetus is just a warm-up.

Intact | Catherine Anderson

The rubbery remains of this chick
chick yellow balloon
with a wilted cherry red ribbon tied to it
is somehow still holding its curl.

The remains of the deflated promise
in my shivering hands, in early March on the coast of Maine,
I am celebrating my birthday, and she is not.
She would have been seven.

On this cove is where I first said good-bye
before the surgery
when my body was a walking casket,
her little death inside me.

A message on the answering machine
reported the results of the tissue analysis
from the pathologist at the lab:
the fetus was a normally developing female.

While hemorrhaging in bed alone,
I hit delete on my phone
erasing any and all evidence of my daughter,
who for nearly three months lived within and not without me.

Did she slowly just drift away?
On one uneventful empty day
like a wave receding: this wave? This one. This one?
A thousand imperceptible instances before

on the ocean a balloon lands softly and waits.

evidence-based, *n.*

Pronunciation: /'eɪvɪdəns/

Etymology: Middle English evidence

5. Ground for belief; testimony or facts tending to prove or disprove any conclusion.
Const. *for, of* (the thing to be proved), *from, of* (the source of testimony).

b. Forming adjectives in combination with a past participle.

c1380 *Eng. Wycliffite Serm. in Sel. Wks. II. 107* Þe dedis þat Crist dide ben
unsuspect evydenþat Crist is boþe God and man.

c1380 WYCLIF *Sel. Wks. III. 340* Þei shulden haue eyudence to seie þat God haþ told
þem þis.

1393 J. GOWER *Confessio Amantis III. 87* Theology..yiveth evidence Of thing, which is
nought bodely.

?a1400 *Morte Arth. 286* Thus hafe we evydens to aske þe Emperour..whate ryghte þat
he claymes.

c1425 WYNTOUN *Cron. VIII. xv. 163* Ðis Kyng [Edwart] þan feyhnyd evydens As to
declere hys Consciens..Quhat he in Scotland gert be dwne.

1480 CAXTON tr. *Trevisa Descr. Eng. 18* He maketh non evidence for in neyther side
he telleth what moeueth him so for to saye.

1530 *Compend. Olde Treat. sig. Aij^v* It owght to be..as we shall preue by
open evidence thoroughe goddes helpe.

1593 R. HOOKER *Of Lawes Eccl. Politie I. iv. 56* Adoration grounded vpon
the evidence of the greatnes of God.

1611 *Bible (King James) Hebrew xi. 1* Now faith
is..the evidence [1887 *Revised* assurance] of things not seen.

1662 E. STILLINGFLEET *Origines Sacrae III. i. §7* Those who deny that there is a God,
do assert other things on far less evidence of reason.

1736 BP. J. BUTLER *Analogy of Relig. II. iii. 169* Its Evidence not being so convincing
and satisfactory as it might have been.

1769 'JUNIUS' *Stat Nominis Umbra (1772) I. v. 44* The plain evidence of facts is
superior to all declarations.

1795 W. PALEY *View Evidences Christianity (ed. 3) II. II. vi. 133* There is
no evidence that any forgeries were attempted.

1809 *Med. & Physical Jrnl. 21 359* The truth of which I can yet attest by
living evidence.

1815 J. SMITH *Panorama Sci. & Art I. 457* The evidence of sight is corrected by the
judgment.

1846 J. S. MILL *Syst. Logic (ed. 2) III. xxi. §1* Evidence is not that which the mind does
or must yield to, but that which it ought to yield to.

1878 T. H. HUXLEY *Physiogr. (ed. 2) 100* The weight of evidence appears strongly in
favour of the claims of Cavendish.

In a Word | Devon Balwit

Before I emerged from the womb,
I was a *fetus*,

this, *evidence-based* from sonograms.
Similar data suggests,

science-based, that I continue along
the well-established

human continuum from birth to death.
White,

I have benefited from no small degree
of privilege, *entitlements*

I'm often blind to, although my gender, age,
social class, and profession still

leave me *vulnerable* to the vagaries
of the market.

I live in the Pacific Northwest, not known
for its racial *diversity*,

but whose blue cities are home to many
transgender individuals,

persons claiming a space and voice
in the community,

the barest minimum that all of us
deserve.

Autocrats in Washington might strive
to muzzle us,

but then, we will speak via our cellular
membranes—*evidence-based*—

by endo and exocytosis, diffusion, osmosis,
by active transport.

science-based, *n.*

Pronunciation: Brit. /'saɪəns/, U.S. /'saɪəns/

Origin: A borrowing from French

Etymology: Anglo-Norman *ciencie*, *sience*, Anglo-Norman and Middle French *science*

2. Knowledge or understanding acquired by study; acquaintance with or mastery of any branch of learning

b. Forming adjectives in combination with a past participle.

1850 *Dublin Univ. Mag.* Nov. 547/1 Not a mere dilettante smattering of pictures, statues, or buildings, but a thoroughly science-based knowledge of the principles of beauty.

1962 *Economist* 14 Apr. 187/1 An industry can be science-based, said Lord Hailsham, and yet do little or no actual research.

2011 U. BARDI *Limits to Growth Revisited* i. 2 We have excellent predictive tools in the form of science-based models.

Poetific Method | Meg Ferguson

Consider the definition of the compound, 'Science-Based'...

That is an essential epic poem, nay?

Say, 'tis not the very broad basis of science blanketed beneath the known noun-citation of Base?

In this case fate is chaste and bound by the very evidence event equivocally.

Frolicking physics float phonetically furrowing phenomena all across the universe.

Futurism parallels past-present essences of Deconstructive musings inside the sky.

Foreshadowing suns shine upon Moons, upon Moons, upon Moons.

Jupiter Rules the Milky Way to the cosmos.

protest, *n.*

Pronunciation: Brit. /'prɒstɛst/, U.S. /'prɒʊtɛst/

Etymology: Old Compare Middle French protest (masculine)

4a. Originally: a formal declaration of disapproval or dissent; a remonstrance, a complaint. In later use more generally: any action, act, or statement expressing (emphatic) objection to or dissent from something.

1644 R. BOOTHBY *True Declar. Intollerable Wrongs* 32 I bethought my selfe how to provoke the India Court to commence suit in Law against me,..and that was by publishing a Protest against the Governour and whole Court.

1650 J. HOWELL *Epistolae Ho-elianae* II. 5 Both of you might have just grounds to exhibite a Bill of Complaint, or rather, a Protest, against me.

1751 *Parl. Hist. Eng.* I. 38 This Answer of the Barons to the King [in 1242]..being in the Nature of a Protest, is the First of that Kind we meet with in History.

1769 W. ROBERTSON *Hist. Charles V* III. x. 221 Protests and counter protests were taken.

1823 SCOTT *Quentin Durward* Introd. p. 1 Against this various reading of a well-known passage in Shakspeare I took care to offer no protest.

1877 *Spirit of Times* 15 Dec. 521/2 At the termination of the fourth heat in the race a protest was made, alleging the dun gelding G.T. Pilot to be ineligible.

1879 *Herald & Torch Light* (Hagerstown, Maryland) 22 Oct. 1/6 My soul cries out in protest against the favoritisms of fame.

1918 A. G. GARDINER *Leaves in Wind* 8 You can open the window or shut it without provoking a protest.

1949 D. SINCLAIR *Secret Riders Farm* vii. 73 Grant lifted a hand in protest, 'Save it for Tubby,' he said grinning.

2000 *Sunday Times* 23 July (Sports section) 16/5 In the face of vociferous Villa protests the Danish referee bravely overruled a flagging linesman.

4b. A written statement of dissent from any motion carried in the House of Lords, recorded and signed by any peer of the minority.

1854 MACAULAY *Biogr.* (1867) 16 Some of the most remarkable protests which appear in the journals of the peers were drawn up by him [*sc.* Atterbury].

1875 ROGERS *Compl. Coll. Protests Lds. 1624-1874* Pref. 15 The first protest with reasons entered in the Journals of the Irish House of Lords was in 1695,..the practice was plainly borrowed from English procedure.

1910 W. SMART *Econ. Ann. Nineteenth Cent.* xxiv. 453 The Protest was drawn up by Grenville, who had seldom swerved from what was even then considered the 'economist's doctrine' of Free Trade.

2005 *Compan. Standing Orders & Guide to Proc. House of Lords* (Electronic ed.) v 5.26 Any Member has the right to record a protest against any decision of the House.

Excluding the Title: Six Hundred Seventy Words that Comply Without Complying | Ben White

If we don't have a word for it, we can turn our backs on it.

Then, the unborn will not be in a position of needing help when the hope is gone. In addition, they won't be in a position to provide hope when the help is gone. Research and the medical advances of stem-cell salvation have no place at the table of the well-fed; the well-taken-care-of; the righteous and blessed keepers of the language.

Those who never go hungry will never feed us.

Sex – the act, the idea, the filth, the pleasure, the gift, the body, the pain, and, most of all, the emotion – cannot be admitted into the ideas and glory-be-unto-thee forces maintaining the silence against natural evolutions and genetic shifts that can be seen as imperfections in the perfect world that God hath made.

Unwelcome volunteers are ready to leave their social minority that is based on physical and emotional desires to join another, smaller minority willing to defend a constitution that is under attack by enemies – often more domestic than foreign. There are enemies ready to “thank you for your service” to hide the guilt of not serving the same constitution with the same conviction. So, if the black-white, male-female simplicity of “thank you” was complicated by the service of those whose very existence most validates the constitution, the guilt would become too complex to alleviate by muttering a guilty, superficial thanks.

The counter-facts of truth are everywhere in a society where the deities carry rifles in the name of love-thy-neighbor to make sure the pillars of salty tears don't look back at the children left dead in the elementary school. Alternatives can twist and be rocked to sleep in the prayers of cradled sorrow and mercy handed down from authority that has been elected to know best or at least be persuaded by lobbyists to promote differences in opinion to scare the godless aspects of the good citizens into the gun shop on Friday, the shooting range on Saturday, and church on Sunday. And every routine errand is driven around town locked and loaded; convinced the heroics of valor are within them as they hope someone starts a gun battle just to prove how safe the streets really are.

Godlessness is as clean as it gets, when the politics of a nation are shrouded by the insertion of fables and myths documented as educational sources. So the school books glorify the genocide, homicide, and ethnic pride cherished by a kill-driven race living within profit-driven systems to perpetuate the hope and faith of children falling in line to pop their elations, drink their personalities, smoke their hallucinations, and swallow the expectations of an ethnocentric way of life defining humanity in shades of skin color and oil reserves.

The United States government has forbidden seven words from being used in official correspondence and documentation. Once again, the protecting freedom of speech has been handed off into the care of comedians, poets, patriots, and free-thinkers who deviate from the parameters of authoritative normalcy to make the points that should not have to be made; points

that would not have to be made except for ideologies of fear. A government that legislates and dictates from a core-source of fear has already lost the freedoms it is afraid of losing. But a Democracy run by Capitalism has too much to lose to not be afraid.

If we deny the word, we can deny the thought. And, vice versa; if we deny the thought, we deny the word. In other words, if we do not have the mental capacity to understand what we are talking about, we should stop talking, and listen to those who do have the mental capacity to think critically and hold onto the richer aspects of conversations, discussions, and dialogues.

Meanwhile, if we do not understand ourselves and the fullest enrichment of our language (in its totality) we are left with another seven words we should strike from our language:

Independence.

Freedom.

Liberty.

Justice.

Equality.

Intelligence.

America.

Advent | Christopher G. Nugent

To risk everything for love is to be vulnerable.

Love, one must understand, is a gift, not an entitlement.
It comes when least expected, out of the diversity
Of ordinary experience. The beloved may be transgender,
Or not. The lover loves blindly, unconditionally, as a fetus
Loves the sound of a distant heartbeat, whose returned love
is as yet without evidence.

But if one seeks love, why look for evidence
That another's heart also feels vulnerable?
To feel new love grow is to be like a fetus
That longs so intently, without entitlement,
To know a mother's embrace. Transgender
Souls, that is, all souls, in their diversity

Seek the beloved who, by embracing diversity,
Creates unity. Of this eternal truth the evidence
Is clear. You may well ask, "Why is the soul transgender?"
Only that state, so tender and so vulnerable
Can express the soul's search for entitlement.
Still, you will wonder, "If love is like a fetus

Why has its memory left my body, which was once a fetus?" So
many possible answers arise, such diversity
Of opinion. Does our body retain entitlement To
prenatal sensations? On what evidence
Do you base the claim that a heart in love is vulnerable?
If I tell you the soul is transgender

Will you not in your nightly prayers ask your transgender
Soul to bring back remembrance of when you were a fetus?
Ah, but how many of us do not know our souls? How vulnerable
To Satan's snares in all their wicked diversity
We become. And so, we blandly look for evidence, As if
the soul, as if love itself were entitlement

Enough to know that love is no entitlement.
And so we recognize the soul to be transgender
In that it knows from the evidence
Of its own existence, joined to the human as a fetus, That
despite the unity it creates in diversity,
To be genuinely itself is to be absolutely vulnerable.

The fetus that believes it has entitlement

To love, like the the transgender soul that creates unity in diversity, Will
always look blindly for evidence to prove it is not vulnerable.

America the Vulnerable. A Sestina. | Sarah L. Higley

He sits on the doorstep as we pass, vulnerable
In her begging, I feel my own entitlement
Tighten my hand on my purse. The diversity
Of the street surrounds me. This underfed transgender
Person shelters their stomach. A growth? A fetus?
He? She? They? Is this the scientific evidence

Of their sex when the very term “scientific evidence”
Is banned from those who can describe the vulnerable,
Disobedient body and heal it? An idiot said that a fetus
Won’t form when a woman resists a man’s entitlement
To rape her. What blundering science! The transgender
Who gets pregnant has proven it: God in his diversity

Made men and women’s bathrooms. In earth’s diversity
We find the protandrous clownfish, scientific evidence
That sex is volatile, and that a fish can be transgender
And not resist its place in the order of things. I am vulnerable
As I take out my wallet and wonder what my entitlement
Has given me. A title, money, words, the power to say “fetus”

If I am asking for government money to treat the fetus.
But I am only treating a beggar. I have long nursed a diversity
of language, caged as it in this poem, an entitlement
To words that can speak or not speak in evidence
Based on facts that are not “fake news.” If you are vulnerable
To fact, keeping scientists from using the word “transgender”

Won’t save you. I don’t know if this person is transgender

Who reaches for my offered money. Nor do I know if a fetus
Is a person or a potential person. But I can feel how vulnerable
It is to have no bed but cement. Nature, in its diversity,
Gives us a mind for nurture but also for evidence
That we impoverish ourselves when we let greed's entitlement

Take away what nurture has given us as entitlements.
The right to write a Masters Thesis on transgender
And religion. The right to our money, and to hard evidence
That we learn in school. The need to distinguish a fetus
From a child. The right to claim that racial diversity
Is a good thing in a nation, how good to care for the vulnerable!

My charity gives me no entitlement; it will not heal a fetus,
Or soothe the transgender, or protect our diversity.
But give us the words of evidence, O America the Vulnerable.

Six Words | Marcus Bales

for Deborah Lyons

When you may talk about diversity
You talk about what's normal. Can a fetus,
For example, or a transgender
Person feel that they are not vulnerable
When there's such a clear-cut entitlement
For normal that is so evidence-based?

Whoever's normal is the evidence – based
Upon a real lack of real diversity;
That's the definition of entitlement.
A person's normal under law; a fetus,
Though, is not a person, and is vulnerable
Differently that someone who's transgender.

A person who just happens to be transgender
Hasn't got a lot of evidence-based
Data they can offer; they're just vulnerable
To the normal because of their diversity,
While once a person's pregnant, then the fetus
Is mostly seen as normal – its entitlement.

And isn't that an odd thing for entitlement
To privilege when there's a person, transgender,
Perhaps, but a person, not a fetus,
Standing there. How much more evidence-based
Can someone get? Especially when diversity
Only seems to mean that you are vulnerable.

And face it, everyone's a little vulnerable;
Everyone is missing some entitlement;
Everyone experiences diversity.
So why aren't people kinder to transgender
People? Fear. Fear's not evidence-based,
Fear treats the Other as a non-person fetus.

But there are methods not to make a fetus,
While once they're born a person's always vulnerable
Even if they're normal. The evidence-based
Agreement that we need is that entitlement

Attaches to your person, whether transgender,
Or somewhere else on the spectrum of diversity.

L'envoi

Come on, people! Every person's entitlement
Is personhood – then later when transgender
Is normal, you're protected by: diversity!

En Route | Samuel Cole

From the street, they appear as two statuesque figurines: mirror shadows circling beneath the kitchen floodlights. I've never seen them in the open, or outdoors, although I've heard from neighbors about their fancy-man haircuts, lipstick-red vehicles, and the pop music they play shirtless while beautifying the yard, which apparently looks super gay. I didn't know yards had sexual orientations, but I'm not unique like that.

The two men come into better focus once they stand between the microwave and kitchen stove. Navy tattoos and all. I believe they have all their eyes, ears, and teeth. Perfectly normal-looking human beings except they're described as evidence-based demons bursting with unnatural, abnormal, and totally out-of-this-world tendencies. I'm not sure if I like how accustomed I've become to listening to hateful rhetoric floating like smog up and down the street. I've never worried for men before, not the way I do for these two boys. They're vulnerable, even if they don't know, or care

My daughter came out as a lesbian last week. Since the announcement, I've been trying to form a new opinion about gayness, maybe even change a little bit, if that's possible. I've decided if the neighbors chastise me for walking too close to the gay men's yard, I'll say I'm studying the aftereffects of gay grass on a gay lot. If I'm pushed for further elucidation, I'll say I'm a bird-watching aficionado in love with the daytime Sparrows soaring above their house. If that doesn't shut them up, I'll remind them that it's my week to do the neighborhood watch, so leave me alone and let me do what I need to do, where I need to do it.

A bright light in the living room flickers on, illuminating the men's chiseled-chested handsomeness. They perform an embrace so carefully executed, I believe I have never been hugged, or met diversity. They kiss, long and sweet, hands interlocked above their heads. It's like I'm watching a slow dance between raw-flesh lovers being rejuvenated by tenderness. I've been told to feel nauseous at such visions of same-sex closeness, to scowl out loud with entitlement at any and all signs of their offensive touching, but I don't feel sick and I have no desire to scowl at anyone, especially them. Truth is, I feel well. It's as if someone, or something, greater than myself has given me a dose of enlightenment's elixir meant to repurpose and reframe every synapse in my mind, and heart, to be able to see gay men, and my lesbian daughter, as they are, instead of seeing them the way others have told me to see them, which is to not see them at all. Fetus abnormality in a cursed womb.

I can't help but gawk at the men's palpable connection, or marvel at the vibrantly decorated walls and well-balanced furniture: a glossy oak upright piano, a burnt sienna-colored couch, two striped wing-back chairs, and an ornamental dining room table complete with a lavish floral centerpiece, bulbous flowers reaching toward the ceiling as if perfectly gratified, happy, and comfortable to live and die right here.

The men finger-comb each other's hair; fulfilled movements of science-based equality. For once I feel in the minority. Love is happening, right in front of me, and I want to loiter as long as I can, let my senses run alive with other people's thriving. I've grown tired of intolerance preaching its moral obligation, demanding that I agree with its point of view.

The men approach the bay window. They smile and wave. I want to smile and wave back; maybe even be invited inside. But I rarely get what I want, just ask my husband, and daughter.

I turn and jog away, each step taking me further from their welcome mat. I've always been a coward, unable to stand up for other people's rights, especially scared of Jennifer Baltic, this year's

block party chairwoman, who said if the two men show up, they'll be ignored, shunned, and chastised. I stand on my own welcome mat, a precursor to a home where my daughter, Emily, and her partner Shelley Banks are not welcome to come for birthdays, Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas brunch, relegated to exclusion by husband number four, Leroy Klingersheen, soon to be ex-husband number four, thanks to Kenneth Henricks, a social activist who Shelley introduced me to last week during a protest rally of President Donald J. Trump's ban on transgender individuals from joining the military. Navy tattoos and all.

Honors English | Chris Espenshade

Assignment 13

Please use each the following in a sentence reflecting the reality of our nation today.

fetus: *The death of a fetus requires strong legislative action when an abortion doctor is involved, but not when an NRA member is the cause.*

diversity: *It is a crying shame that the diversity of the White House staff was almost completely eliminated with the forced departure of a single black woman.*

vulnerable: *The class bully (and the bully class) always picks on the most vulnerable.*

entitlement: *Nothing says entitlement like cutting the tail off an elephant; once that tail is out of the way, we can see the real ass hole.*

transgender: *Trump wonders if groping that transgender individual made him a little bit gay.*

science-based: *Our president mistakenly believes that science-based, critical thought means thinking critical things about scientists.*

evidence-based: *You may believe that evidence-based narrative is somehow a despicable trick of Fake News, but it will really be the basis for Democrats to regain control of Congress.*

Deleted | Jonah Jones

According to the Bible, therefore not based upon (DELETED) evidential or scientific fact, Adam and Eve were the only two people who didn't start life as a fusion of cells, growing into a (DELETED) bigger conglomeration of cells which grew in (DELETED) diverged in purpose to form a (DELETED) proto-human being inside a woman's body where, being (DELETED) easily damaged, it was (DELETED) could develop safely into whichever gender it might; male, female or (DELETED) anything in between.

Contributor Notes

Catherine M. Anderson is a poet, and essayist, anti-racist ally, educator and director and curator of Ovarions Offstage in Portland, Maine. Catherine turns to poetry as a way of mediating her experience as a mother of two sons of color, confronting her own internalized racism, her experience as an adoptive mother, foster mother, and a sexual assault survivor to name a few. Her first manuscript (Not) Black Enough which she began at her stay at the Martha's Vineyard Writers Residency in April, 2014 is poised for publication. Her newest collection: Inside the Water Tower is nearing completion. Select Publications include; Portland Press Herald's Deep Water Series 2017, Hip Mama Magazine (Ariel Gore Editor), The Adoption Constellation, Psychology Today (Interview).

Not much is known about Marcus Bales except he lives in Cleveland and his poems have not been published in New Yorker or Poetry.

Devon Balwit teaches in Portland, OR. She has six chapbooks and two collections out or forthcoming, among them: The Bow Must Bear the Brunt (Red Flag Poetry); We are Procession, Seismograph (Nixes Mate Books), and Motes at Play in the Halls of Light (Kelsay Books). Her individual poems can be found in The Cincinnati Review, The Carolina Quarterly, Fifth Wednesday, the Aeolian Harp Folio, Red Earth Review, The Fourth River, The Free State Review, The Inflectionist Review, and more.

Rebecca Kiwi Barnstien is an experimental poet who works with elements of alterity to fuel her work. She holds a BFA from Naropa University and an MFA from the University of Kent. She has a permanent address, a cat, and a lover in Denver, Colorado.

Tina Bubonovich must stay drunk on writing so reality does not destroy her.

Samuel E. Cole lives in Woodbury, MN, where he finds work in special event/development management. He's a poet, flash fiction geek, and political essayist enthusiast. His work has appeared in many literary journals, and his first poetry collection, Bereft and the Same-Sex Heart, was published in October 2016 by Pski's Porch Publishing. His second book, Bloodwork, a collection of short stories, was published by Pski's Porch Publishing in July 2017. His third book, Siren Stitches, a collection of short stories, was published by Three Waters Publishing in October 2017. A second poetry collection, Dollhouse Masquerade, will be published by Truth Serum Press in May 2018. He is also an award-winning card maker and scrapbooker.

Chris Espenshade has been a professional archaeologist for 32 years. He has written one book, chapters for edited volumes, journal articles, and 1,000+ technical reports on archaeology. Beginning in 2017, he branched into creative writing. He has had works published by The RavensPerch, The Dead Mule School of Southern Literature (twice), The Raven Chronicles, and Georgia Outdoors News.

Sarah L. Higley is a professor of English at the University of Rochester, NY, specializing in Medieval Literature, Women's Studies, Film Studies, and Creative Writing. She has published three books (a monograph on Old English and Middle Welsh Poetry; an edited anthology with Jeffrey Andrew Weinstock on The Blair Witch Project; an edition, translation and discussion of Hildegard of Bingen's *Lingua Ignota*). She is currently editing a fifteenth-century English translation of Coudrette's *Tale of Melusine* (Middle French) and writing two novels. She has read her poetry at various gatherings and workshops, and published her fiction under the nom de plume of "Sally Caves." As Sally, she is best known for her teleplay for *Star Trek: The Next Generation* ("Hollow Pursuits") and for her artistic language experiments.

Jude Hoffman (he/him) aims to write in a way that strips away the rules and expectations of what poetry should be. He is still working on how to find the appropriate intersection between being politically active, writing, and not taking up others' space. His hope is that his style of poetry will begin to provide whatever catharsis the reader is looking for. He is the author of the books "Am I Good Enough Now, Dad?" and "Poems I Wrote on My Honeymoon (I Am Not An Expert On Robots or Jesus)"

Jonah Jones, lives in South Wales, U.K. He is a scriptwriter, playwright and occasional short story writer. He is also directs short films. website: jonahjones.net

Born in Brooklyn, NY, Ann Malaspina has an M.F.A. in Writing from Vermont College of Fine Arts, and a B.A. in English from Kenyon College. She is a published poet, journalist, and children's author. Her next book "A Scarf for Keiko" will be published in 2019.

Simon Nader is a mixed-race British writer, actor, and director. He is a graduate of Queen Mary College, University of London and was The Stage Scholarship winner at The Academy Drama School. Simon is a regular contributor to uncensored British magazine 'Public House' and writes everything from poetry to crime fiction. 'Zonkey' is taken from a larger volume of irreverent poetry 'The Alphabet According to Several Strange Creatures' which deals with important issues such as environmentalism, societal integration, teenage concerns of self-identity and humanity's place within the wider world.

Christopher G. Nugent earned his B.A. from Yale in 1987, and his Ph.D. in medieval English literature from the University of Rochester in 1999. He currently teaches literature in Madison, NJ, where he is also a freelance tutor.

Ivan Seinders is a student at the University of Arkansas where he studies journalism, Spanish and French.

Autumn Slaughter is a clinical psychology doctoral student at the University of Tulsa. In 2017 Autumn's poetry was part of the third annual TEDx Tulsa event. In the same year she was recognized as a Woody Guthrie Poet at Oklahoma's annual Woody Guthrie Festival.

Autumn also serves as the mental health ambassador for MUSED., a nonprofit poetry organization in Tulsa. Autumn has published five books including a memoir and two books of poetry.

Timothy Tarkelly has an MA in Theatre (Drama Therapy) from Kansas State University. His poems have been featured by Lycan Valley Press, Fourth & Sycamore, Poets & War, and Aphelion. He is a member of the National Writers Union (UAW local 1981) and is on the National Committee of the Social Democrats, USA. When he is not writing, he works for a non-profit that serves survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

Sydney Watson is a sixteen year-old homeschooling student living in rural Missouri. She's been writing and making art since she could hold a pen and is currently writing several books, a graphic novel and a collection of short horror stories. She also aspires to develop video games, make amazing art and write, produce, direct and act in movies of every genre.

The author of "Buddha Bastinado Blues," and "The Kill Gene," Ben White was convinced he was a poet only to find out he is not a poet at all. He is a witness; what he writes is testimony.

Jocelyn White is a writer from Oregon who graduated from Portland State University with fire in her veins.

