

---

EDINBURGH JOURNAL ARTICLE WRITING WEEK

9<sup>TH</sup>–15<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2013

## CONTENTS

About the Handbook.....	3
About EdJoWriWe.....	4
Acknowledgements.....	6
Schedule.....	8
Monday: Workshop .....	8
Tuesday: Roundtable and Skeleton Text .....	8
Wednesday: Pomodoro Morning and Free Writing Afternoon .....	9
Thursday: Free Writing and Writing Clinic.....	9
Friday: Writing Clinic and Free Writing.....	10
Saturday: Writing and Reviewing.....	10
Sunday: Reviewing and Writing .....	11
Workshops .....	12
Writing for Publication.....	12
Writing Clinics .....	13
Practicals .....	13
Structure of the clinic.....	13
Any questions?.....	14
Round-table Discussion Participants.....	15
Drop-in Advisors.....	16
Reflections on Academic Publishing and Writing .....	17
What?! Write an Article when Chapter Two Isn't Written? .....	17
Writing Journal Articles.....	19
Peer Review as Constructive and Engaging .....	20
"Pain is inevitable. Suffering is optional" (Murakami):.....	21
'Kill Your Baby', 'Feed that Beast': Strategies for Reading and Editing Your Own Work.....	24
Academic Publishing: Three Initial Conundrums .....	26

Gastronomic Staycations in a World of PhD Plenty.....	28
Frequently Asked Questions .....	30
Logistics.....	30
Writing, Writing and More Writing.....	30
How Is EdJoWriWe Unique? .....	32
EdJoWriWe and Social Media .....	33
Organisers .....	35
Contact Details.....	36
Further Reading .....	37
General.....	37
Before Writing.....	38
During Writing.....	39
After Writing .....	40
Light Relief .....	41

## ABOUT THE HANDBOOK

This handbook is intended both as a guide for participants in EdJoWriWe and as a resource for anyone else who feels it might be useful to them. The reasoning and aspirations behind EdJoWriWe is set out in 'About EdJoWriWe' while the week's structure and constituent parts are set out in the 'Schedule' and under the relevant headings. In advance of EdJoWriWe itself, we have been collecting anecdotes and advice relevant to academic publishing both from current professionals and from other sources: these are presented under 'Reflections on Academic Publishing and Writing' and include some excellently insightful contributions. Finally, this handbook has been prepared in advance of the first ever EdJoWriWe. We intend to blog about the reality of the experience when it comes: our blog can be found at <http://edjowriwe.weebly.com>.

We hope you find this document useful.

## ABOUT EDJOWRIWE

Edinburgh Journal Article Writing Week (EdJoWriWe) is both an experiment and a challenge. Over the course of seven days (9<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> December 2013), 21 postgraduate researchers from the School of Literatures, Languages and Cultures (LLC) and the School of History, Classics and Archaeology (HCA) at the University of Edinburgh will attempt to complete the first draft of a publishable academic journal article. At first glance, this undertaking may seem overly ambitious if not downright foolhardy, but that is not quite the case; there is some degree of method to our madness.

EdJoWriWe was inspired in part by Dr Inger Mewburn's workshop 'How to write a journal article in 7 days' held at the Institute for Academic Development (IAD), University of Edinburgh in April 2013. In this workshop, Dr Mewburn suggested a seven-day schedule for planning, writing, and revising the first draft of a journal article. The steps she outlined seemed both practical and achievable, primarily requiring the time and space to dedicate oneself entirely to writing an article. Of course, this is easier said than done; it can be difficult to define and set-aside a period of time for such a purpose. Publishing is essential to a career in academia, but it must often fit around other responsibilities, such as dissertation-writing, teaching, administrative tasks, and the multifarious jobs postgraduates take on during their studies. These obstacles are not unique to postgraduates – the difficulty of apportioning time to researching, writing and publishing haunts academics throughout their careers – but postgraduate researchers find it difficult to rationalise time-not-spent-on-dissertation, both to themselves and to others. In addition, they may be daunted by the journal article publishing process, which may appear mysterious and somewhat inaccessible. EdJoWriWe thus arose as a response to three primary questions:

- (i) Is it possible to write a journal article in seven days?
- (ii) What do postgraduate researchers need to know about the publishing process?
- (iii) How can the University of Edinburgh facilitate such an endeavour?

Generously supported by the University of Edinburgh's Researcher-Led Initiative Fund, EdJoWriWe aims to carve out a dedicated time and space for postgraduate researchers to reflect upon their writing practices and methodologies as they take-up the challenge of attempting to write a journal article in seven days. In order to ensure participants optimise this opportunity, all participants are required to have completed the bulk of the research for their article prior to the week, and have been selected on the basis of a pre-submitted abstract. They are consequently ready to embark upon the task of writing and revising their journal article.

It is hoped that EdJoWriWe's structured schedule of workshops, writing sessions, and discussions will help participants develop confidence, dexterity and discipline in writing publishable journal articles. To this end, the week commences with a day-long workshop with Dr Daniel Soule on 'Writing for Publication'. This is followed on the second day by a round-table discussion with academics from LLC who have kindly agreed to share their experiences and advice with the participants. Furthermore, visiting lecturers and research fellows will act as drop-in advisors over the course of the week, and offer brief consultations to the participants. Finally, Dr Mimo Caenepeel will provide feedback to participants on initial drafts on Thursday and Friday.

Although EdJoWriWe's ostensible aim is to facilitate postgraduates to produce drafts of articles, its core aim is pedagogic in nature. There is no real imperative for participants to complete their articles by the end of the week. Instead, the week undertakes to assist participants in exchanging and exploring writing methods and strategies, including anti-procrastination techniques, within the context of a supportive and encouraging writing community. It is also an opportunity for participants to experiment with ways of streamlining academic writing, identifying key tasks involved in producing an article and de-mystifying the publication process. The focus is on improving the efficacy and efficiency of participants' writing, rather than on the production of a certain quantity of writing, and on reducing some of the anxiety and doubt academic writing can provoke in the most confident of us.

In summary: EdJoWriWe is a week-long writing retreat in the heart of Edinburgh. It endeavours to facilitate writing – lots and lots of writing – and self-reflexivity on the writing process, and it aspires to community-building through the conversations and guided discussions the week's activities will engender. It is both a challenge and an experiment; we are delighted you, the participants, have decided to embark upon EdJoWriWe with us.

Monday, 9<sup>th</sup> December 2013

Muireann Crowley

Eystein Thanisch

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

EdJoWriWe has been the recipient of the help, support and inspiration of a deceptively wide and varied range of individuals and organs of academia. At the time of writing (three days before EdJoWriWe begins), we are aware that others may yet emerge to whom the project will become indebted but who cannot be named here.

EdJoWriWe was conceived after a seminar given in Edinburgh by Dr Inger Mewburn entitled 'How to Write that Journal Article in Seven Days'. Early on in its development, Dr Laura Bradley and Linda Grieve were both generous sources of advice and encouragement in formulating our ideas. From the Institute for Academic Development (IAD), Nicola Cuthbert, Louisa Lawes and Louise McKay were open, forthcoming and helpful during the process of applying to the Researcher-Led Initiative Fund (and thereafter) and Prof. Wilson McLeod further boosted our morale by his far-sighted endorsement of our funding proposal. Naturally, we are extremely grateful for the transformative financial support we have received from the Researcher-Led Initiative Fund itself.

As planning progressed, we benefited considerably from discussions with Dr Adam Budd, Dr Anna Groundwater, Freya Gowrley, Tawny Paul and Heather Carroll from the HCA. Abigail Burnyeat (LLC), Peter Kingsley (SPS) and Dr Andrew Simpson (University of Aberdeen) also offered useful and penetrating thoughts and advice. The staff of the LLC Graduate School Office - especially Linda Grieve, Julie Robertson and Gordon Littlejohn - have been a consistently reliable and genial source of information, logistical support and encouragement. Our hired writing consultants – Dr Daniel Soule and Dr Mimo Caenepeel – have both been sensitive and flexible in adapting their workshops to EdJoWriWe's needs. Dr Soule has been particularly helpful in his openness to discussing our plans and objectives with us.

As the week itself fast approaches, we are deeply impressed at the generosity of the lecturers, researchers and postdoctoral fellows who have given up their time and committed themselves to support EdJoWriWe's participants in various ways. The panellists in our round-table discussion are Prof. Joachim Gentz, Dr Anthony Gorman, Dr Frauke Matthes, Prof. McLeod and Dr Anna Vaninskaya; they have volunteered their wisdom and experience in the face of potentially any question from participants and their openness and willingness to support students - as well as their expertise - is very much appreciated. Dr Laura Bradley, Dr Amy Burge, Dr Anna Groundwater and Dr Lena Wånggren are running drop-in sessions, giving participants the valuable opportunity to discuss their work informally on a one-to-one basis. Additionally, both participants and other readers of this handbook will benefit from some excellent written contributions on academic writing from

individuals at a range of career-stages: Prof Marilyn Booth, Dr Groundwater, Maja Milatovic, Eystein Thanisch and Mikey Wood as well as from Elizabeth Stewart and Laura Chapot (former and current editors, respectively, of FORUM). The co-convenors are also grateful to their fellow LLC PhD students, Sarah Sharp and Ella Leith, who are running EdJoWriWe's catering and social media output in an excellent and highly professional manner, and to Emily Anderson, currently engaged in an MSc at the same School, who conducted valuable and imaginative research for this very handbook.

Finally, we very much appreciate the day-to-day support and encouragement we have received from our fellow postgraduates, the generally positive and generous response we have experienced from virtually everyone with whom we have discussed this project, and the trust and sense of adventure that led more than the maximum number we could accept apply to take part in EdJoWriWe. It is something of an experiment and we are yet to see how it will work in practice but, in our opinion, it reflects very well on our university as a whole that so many people have got behind the experiment happening in the first place.

## SCHEDULE

MONDAY: WORKSHOP		
10.00 - 10.30	Introduction and welcome	
10.30 - 11.30	Workshop (Dr Daniel Soule, 'Writing for Publication')	
11.30 - 11.45	COFFEE BREAK	
11.45 - 13.00	Workshop (Dr Daniel Soule, 'Writing for Publication')	
13.00 - 14.00	LUNCH	
14.00 - 17.00	Workshop (Dr Daniel Soule, 'Writing for Publication')	
17.00 - 17.30	Group discussion	
17.30 - 18.00		
18.00 – 20.00	OPTIONAL EXTRA WRITING	
TUESDAY: ROUNDTABLE AND SKELETON TEXT		
09.30 - 10.00	Introduction and discussion	
10.00 – 11.15	Round-table discussion	
11.15 - 11.30	COFFEE BREAK	
11.30 - 13.00	Writing	
13.00 - 14.00	LUNCH	
14.00 - 15.00	Writing; <b>Drop in: Dr Lena Wånggren</b>	
15.00 - 15.30	Writing	
15.30 - 16.00	[OPTIONAL BREAK]	
16.00 - 17.00	Writing	
17.00 - 17.30	Group discussion	
17.30 - 18.00		
18.00 – 20.00	GAMES NIGHT	

WEDNESDAY: POMODORO MORNING AND FREE WRITING AFTERNOON		
09.00 - 09.30	Discussion	
09.30 - 10.05	Writing (Pomodoro Unit 1)	
10.05 - 10.40	Writing (Pomodoro Unit 2)	
10.40 - 11.15	Writing (Pomodoro Unit 3); <b>Drop in (11.00 - 12.00): Dr Anna Groundwater</b>	
11.15 - 11.50	Writing (Pomodoro Unit 4); <b>Drop in: Dr Anna Groundwater</b>	
11.50 - 12.05	COFFEE BREAK <b>Drop in (to 12.00): Dr Anna Groundwater</b>	
12.05 - 13.00	Writing: sample to Dr. Caenepeel by 13.00.	
13.00 - 14.00	LUNCH	
14.00 - 15.30	Writing	
15.30 - 16.00	[OPTIONAL BREAK]	
16.00 - 17.00	Writing	
17.00 - 17.30	Group Discussion	
17.30 - 18.00		
18.00 - 20.00	OPTIONAL EXTRA WRITING	
THURSDAY: FREE WRITING AND WRITING CLINIC		
09.00 - 09.30	Discussion	
09.30 - 11.30	Writing	
11.30 - 11.45	COFFEE BREAK	
11.45 - 12.00	Writing	
12.00 - 13.00	Writing; <b>Drop in: Dr Amy Burge</b>	
13.00 - 14.00	LUNCH	
14.00 - 15.30	Writing/ Writing Clinic (Dr Caenepeel)	
15.30 - 16.00	BREAK / Writing/ Writing Clinic (Dr Caenepeel)	
16.00 - 17.00	Writing/ Writing Clinic (Dr Caenepeel)	
17.00 - 17.30	Group discussion	
17.30 - 18.00		
18.00 - 20.00	OPTIONAL EXTRA WRITING	

FRIDAY: WRITING CLINIC AND FREE WRITING		
09.00 - 09.30	Discussion	
09.30 - 10.00	Writing	
10.00 - 11.30	Writing/ Writing Clinic (Dr Caenepeel)	
11.30 - 11.45	COFFEE BREAK	
11.45 - 12.00	Writing/ Writing Clinic (Dr Caenepeel)	
12.00 - 13.00	Writing/ Writing Clinic (Dr Caenepeel) <b>Drop in: Dr Laura Bradley</b>	
13.00 - 14.00	LUNCH	
14.00 - 15.30	Writing	
15.30 - 16.00	[OPTIONAL BREAK]	
16.00 - 17.00	Writing	
17.00 - 17.30	Group discussion	
17.30 - 21.00	LLC CHRISTMAS PARTY	
SATURDAY: WRITING AND REVIEWING		
10.00 - 10.30	Discussion	
10.30 - 11.30	Writing	
11.30 - 11.45	COFFEE BREAK	
11.45 - 13.00	Writing (exchange drafts to review)	
13.00 - 14.00	LUNCH	
14.00 - 15.30	Writing/Review	
15.30 - 16.00	[OPTIONAL BREAK]	
16.00 - 17.00	Writing/Review	
17.00 - 17.30	Group discussion	
17.30 - 18.00		
18.00 - 20.00	OPTIONAL EXTRA WRITING	

SUNDAY: REVIEWING AND WRITING		
<b>10.00 - 10.30</b>	Discussion	
<b>10.30 - 11.30</b>	Writing	
<b>11.30 - 11.45</b>	COFFEE BREAK	
<b>11.45 - 13.00</b>	Writing	
<b>13.00 - 14.00</b>	LUNCH	
<b>14.00 - 15.30</b>	Writing	
<b>15.30 - 16.00</b>	[OPTIONAL BREAK]	
<b>16.00 - 17.00</b>	Writing	
<b>17.00 - 17.30</b>	Group discussion and feedback	
<b>17.30 - 18.00</b>		
<b>18.00 - 20.00</b>	OPTIONAL EXTRA WRITING	

## WORKSHOPS

There will be two workshops over the course of EdJoWriWe.

### WRITING FOR PUBLICATION

The first workshop, 'Writing for Publication', takes place on Monday, 9<sup>th</sup> December, and is led by Dr Daniel Soule. Dr Soule is a graduate of the University of Glasgow; he has a keen interest in the process of academic writing and the role of writing within research. You can learn more about Dr Soule's work and research on his website (<http://grammatology.co.uk/>).

The workshop will start with a discussion of what stops or slows down research writers. Effective strategies for overcoming blocks and procrastination will be suggested. The idea of writing using the Pomodoro Technique will be discussed, as well as other strategies, such as free writing, building stamina, and how to build in different stages to the writing process: for example, creativity and generative writing, editing structure, and copy editing. After this Dr Soule will introduce some structures and models for sections of the journal article, which can be used to model sections and create a generative plan which to write to. Participants will try out the models based on journal articles they bring with them from journals they wish to publish in. In so doing they will model their paper in a way appropriate to the style of their target journal, and they will start to produce their journal article during the first day.

## WRITING CLINICS

We are offering two ‘writing clinics’ – tutor-led group sessions which allow you to receive feedback on (some of) your writing and give feedback on other people’s writing. These will be led by Dr Mimo Caenepeel (<http://mimocaenepeel.com/>). She is a graduate of the University of Edinburgh and teaches many courses on academic research and writing for the Institute for Academic Development.

## PRACTICALS

There will be two clinic sessions during the retreat: one on Thursday afternoon, and one on Friday morning. You will be assigned a place on one of these sessions.

You are invited to submit some of the writing you have produced during the retreat. This will inevitably be writing-in-progress, and that’s what exactly we are looking for. If your writing is discussed during the clinic, it will be approached as a ‘minimal viable product’ rather than a finished text. Feedback will focus on reflecting back the strengths of your writing, as well as any writing patterns that may inhibit clarity. The purpose is to provide you with observations that you can incorporate into a more advanced draft or other future writing.

To include your writing to the clinic, you need to submit your text to Dr Caenepeel ([mimo.caenepeel@gmail.com](mailto:mimo.caenepeel@gmail.com)) by 1 pm on Wednesday. Your text should be no more than three pages long, and in *Word* or *pdf* format.

We can’t guarantee that all submitted work will be discussed – this will depend on the number of submissions.

Each participant will receive copies of the writing that will be offered for feedback during their clinic.

## STRUCTURE OF THE CLINIC

If your writing is discussed in the clinic, you will be asked to introduce your text briefly. You may want to sketch the article the writing will contribute to, the target publication, any problems you are encountering in writing it, and any particular questions or concerns you may have about it. In short, you can tell us what specifically you would like feedback on.

The feedback participants to the clinic (including the tutor) offer will be

- **reflective/experiential** (it will focus on what it’s like to read the text – which parts are clear and which parts are confusing or difficult to read)

- **respectful** (we won't correct the text or make changes to it; but we may suggest changes, and leave it to the author to decide whether he or she wants to adopt them)
- **constructive** (we won't 'assess' the text, but we may offer pointers for changes that could improve the text)
- **focused on patterns** rather than individual instances (we will ignore one-off errors or typos, and pay attention instead to recurrent patterns that hinder the reader process)
- **appropriate to the stage the text is at** (we will take into account the author's introduction and the fact that this is not a final draft)

### ANY QUESTIONS?

If anything is unclear, you can get in touch with Mimo at [mimo.caenepeel@gmail.com](mailto:mimo.caenepeel@gmail.com).

## ROUND-TABLE DISCUSSION PARTICIPANTS

The round-table discussion will take place at 10am on Tuesday, 10<sup>th</sup> December in Room G2 in 19 George Square. In order to provide us both with past experiences and with insights from the perspectives of professionals, five lecturers and researchers from across the LLC will be generously giving their time and joining EdJoWriWe to discuss questions from participants on academic writing and publication. The confirmed participants are:

- Professor Joachim Gentz (Chinese Studies)
- Dr Anthony Gorman (Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies)
- Dr Frauke Matthes (German)
- Professor Wilson McLeod (Celtic and Scottish Studies)
- Dr Anna Vaninskaya (English Literature)

The discussion will be structured around the following topics:

- **Personal experiences:** panellists' reflections and formative experiences on academic writing.
- **Positioning an article:** the purpose(s) of an academic article, where to place it and how to write it accordingly.
- **Peer review etc.:** receiving feedback, working with peer reviewers and editors, dealing with rejection.
- **Afterlife of an article:** the effect of a published article on the postgraduate's career and subsequent research.
- **Any other questions:** further questions arising from discussion of the previous points.

## DROP-IN ADVISORS

Over the course of the week, several University of Edinburgh academics will act as drop-in advisors and visit the EdJoWriWe participants in 19 George Square. Each advisor will take-up residence in one of the EdJoWriWe rooms for a period of an hour, and will be available for informal consultation by participants.

### ***2-3pm, Tuesday, 10th December 2013***

Dr Lena Wånggren is the RSE Research Fellow with the Department of English Literature. Her research interests focus on questions of gender in late nineteenth century literature and culture, and she is also interested in literary and cultural theory, intersectionality, feminism and pedagogy. She has edited several journal issues, as well as a book collection, and has also co-authored journal articles with fellow researchers.

### ***11am-12pm, Wednesday, 11th December 2013***

Dr Anna Groundwater is AHRC Research Fellow on the Ben Jonson's Walk to Scotland 1618 project. She is also the Research Methods Co-ordinator in the Graduate School of History, Classics and Archaeology. She lectures on early modern Scottish and British history, and has published widely in this field.

### ***12-1pm, Thursday, 12th December 2013***

Dr Amy Burge is a Teaching Fellow and the Research Methods Co-ordinator for the Graduate School of Literatures, Languages and Cultures. Her research interests focus on medievalism, feminist theory and gender studies, popular literature, and cross-period research. She is happy to give feedback on structure and argumentation.

### ***12-1pm, Friday, 13th December 2013***

Dr Laura Bradley is Senior Lecturer in German and Deputy Postgraduate Director of the Graduate School of Literatures, Languages, and Cultures. Her research interests focus on the relationship between culture and politics in Germany, and she has published widely on Brecht and on theatre censorship in the GDR.

## REFLECTIONS ON ACADEMIC PUBLISHING AND WRITING

We asked several University of Edinburgh researchers to share their thoughts on, and experiences of, writing for publication, as well as any advice they would like to share with postgraduate researchers attempting to write their first journal article. The responses included here are diverse and thought-provoking in their range, and offer a variety of perspectives on the purpose, process, and net result of writing and publishing an academic journal article.

### WHAT?! WRITE AN ARTICLE WHEN CHAPTER TWO ISN'T WRITTEN?

*Professor Marilyn Booth*

Well, yes, perhaps! While no PhD student should feel pressured to do so, there are reasons to consider it. As a PhD supervisor – and as a former PhD student - I'm well aware of how differently we all work. Some people find themselves most energized when working on three things at once. Others are monomaniacal about finishing one project before starting another. Most of us are probably somewhere in between, but it is often good to have a 'refuge' that isn't your thesis but also won't leave you feeling guilty about a diversion. And publishing an article can give you the confidence you need to persevere with the difficult business of dissertation writing.

It's not just about your CV - or it shouldn't be. And it is not something to contemplate lightly. Don't attempt it at this stage unless there is an article-sized problem that you are keen to grapple with and can't get out of your head. In fact, one reason to consider writing an article for publication while the PhD sits there glowering at you is that it allows you to work on a 'spin-off', a topic that arises from the research you are doing but either you can't quite see how to fit it in to the larger project or (an even better excuse if you need one) you'd like it to be there but that implacable maximum word count is already giving you nightmares. Write an article: and if it is published or forthcoming, instead of spending 25 pages on it in the dissertation you can turn it into a crisp and satisfying footnote: 'On this, see my essay .... forthcoming in... (and then perhaps – if your supervisor thinks it is a good idea - you can also add it in as an appendix!).

Sometimes, on those dark afternoons in the library, you just can't produce the next section of that troublesome chapter. So perhaps you need something more galvanizing than a Diet Coke. Start writing an article! Let yourself go on a tangent. Whether or not it turns into an article, it may fire up your motor again. Our long projects almost always at some point feel like too much of an endless burden.

At the same time, you can't let such a 'digression' take over your life. If your supervisor(s) agree that it is good use of your time to embark on an article, set yourself a strict deadline. If you don't meet the deadline, put it aside and get back to the thesis. What you did accomplish in that defined period of time, even if it isn't a finished article, may help you to refocus on the dissertation; perhaps it gave you a different perspective on issues you were already working on. Perhaps it yielded a conference paper or a working paper that you can share with colleagues, for feedback.

Writing an article – even a fantasy article – can be a good way to reorganize your thoughts if you're feeling a structural deficit or facing a conceptual stumbling block. An essay forces you to develop a rich original idea into a succinct narrative that others will want to read. You can go for depth more than breadth. You can experiment in a way you might not be ready to do in your dissertation.

It's also never too early to start becoming acquainted with journals in your field. Without letting it overpower your own voice and direction, try to write with a journal in mind (even better, two or three). Writing an article also can help you get a critical purchase on others' academic writing. And if you submit the article for publication, an added benefit is that you will get the critical feedback of peer readers without having to find them yourself.

Keep in mind shorter forms, too: a book review or book review essay, a 'forum' type contribution to a journal. Book reviews can be very satisfying to write, as they compel you to grapple carefully and sensitively with an author's argument and evidence. You can usually get onto book review editors' lists of potential reviewers if you send a CV and cover email explaining briefly what your areas of interest are. (Some academic journals will only take reviewers who already have a PhD, with the logic that only after one has completed a major piece of work does one understand the process well enough to be a fair reviewer.)

And of course, whether it is an article or a review, there *is* the tremendous satisfaction of getting published.

Marilyn Booth  
Iraq Professor of Arabic and Islamic Studies  
IMES, University of Edinburgh  
[m.booth@ed.ac.uk](mailto:m.booth@ed.ac.uk)

## WRITING JOURNAL ARTICLES

*Dr Anna Groundwater*

Short of writing your first book, there's nothing more exciting than starting to write your first article. All that research, all those years of accumulating information, and it's all bursting to come out. For the first time, you get to choose exactly what you are writing about, unshaped by the expectations of supervisors and examiners. I remember the thrill of sitting in the EUL surrounded by journals deciding which one I should send what to. I had very ambitious plans. After all, there's not much point in doing the research if we don't then get it out there, helping to polish our CVs, and showing how interesting our work is.

But that morning in the EUL was one of the most important that I spent in the days after submitting my thesis. Reading other people's work made me review what I had done with my material, and how I could use it differently. In the first hyper-flush of enthusiasm, with research burning in my head, and the practice of writing still fresh, I banged out my first article in a week, and sent it off. I was lucky, I had kind editors who suggested some changes and the article was published. But it was to be another three years before anything else came out.

The post-doctorate momentum is a wonderful thing to make the most of, and I may never pull an article together again so fast. But in the last couple of years, by identifying the appropriate journals for my work, and then some disciplined periods of writing, I have got into the habit of embarking on the next article as soon as the last is finished – at least mentally if not physically. As for writing, if I keep in practice, words seem to flow. Writing a blog, though sometimes tricky, keeps the fingers moving, and the thoughts developing. Typing out the inspirational quote that stimulated an article is a very fine feeling, even if the next step is merely more thinking. And then I let the words just come, not overly controlling their structure. A week later, it's time to walk away into Edinburgh's wind, before returning with an editor's hat on.

Anna Groundwater  
 Research Fellow, Ben Jonson's Walk to Scotland 1618  
 Department of English Literature, University of Edinburgh  
[anna.groundwater@ed.ac.uk](mailto:anna.groundwater@ed.ac.uk)

## PEER REVIEW AS CONSTRUCTIVE AND ENGAGING

*Maja Milatovic*

Submitting your work to a journal represents a particular challenge for a PhD candidate or an early career researcher. The carefully nurtured ideas, transformed into an article, are now sent into the unknown and submitted to merciless scrutiny. However, the experience of submitting one's work to a peer-reviewed journal and receiving feedback for it can be viewed in a different way. I personally find reviewers' comments to my work extremely constructive and thought-provoking. Whether the revisions required are minor, moderate or prompting dialogue, they offer a way of establishing a conversation about my work with journal editors and peer reviewers, and engaging with their impressions of my research and ideas. The feedback works well on many levels: it improves one's academic writing, structuring of arguments to make them more coherent to diverse readers and leads to additional resources and positions one might not have necessarily considered. The important aspect of this process is not to take the criticisms personally – the work is an ever-evolving process and formulating a receptive and self-reflexive response to criticism is equally important. Every reviewer is different, with different styles of feedback. At times, it might happen that one disagrees with certain comments or find that one's argument might have been misunderstood. However, I see this as yet another chance to reflect on the clarity of my arguments and whether they are well-presented and clear, allowing for additional space for elaboration and conversation. Working on my publications, I found my own experience as a peer reviewer and editor helpful as I am able to analyse my own responses to someone's work and the feedback I give (for example, underscoring which aspects I find most compelling, plausible and well-structured), which ultimately helps develop self-reflexivity when working on my own publications. As a PhD candidate and / or an early career researcher, it is important to establish a conversation about our work, ideas and writing and apart from public presentations, blogging, dialogues with colleagues and supervisors and numerous other ways to engage with others, submitting our work to a journal and getting our work peer-reviewed is yet another useful way of developing and enriching our research. While it can be a daunting and lengthy process, it can be an equally constructive and beneficial experience, enhancing our critical thinking, writing skills and transforming ideas into a coherent and compelling written form.

Maja Milatovic  
PhD candidate, Department of English Literature  
University of Edinburgh  
[maja.milatovic@ed.ac.uk](mailto:maja.milatovic@ed.ac.uk)

## “PAIN IS INEVITABLE. SUFFERING IS OPTIONAL” (MURAKAMI): WHAT I THINK ABOUT WHEN I THINK ABOUT EDITING

*Elizabeth Stewart and Laura Chapot*

*Dear Reader, your article has been accepted for publication!*

Ah wait, ... sorry.

This is just a handbook.

I am not your editor.

Erm, and you still have to finish writing.

Well, details, details... It felt good to read that though didn't it? This is the email everyone wants to see in their inbox after weeks (possibly months!) of waiting to hear back about a publication submission. Finally, a result! You win! You and your thesis deserve a serious drink!

This email will probably feel like the end of a long slog and should definitely be celebrated as a milestone. However, as in Alcoholics Anonymous, acceptance is only the first step. In fact you are entering a whole new stage of the publication process: editing. And one way or another, getting that article out there is probably still going to hurt. You are going to have to deal with feedback and criticism of your work from anonymous peer reviewers; there will be an editor to correspond with who you may well never have met; and you might well have some rewriting or even bits of further research to get done. What is more, suddenly you are working to a time-frame that is not your own.

As Murakami says though, “Pain is inevitable. Suffering is optional.” So here are some thoughts on how to make that final stage of the process as bearable as possible both for you and your editor.

1. There will be comments on your work: what are you going to do with them?
  - Sometimes these won't match your own understanding of what you have written. My first article from my thesis was read by really helpful and detailed peer reviewers. However both of these asked me to expand on a point which I felt that my article was not about, and which, in fact, I didn't want it to be about. At first I was confused about this, but as both reviewers had mentioned this it was clearly not something I could dismiss – what if any subsequent readers would have the same question or issue with the article? Then I realised that what I needed to take from this was that the focus of my article was not coming through clearly enough. In fact I was able to say why the area they had identified was not the point of my article and why I thought the ‘real point’ was more worth exploring in two sentences – so, as well as strengthening my point in a few other areas, I put those two

sentences in. That feedback was incredibly useful in helping me realise that my article was not communicating what I wanted it to communicate. When the article was published last year, the editor included a brief summary of what he saw as my article's contribution in the introduction – I was so pleased when I read this as it exactly fitted the point I had wanted to, but initially had failed, to bring across.

- Be pleased you have these comments now – wouldn't it be awful to look back in three years time and think 'Oh god – I wish I'd never published that.' Or worse still for someone else to rip into your work in their publication!
  - If you don't know how to interpret something, ask around. Peer reviewers are not perfect, nor are they infallible and at the end of the day you need to be happy with the work you are publishing. You don't have to take on every suggestion but, if you are unsure, it is always worth getting a second opinion – whether from your supervisor or from the editor.
  - Don't fully rewrite the article (unless they have really, truly asked you to do this). It has already made it through peer-review, sending a completely different article back would defeat the purpose.
2. You are going to have to be in contact with your editor. How do you want to come across?
- Your editor is most likely going to be someone in your field and so someone you are going to come across again. You never know where this might be – at a job interview, at a conference. Even if they are not in your field, people can pop up at the funniest times, and sometimes the most interesting relationships arise out of thinking across disciplinary barriers. So take this as an opportunity to start being the academic you want to be. If it is a postgraduate journal, take the fact that you are peers as a reason to be good to each other.
  - E-mail can be a tricky mode of communication at the best of times. Try to be a clear and considerate emailer. Personally I prefer to receive one long email with a number of questions in it which I can sit down and answer point by point than four or five short emails each with a different piece of information in and which are hard to keep track of in a busy inbox.
  - Deep breaths are important. If you feel cross or confused draft an email then leave it for a while. You never know when you might come across someone again so try to keep on good terms with your editor and reviewers. Ranting to a friend can help you blow off steam, but ranting to your editor is not constructive. At the end of the day both you and your editor want the same thing – for your article to be out there in its best possible form.
  - Stick to the deadlines. Depending on the journal, depending on the timeframe a missed deadline can have a range of implications. It may be that you being late will not be an issue because there is a delay with another part of the process anyway. Equally, it may be that this will lead to the issue being published without you. Don't risk it – stick to the deadlines you've been given.
3. How are you going to make the most of your editor? Small things that will make your editor and publishers appreciate your work (and you!) even more.

- These may sound like very small and insignificant details, but make sure you format your work to the style of the journal. You will probably receive specific instructions from the journal about these, and make sure you follow them to the letter. It is very tedious for editors to have to go through dealing with issues which should have been sorted out prior to submission. It will also mean that you and your editor will be able to focus on more important aspects of your work rather than small details of formatting and in-house style.
- Consult. Make sure that you carefully consider all the suggested revisions made by the reviewers. As mentioned previously, you don't necessarily have to follow these to the letter, particularly if you feel they are pulling your article in a direction you don't want to go. Discuss your article, and any issues of feedback with a variety of people (your editor is obviously your first point of call, but they are not infallible and so make sure you run your problems and ideas past your peers or your supervisor).
- Communicate. If you can see a problem looming on the horizon communicate about this - the earlier the better. Life happens and everyone understands this. People are usually happy to work around issues which comes up that might cause delays. If they don't know about it though, they can't alter their plans.
- Acknowledge: You are working hard on your article but so is your editor (hopefully!). If you've had a good experience working with someone or are just pleased your piece is out there then tell them. It'll make their day.

Remember, your editor is on your side – all you have to do is keep them there. If your piece has been accepted then the thing to hold on to is that they already want your article in their journal/book/life. Everything else is just about getting it there in its best possible form.

Your editor loves you baby!

Elizabeth Stewart  
PhD candidate, German/Editor of Forum (Sept. 2012 – Sept. 2013)  
University of Edinburgh  
[e.stewart-4@ed.ac.uk](mailto:e.stewart-4@ed.ac.uk)

Laura Chapot  
PhD candidate, Comparative Literature/ Editor of Forum (Dec. 2012 – Dec. 2013)  
University of Edinburgh  
[s0677600@sms.ed.ac.uk](mailto:s0677600@sms.ed.ac.uk)

## 'KILL YOUR BABY', 'FEED THAT BEAST': STRATEGIES FOR READING AND EDITING YOUR OWN WORK

*Elizabeth Stewart*

I get oddly attached to my words when I write. They might not be good words. There are probably too many of them. Admittedly sometimes they don't make sense.<sup>1</sup> But they are mine. Look – I made them myself! Typed them out and everything!

This means I have to get aggressive when it comes to presenting them to other people. Having pushed and shoved, nudged and needled the reluctant little buggers out of my head and onto the page, becoming ruthless is the only way to for me to get them to actually do any work for me. For this reason my own motto for preparing my writing for publication, for conferences, even for supervision, is 'Kill Your Baby'!

There are other, less infanticidal images you could go for. A good friend of mine called her writing process 'Feeding the Beast'. This mainly involved fattening up the thesis to keep it satisfied and at bay. I thought she was preparing for the final show-down – the beast glowering in its cave, threatening the townspeople; she, the valiant knight, ready to face and defeat her foe. But then she began talking about 'taming' and 'grooming the beast' as she edited it for submission. Suddenly the Beast was not so hungry and she was in control. Like Belle in *Beauty and the Beast*, for my friend 'there was something there that wasn't there before' (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WFZuzW6z6lg>).

Unfortunately, I have yet to live happily ever after with my thesis – it is still in progress and insists on keeping me prisoner in a dingy room with only Chip, my faithful cup of tea, for company. As me and the thesis are still at war, I have to stick with 'Kill Your Baby' as my motto when trying to edit my own writing. The idea with 'Kill Your Baby' is that the thing you are most attached to (that beautiful sentence, that hilarious pun, that inspired piece of analysis that doesn't really fit with the rest of the argument) often needs to go in order for the piece to really become what you want it to. So it's not necessarily your whole baby that will suffer, but maybe an arm or two is going to have to come off.

I know that babies have nothing to do with pirates, but somehow this motto allows me to strap on an imaginary eye-patch, swashbuckle over to my writing and get to work pillaging the best and most

---

<sup>1</sup> I once accidentally wrote that x 'resounds' with y the whole way through a chapter only to realise afterwards that what I really meant was 'resonates'. Sometimes (despite being a native English speaker) I accidentally use German word order. Sometimes there is just no excuse and a solid dose of Chekhov is in order to remind me of the excellence of the shorter sentence.

relevant aspects of what is already there. The rest can walk the plank. It helps me acknowledge the fact that I am attached to the work I already put into producing my messy mass of words, but it also gives me the license I need to rally, re-attack and re-write (the war cry of the alliterative pirate self-editor). I try to look at it from all angles – does that paragraph need to be there? Does this quote add anything significant? Have I cut out the ‘writing ticks’ I tend to rely on as crutches?<sup>2</sup> It lets me get rid of the excess, the irrelevant, and usually leaves me with a tighter argument and a more polished piece.

Although the process is less pleasant than the grooming of the beast, both give you that feeling of having made progress in moving from writing as exploration to writing as communication. I also find this useful in dealing with feedback on my work as well – once I’ve detached a little bit from the piece, it is easier to see it through someone else’s eyes (whether that someone else is a murderous pirate alter ego or a peer reviewer). Beasts and pirates might not work for everyone. Some people might not even need an elaborate fantasy scenario to internalise a critical eye on their own writing. For those who do though, there are plenty more metaphors in the sea. Find one that works for you, get critical, and get that writing out there!

Elizabeth Stewart  
PhD candidate, German/Editor of Forum (Sept. 2012 – Sept. 2013)  
University of Edinburgh  
[e.stewart-4@ed.ac.uk](mailto:e.stewart-4@ed.ac.uk)

---

<sup>2</sup> As you might guess, mixing metaphors is one of these. I’ve been indulgent here and left them in though in a tiny act of rebellion against my editorial self.

## ACADEMIC PUBLISHING: THREE INITIAL CONUNDRUMS

*Eystein Thanisch*

As a PhD student, my experiences with publication to date have been neither vast nor wide-ranging nor entirely successful so I do not pretend to write here from a position of authority. However, I have noticed some tensions and experienced some surprises. These are, in fact, partly the inspiration behind EdJoWriWe.

First, writing for publication is rarely a formal aspect of a structured postgraduate course. Opportunities can be seized on unilaterally by the student or the idea can be proposed by the supervisor, yet a somewhat illicit, off-the-books atmosphere remains, regardless. At the same time, there is intense competition for postdocs and academic jobs in the humanities and building up a portfolio of academic publications even before the end of a PhD programme can feel virtually essential. I have spoken with academics who are very worried about postgraduates feeling pressurised to try and publish before either they or their work are ready and that academic publication can be presented as yet another form of quantity-based 'CV-stuffing'. In a way, negotiating the tension between quantitative forms of assessment and the idiosyncratic intellectual and practical requirements of individual fields of research is good training for an academic career as a whole.

When I have set about writing articles, I have experienced a sense of disorientating and slightly uncomfortable freedom. Essays are in response to set questions and are usually used to demonstrate understanding of a particular curriculum while the aims and structures of dissertations are negotiated and scrutinised in advance over time in conjunction with one's supervisor(s). In these cases, one can also be fairly sure who will read the finished product and they are often someone you know; it can thus be written for that person. An article, meanwhile, can be about anything (within reason!) and could be read by anyone. There is thus a temptation to make it about *everything*, to follow up all tangents and heavily qualify all statements both as a display of erudition to the outside world and as a defence against potential criticism. While rigour is obviously excellent, in excess, it can make writing for publication an overwhelming and prohibitively draining experience. It seems wise to define an article's remit and objectives quite carefully before beginning and to have the confidence that the vast majority of readers who are worth listening to will read it for what it does say rather than picking up on what it does not say.

Finally, given my anxieties over the scrutiny under which my article might come (thinly disguised in the previous paragraph through use of the third-person and the impersonal), I was quite surprised at the range of responses from peer reviewers. In one case, my article was rejected and the reviewer wrote a lengthy, detailed and actually very fair and helpful analysis of why it had been rejected, covering everything from issues of style to philosophical problems with my argument. Subsequent to that, reviewers that I have encountered have been extremely *laissez-faire* with respect to content, citing only errors in spelling and grammar and lack of clarity in expression. The slightly frightening impression was that my arguments and ideas were mine own and that no one was going to save me from myself. It is therefore important to be prepared for a range of responses and ultimately to take responsibility for one's own work and arguments.

I have dwelt here mainly on problems or causes of confusion; I have also found writing for publication very satisfying. It might be self-serving in some respects but it also constitutes a lasting contribution to knowledge and debate. Given its ultimate importance but also the uncertainty and practical difficulties surrounding it, I am very much looking forward to EdJoWriWe as a space in which to explore it further.

Eystein Thanisch  
PhD candidate, Celtic and Scottish Studies  
University of Edinburgh  
[e.p.thanisch@sms.ed.ac.uk](mailto:e.p.thanisch@sms.ed.ac.uk)

## GASTRONOMIC STAYCATIONS IN A WORLD OF PHD PLENTY

*Michael Wood*

When finishing off a chapter, there's always a bit of research that didn't make it in. Of course, there's only so much you can fit into  $n$ -thousand words. So, much like that inevitable post-Christmas speciality, what about an academic bubble and squeak? Leftover ideas are still ideas, after all. And if they can be fashioned into a delicious (delicious?), worth-while read for someone else, and contribute to your field of research, they're no longer leftover ideas. When you're wondering what to do over the summer, when everyone else has gone abroad, there's no need to follow the crowd: settle down, enjoy the Scottish summer (summer?), and cook up a storm. If you've already done the thinking, it may just be that rewarding staycation you've been looking forward to all year.

Presenting a dish to your dinner guests can sometimes be a little daunting: will they like the interesting, innovative, beautifully executed concoction you've put together? And, if they don't, will they be brazen enough to say so? Fortunately, when submitting work to a journal, your academic dinner guests tell you whether or not they think the flavours work. And, they'll go one step further: it's a little under-seasoned; we could do with a little more thyme (it's never time); maybe drop the cumin; have you thought of combining this delicately cooked piece of turbot with white chocolate and turning it into a parfait? (Don't. It would be foul). The thing is: by and large, they want you on board, and they want your dish to be the most beautiful dish on the pass (their journal).

This extended metaphor is getting a little out of hand. I think I'll leave it there. If your idea is worth putting out there, do. And be prepared for criticism. Sometimes, it may be outright rejection. But don't lose heart: there's always somewhere else. If they turn it down, then maybe that's a sign... By and large, reviewers and editors are like you and me, i.e. a rather nice bunch. So, when you read comments and think they're a little harsh, sit down, have a coffee, talk to someone about the weather. Then go back. Indeed, this reviewer's actually saying it's a great piece of work, but maybe you could cut out the sea buckthorn altogether and instead bring out more of the lighter honey tones. Sorry. Maybe they're saying: just say 'potato gratin' instead of 'potatoes dauphinoise'. Again, sorry. Also, never be afraid to think: that's not me, so I think I'll withdraw it.

Seeing your name in a journal and/or a book is a very rewarding experience. You've contributed to your field of study and, perhaps most importantly in an ever-shrinking academic job market, your CV starts to smile like never before. Not least, you get noticed by your peers and your seniors. But in order to get there, you have to put in the hard work, listen to criticism, think about criticism, and put in more hard work. Indeed, reviewers' comments never come at the perfect time, but when you find

the time to write and to edit, you can make sure that your dish will reach the pass and be guzzled down with decalitres of Picpoul de Pinet and maybe even cited by the great Alain Ducasse himself. I just couldn't help myself.

Michael Wood  
PhD candidate, Department of German Studies  
University of Edinburgh  
[m.a.p.wood@sms.ed.ac.uk](mailto:m.a.p.wood@sms.ed.ac.uk)

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

You have questions? We have (some) answers! EdJoWriWe is a unique social-academic writing experiment, and we expect that some of your questions will be answered only over the course of the week and not a moment before. That said, there are a few queries to which we may have the answers, as provided below.

### LOGISTICS

#### ***Where is EdJoWriWe taking place?***

EdJoWriWe will take place in 19 George Square. We have reserved the following rooms for the entire week: G2, G22, G23 and Room 2.28 (second floor, above the kitchen). Participants should congregate in G2 each morning in the first instance.

#### ***When does EdJoWriWe take place?***

EdJoWriWe takes place over seven days: Monday 9<sup>th</sup> December – Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> December 2013. Starting times vary between 9am and 10am; please consult the schedule for a given day's schedule.

#### ***Tell me more about lunch.***

Sandwich platters will be provided by Urban Angel at 1pm from Monday-Thursday. There will be the following sandwich options: meat and seafood, vegetarian, gluten-free (mixed meat and vegetarian). EdJoWriWe will also provide a store of ground coffee, teabags and other drinks. This is covered by the cost of your £10 fee. Participants will have to fend for themselves Friday-Sunday.

#### ***I need to leave for a few hours on a specific day. Will this be a problem?***

Not at all – your time is your own. However, we would ask that you sign-in and -out using the sign-in sheet we will leave in the Common Room. This will make it easier for us to ensure that everyone has left at the end of the day.

### WRITING, WRITING AND MORE WRITING

#### ***Do I have to write an article or can I work on my dissertation for EdJoWriWe?***

Despite the title, we are actually quite relaxed about this. However, the week will be most beneficial to participants who are undertaking a self-contained piece of work. Therefore, if you do want to work on your dissertation, please try to designate a particular chapter that you will complete at EdJoWriWe.

***Will I have to show my writing to other participants?***

We won't force you to, but there will be opportunities both to receive and to give feedback, and we imagine it would be beneficial to take advantage of these.

***Will I have failed EdJoWriWe if I do not complete my journal article?***

No, not at all! This is our target and we want to see if it is possible, but it is in no way required of anyone. EdJoWriWe is intended to facilitate your productivity; if the target of a completing a first draft threatens to cripple your writing, take a moment to reflect on your writing and redefine your goals.

***My journal article is not working out as I had envisaged. Can I work on my dissertation instead?***

Yes, you can work on whatever task you feel would profit most from your attention during EdJoWriWe. With that said, if you do encounter a writing block we would encourage you to make use of the supportive environment and talk to the co-convenors and your fellow participants. Attempt to talk your way through or around the obstacle; it may not be as insurmountable as it first appears. Nevertheless, if you feel you have reached an impasse in your project, speak to the co-convenors and they will help you re-define your goals for the remainder of EdJoWriWe.

***Will you help me publish my journal article?***

No – sorry! Where and when you submit what you have written is a matter for you and your supervisor. The panel of academics early in the week might be an appropriate forum to ask in general about how to go about approaching journals etc., however they can only advise in a very general way – the specifics are unique to your particular situation.

***Should I expect to be able to submit my journal article at the end of the week?***

We would strongly recommend you show what you produce to your supervisor and other specialists in your own field before submitting your work from EdJoWriWe. It is worth stressing at this point that we do not claim to be a replacement or a substitute for your supervisor and would expect your work for EdJoWriWe to be derived from your work with them, and that they would be consulted about the next steps once the week is over.

***What do I need to bring?***

Whatever you need: laptops, notes, books, snacks etc. We will have electricity and university WiFi. Obviously, people will be concentrating quite intensely in a quiet environment so it would be best to be considerate with the design of any music-making device you might wish to bring. For the 'Writing for Publication' workshop, Dr Daniel Soule has requested that each participant bring their journal

article or a journal article they admire; it would be best if this was a printed version for ease of access.

***Are there any deadlines during EdJoWriWe?***

Not as such. We ask that participants have a representative writing sample of no more than 1500 words ready for Dr Mimo Caenepeel by 1pm on Wednesday afternoon. Aside from that, there are no fixed deadlines.

***Is it necessary to have completed the research for the journal article/dissertation chapter prior to EdJoWriWe?***

This is indeed necessary. We envisage little to no time being spent on research in the course of the week, although double-checking references and fine details is acceptable. 19 George Square is two minutes from the Main Library so this should be reasonably practical.

***EdJoWriWe's writing schedule does not seem very demanding. Shouldn't we be writing all day and all night?***

We admire your fighting spirit! We believe it will be constructive for most participants to have structured writing blocs of no more than 90 mins / 2 hours, and so engender a balance between productive, focussed writing sessions and informal break-out sessions for discussion and relaxation. However, if you would like to stay in 19 George Square after the day's scheduled writing, we will facilitate you to do so; one of the convenors (either Eystein or Muireann) will remain onsite until 9pm on selected evenings. Please refer to the schedule for more information.

***I want to stay later than 9pm. Can I remain in 19 George Square after everyone else has gone home?***

We certainly would not encourage you to burn the candles at both ends, and would strongly recommend you be reasonable in your expectations of yourself. We would also ask you to be sensible with regards to your personal health and safety. If, however, you are determined to work into the wee hours of the night, we would ask that you consider moving to the Main Library or to one of the 24-hour computer labs, such as in the Hugh Robson building. If you wish to remain within 19 George Square, please inform campus security that you are still in the building, and inform them again when you go home.

**HOW IS EDJOWRIWE UNIQUE?**

***What will I get from this that I don't get from existing support structures?***

Dr Soule's workshop, 'Writing for Publication', will be specially tailored for EdJoWriWe. Also on offer is unique access to academics from across the LLC who have agreed to answer questions regarding

publication. In addition, given that participants will be working to the same end in the same location, EdJoWriWe will provide both a procrastination-free, focused environment and opportunities for support and networking with other postgraduates in the humanities.

***What support will be on-hand?***

The co-convenors will be happy to answer any questions and, to a reasonable extent, help out with anything. Several lecturers and research fellows have kindly agreed to drop-in. Finally, a clinic run by a professional writing consultant will be taking place on Thursday afternoon and Friday morning where you can raise technical issues with your work. Given that everyone involved will be facing the same challenges, we also hope that participants will support and learn from one another.

***Will the drop-in advisors read my article and give me feedback?***

This is unlikely. Each advisor is dropping-in for only an hour, which makes their time very limited. We would recommend that you identify one particular drop-in advisor who you think would be able to offer you particularly pertinent advice, and approach them with specific questions in mind. They will be able to offer only 10-15 minutes per participant in a given session.

## EDJOWRIWE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

***How is EdJoWriWe utilising social media?***

Given that EdJoWriWe is something of an experiment, it is intended that the experiences of those that take part be memorialised and rendered as accessible as possible. EdJoWriWe's social media presence consists of a Twitter feed (<http://www.twitter.com/edjowriwe>) and a blog (<http://edjowriwe.weebly.com/blog.html>); these are both managed by our social media guru Ella Leith. Ella will tweet key topics and themes from the day's discussions, and we encourage our participants to contribute to the online discussion if they so wish. In addition, Ella will carry out mini-interviews with the participants over the course of the week, and post these to the EdJoWriWe blog.

***Will the participants also write blog posts?***

Yes, indeed! During the registration process you were asked to identify a day on which you would like to write a blog post; we have recorded your preferences and will establish a blogging schedule for participants on Monday.

***Will our conversations be broadcast on Twitter?***

No, that is not our intention. We respect our participants' privacy and wish to facilitate informal, honest discussion during the week; we expect participants to extend the same courtesy to each other. Instead, we anticipate the tweets will deal in generalities, e.g. topics, themes, issues, etc. In

the event that you say something of dazzling insight and import, Ella may wish to share it with the wider world and will approach you for your permission to attribute it.

***How can I engage with EdJoWriWe via Twitter?***

Follow the account @edjowriwe and/or use the hashtag #edjowriwe. As mentioned previously, please exercise your good judgement when tweeting and respect EdJoWriWe participants' privacy.

## ORGANISERS

### LEAD ORGANISERS

**Eystein Thanisch** studied Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic at the University of Cambridge before undertaking an MSc in Celtic Studies at the University of Edinburgh. He is currently in the third year of a PhD - also in Celtic Studies at the University of Edinburgh.. His research interests can be broadly described as medieval literary theory, historiography and manuscript studies. He has two articles currently in press for peer-reviewed journals but only after suffering the brutal rejection of his first attempt at publication. Otherwise, he enjoys computer games, hillwalking, fencing and beer.

**Muireann Crowley** holds a BA (Hons) in English and Philosophy, and a Postgraduate Diploma in Education from University College Cork, Ireland. She also holds degrees from the University of Warwick and the University of Edinburgh, and is presently in the second year of a PhD with the Department of English Literature at the University of Edinburgh. She is rambling through Romantic Irish and Scottish literature and print culture studies in the course of her research, and spends much of her time dwelling on paratexts. Outside of the university, she likes comic books and jaunts.

### CATERING LIAISON

**Sarah Sharp** is a second year PhD candidate in the English Literature Department at the University of Edinburgh. Her doctoral studies are supervised by Prof. Penny Fielding and funded by a Wolfson Foundation Postgraduate Scholarship. She is a current member of SWINC (Scottish Writing in the Nineteenth Century) and is a research assistant on the new Edinburgh edition of the collected works of Robert Louis Stevenson. She is also a biscuit connoisseur. For more information on her work please go to... [http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/literatures-languages-cultures/english-literature/postgraduate/phd/student-profiles?person\\_id=207&cw\\_xml=profile.php](http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/literatures-languages-cultures/english-literature/postgraduate/phd/student-profiles?person_id=207&cw_xml=profile.php)

### HANDBOOK RESEARCHER

**Emily Anderson** is doing an MSc in Comparative Literature having completed her BA at Cambridge and spent a year at Cambridge University Press. She hopes to cling on to academia for as long as possible. Outside the library she enjoys rowing and writing terrible short stories (not at the same time).

### SOCIAL MEDIA GURU

**Ella Leith** is in her third year of a PhD in the Celtic and Scottish Studies department at the University of Edinburgh, where she also did her undergraduate degree and MScR. She is researching British Sign

Language storytelling and the Deaf 'oral' tradition in Scotland and enjoys having her mind blown by it on a daily basis. She is also a literacy tutor, and enjoys folk singing and hiking.

## CONTACT DETAILS

You may contact EdJoWriWe's lead organisers via its email address: [edjowriwe@gmail.com](mailto:edjowriwe@gmail.com). If you would prefer to contact the organisers directly, you may do so via their personal emails: Muireann Crowley ([muireann.crowley@ed.ac.uk](mailto:muireann.crowley@ed.ac.uk)) and Eystein Thanisch ([e.p.thanisch@sms.ed.ac.uk](mailto:e.p.thanisch@sms.ed.ac.uk)).

You can also interact with EdJoWriWe via Twitter @edjowriwe (<http://www.twitter.com/edjowriwe>) and through its blog (<http://edjowriwe.weebly.com/blog.html>).

## FURTHER READING

### GENERAL

- R. Murray, *Writing for Academic Journals* (Open University Press: Maidenhead, 2013) [LB2369 Mur.](#)

From the publisher:

“Writing for publication is a daunting and time-consuming task for many academics. And yet the pressure for academics to publish has never been greater. This book demystifies the process of writing academic papers, showing readers what good papers look like and how they can be written.

Offering a research-informed understanding of the contemporary challenges of writing for publication, this book gives practical advice for overcoming common obstacles such as finding a topic, targeting journals, and finding the time to write. The author offers a range of helpful writing strategies, making this an invaluable handbook for academics at all stages of their career, from doctoral students to early career researchers and even experienced academics.

The third edition has been comprehensively updated to reflect the changing landscape of academic writing, including the most recent research and theory on writing across the disciplines. Drawing on her extensive experience of running writing workshops and working closely with academics on developing writing, Rowena Murray offers practical and tested strategies for good academic writing.”

- W. L. Belcher, *Writing Your Journal Article in Twelve Weeks: A Guide to Academic Publishing Success* (SAGE Publications: Thousand Oaks, 2009). 1 copy received at University of Edinburgh Main Library (03/12/13) but not yet catalogued.

From the publisher:

“Wendy Laura Belcher’s *Writing Your Journal Article in Twelve Weeks: A Guide to Academic Publishing Success* is a revolutionary approach to enabling academic authors to overcome their anxieties and produce the publications that are essential to succeeding in their fields. Each week, readers learn a particular feature of strong articles and work on revising theirs accordingly. At the end of twelve weeks, they send their article to a journal. This invaluable resource is the only guide that focuses specifically on publishing humanities and social science journal articles.”

- Inger Mewburn, 'The Thesis Whisperer' ( <http://thesiswhisperer.com/> )

Dr Mewburn is the inspiration behind EdJoWriWe (see her presentation: <http://www.slideshare.net/ingermewburn/write-that-journal-article-in-7-days-12742195>). She is the editor of a blog called 'The Thesis Whisperer', which is a treasure trove of information and opinion on academic writing and on academia in general.

## BEFORE WRITING

- Sue Shellenbarger, 'No Time to Read This? Read This', *The Wall Street Journal*, 18 November 2009.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704538404574541590534797908.html>

This is a fairly light-hearted article in which Shellenbarger explains and samples the most popular time management systems: Getting Things Done (GTD), the Pomodoro Technique, and Franklin Covey's Focus.

- Nicholas Walliman, *Your Research Project: Planning and Designing Your Work*, 3rd ed. (Sage: London, 2011).

Walliman's work could prove very useful for helping with pre-writing preparation (though he offers advice about the whole research project). The section on forming the research question is particularly useful (see attached for extracts). He also notes the psychological problem often faced by students when they come to write: that s/he becomes overwhelmed by the daunting prospect of completing so many words.

- Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (University of Chicago Press: Chicago and London, 2007).

Like Walliman, Turabian offers guidance on the whole process of academic writing. She makes similar points about how to formulate research proposals but puts them in a different light through her use of examples of how to think. For example:

Thinking about aims:

1. I am working on the topic of X (stories about the battle of the Alamo)
  2. because I want to find out Y (why its story became a national legend)
  3. so that I can help others understand Z (how regional myths have shaped our national character)
- (6).

- Evelyn Farbman, *Sentence Sense: A Writer's Guide* (Houghton Mifflin College Division: Boston, 1988)

<http://www.ccc.commnet.edu/sensen/index.html>

This textbook is perhaps a little basic for EdJoWriWe but it does contain some useful material. For example, Farbman models how to go from brainstorming to a paragraph-by-paragraph plan in a continuous process.

## DURING WRITING

- Nicholas Walliman, *Your Research Project: Planning and Designing Your Work*, 3rd ed. (Sage: London, 2011).

Walliman's book offers helpful strategies for planning and drafting work, including a step-by-step formula for how to organise the text.

- Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (University of Chicago Press: Chicago and London, 2007).

Again, Turabian gives help on how to get started with writing, including a few tips on how to avoid procrastination. For example:

Develop Productive Drafting Habits: 'draft regularly and often, not in marathon sessions that dull your thinking and kill your interest. Set a small goal and reasonable quota of words for each session, and stick to it. When you resume drafting, you need not start where you left off: review your storyboard to decide what what you're ready to draft today. Review how it will fit into the section and the whole: What reason does this section support? Where does it fit in the overall logic? Which key terms state the concepts that distinguish this section? If you're blocked, skip to another section. [...] Chronic procrastinators are usually so intimidated by the size of their project that it paralyzes them [...] You can overcome that destructive habit by breaking your project into small, achievable goals.' (72)

- Robert Gunning, *The Technique of Clear Writing* (McGraw-Hill Book Company: New York, 1952, 1968).

This is a handbook for writing but not as we know it! The has the tone of a traditional school teacher, which keeps things interesting and amusing at the same time as being informative. It isn't focused on academic writing, but is against 'fog' in writing in general. There's a lot of interesting information about measuring readability, and which publications are most readable. The main body of the text is introducing and explaining ten 'principles' (not rules) for writing:

1. Keep sentences short
2. Prefer the simple to the complex.
3. Prefer the familiar word.
4. Avoid unnecessary words.
5. Put action into your verbs.
6. Write like you talk.
7. Use terms your reader can picture.
8. Tie in with your reader's experience.
9. Make full use of variety.
1. 10 Write to express not to impress.

The appendices contain a list of '3000 familiar words' and a list of shorter words to replace longer ones. There's a section on technical language, including examples from Einstein and Darwin. Particularly relevant to EdJoWriWe are the (brief) comments he makes about the mistakes made by inexperienced technical writers:

'The best technical writing is being done by persons at the top of their professions who have done important work, understand its meaning, and write about it with confidence. They are bold enough to write simple, direct English. // Too many others, who haven't done much or who understand less clearly what they have done, write with an uneasiness that leads to fog. They are likely to smother their meaning in qualification. The man who is sure of himself includes, of course, qualification that is required. But he also recognizes the surplus that can be safely shed.' (257)

- Rebecca Stott and Simon Avery (eds), *Writing with Style*, (Pearson Education: Harlow, 2001).

This covers a lot of the topics relating to clarity already addressed by the titles above. The content is basic, but is organized and laid-out accessibly. It's not specifically geared towards academic writing, and is probably best suited to fiction writing.

## AFTER WRITING

- Allen Brizee, *Paramedic Method: A Lesson in Writing Concisely*, 17 April 2010  
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/635/01/>

This method, from the Purdue Online Writing Lab, focuses on editing writing to make it easier to read. It also helps with concision - useful for word counts!

- Katie Smith, 'Publishing your work in an academic journal - three does and don'ts', Cambridge University Press Journals Blog, 20 November 2012

<http://blog.journals.cambridge.org/2012/11/publishing-your-work-in-an-academic-journal-three-dos-and-a-dont>

This article gives some fairly obvious pointers about selecting which journals to submit to, and isn't particularly arts focused.

## LIGHT RELIEF

- Extract from 'An Apology for Idlers', by Robert Louis Stevenson (1877). First printed in the Cornhill Magazine, for July 1877, Vol. XXXVI, pp. 80-86. Taken from The Project Gutenberg EBook of Essays of Robert Louis Stevenson.

This is a semi-comic essay in which Stevenson points out the benefits of idleness if it means happiness, and the futility of excessive busyness. Encouragement to attend the evening events...

"It is certain that much may be judiciously argued in favour of diligence; only there is something to be said against it, and that is what, on the present occasion, I have to say. To state one argument is not necessarily to be deaf to all others, and that a man has written a book of travels in Montenegro, is no reason why he should never have been to Richmond.

[...]

Now this [...] is the common opinion. A fact is not called a fact, but a piece of gossip, if it does not fall into one of your scholastic categories. An inquiry must be in some acknowledged direction, with a name to go by; or else you are not inquiring at all, only lounging; and the workhouse is too good for you. It is supposed that all knowledge is at the bottom of a well, or the far end of a telescope. Sainte-Beuve, as he grew older, came to regard all experience as a single great book, in which to study for a few years ere we go hence; and it seemed all one to him whether you should read in Chapter xx., which is the differential calculus, or in Chapter xxxix., which is hearing the band play in the gardens. As a matter of fact, an intelligent person, looking out of his eyes and hearkening in his ears, with a smile on his face all the time, will get more true education than many another in a life of heroic vigils. There is certainly some chill and arid knowledge to be found upon the summits of formal and laborious science; but it is all round about you, and for the trouble of looking, that you will acquire the warm and palpitating facts of life. While others are filling their memory with a lumber of words, one-half of which they will forget before the week be out, your truant may learn some really useful art: to play the fiddle, to know a good cigar, or to speak with ease and opportunity to all varieties of men. Many who have "plied their book diligently," and know all about some one branch or another of accepted lore, come out of the study with an ancient and owl-like demeanour, and prove dry,

stockish, and dyspeptic in all the better and brighter parts of life. Many make a large fortune, who remain underbred and pathetically stupid to the last. And meantime there goes the idler, who began life along with them—by your leave, a different picture. He has had time to take care of his health and his spirits; he has been a great deal in the open air, which is the most salutary of all things for both body and mind; and if he has never read the great Book in very recondite places, he has dipped into it and skimmed it over to excellent purpose. Might not the student afford some Hebrew roots, and the business man some of his half-crowns, for a share of the idler's knowledge of life at large, and Art of Living? Nay, and the idler has another and more important quality than these. I mean his wisdom. He who has much looked on at the childish satisfaction of other people in their hobbies, will regard his own with only a very ironical indulgence. He will not be heard among the dogmatists. He will have a great and cool allowance for all sorts of people and opinions. If he finds no out-of-the-way truths, he will identify himself with no very burning falsehood. His way took him along a by-road, not much frequented, but very even and pleasant, which is called Commonplace Lane, and leads to the Belvedere of Commonsense.[16] Thence he shall command an agreeable, if no very noble prospect; and while others behold the East and West, the Devil and the Sunrise, he will be contentedly aware of a sort of morning hour upon all sublunary things, with an army of shadows running speedily and in many different directions into the great daylight of Eternity. The shadows and the generations, the shrill doctors and the plangent wars, go by into ultimate silence and emptiness; but underneath all this, a man may see, out of the Belvedere windows, much green and peaceful landscape; many firelit parlours; good people laughing, drinking, and making love as they did before the Flood or the French Revolution; and the old shepherd telling his tale under the hawthorn.

Extreme busyness, whether at school or college, kirk or market, is a symptom of deficient vitality; and a faculty for idleness implies a catholic appetite and a strong sense of personal identity. There is a sort of dead-alive, hackneyed people about, who are scarcely conscious of living except in the exercise of some conventional occupation. Bring these fellows into the country, or set them aboard ship, and you will see how they pine for their desk or their study. They have no curiosity; they cannot give themselves over to random provocations; they do not take pleasure in the exercise of their faculties for its own sake; and unless Necessity lays about them with a stick, they will even stand still. It is no good speaking to such folk: they cannot be idle, their nature is not generous enough; and they pass those hours in a sort of coma, which are not dedicated to furious moiling in the gold-mill. When they do not require to go to the office, when they are not hungry and have no mind to drink, the whole breathing world is a blank to them. If they have to wait an hour or so for a train, they fall into a stupid trance with their eyes open. To see them, you would suppose there was nothing to look

at and no one to speak with; you would imagine they were paralysed or alienated; and yet very possibly they are hard workers in their own way, and have good eyesight for a flaw in a deed or a turn of the market. They have been to school and college, but all the time they had their eye on the medal; they have gone about in the world and mixed with clever people, but all the time they were thinking of their own affairs. As if a man's soul were not too small to begin with, they have dwarfed and narrowed theirs by a life of all work and no play; until here they are at forty, with a listless attention, a mind vacant of all material of amusement, and not one thought to rub against another, while they wait for the train. Before he was breeched, he might have clambered on the boxes; when he was twenty, he would have stared at the girls; but now the pipe is smoked out, the snuffbox empty, and my gentleman sits bolt upright upon a bench, with lamentable eyes. This does not appeal to me as being Success in Life.

[...]

There is no duty we so much underrate as the duty of being happy. By being happy, we sow anonymous benefits upon the world, which remain unknown even to ourselves, or when they are disclosed, surprise nobody so much as the benefactor. The other day, a ragged, barefoot boy ran down the street after a marble, with so jolly an air that he set every one he passed into a good humour; one of these persons, who had been delivered from more than usually black thoughts, stopped the little fellow and gave him some money with this remark: "You see what sometimes comes of looking pleased." If he had looked pleased before, he had now to look both pleased and mystified. For my part, I justify this encouragement of smiling rather than tearful children; I do not wish to pay for tears anywhere but upon the stage; but I am prepared to deal largely in the opposite commodity. A happy man or woman is a better thing to find than a five-pound note. He or she is a radiating focus of good-will; and their entrance into a room is as though another candle had been lighted. We need not care whether they could prove the forty-seventh proposition; they do a better thing than that, they practically demonstrate the great Theorem of the liveableness of Life. Consequently, if a person cannot be happy without remaining idle, idle he should remain. It is a revolutionary precept; but thanks to hunger and the workhouse, one not easily to be abused; and within practical limits, it is one of the most incontestable truths in the whole Body of Morality. Look at one of your industrious fellows for a moment, I beseech you. He sows hurry and reaps indigestion; he puts a vast deal of activity out to interest, and receives a large measure of nervous derangement in return. Either he absents himself entirely from all fellowship, and lives a recluse in a garret, with carpet slippers and a leaden inkpot; or he comes among people swiftly and bitterly, in a contraction

of his whole nervous system, to discharge some temper before he returns to work. I do not care how much or how well he works, this fellow is an evil feature in other people's lives.

[...]

And what, in God's name, is all this pother about? For what cause do they embitter their own and other people's lives? That a man should publish three or thirty articles a year, that he should finish or not finish his great allegorical picture, are questions of little interest to the world. The ranks of life are full; and although a thousand fall, there are always some to go into the breach. When they told Joan of Arc she should be at home minding women's work, she answered there were plenty to spin and wash. And so, even with your own rare gifts! When nature is "so careless of the single life," why should we coddle ourselves into the fancy that our own is of exceptional importance? Suppose Shakespeare had been knocked on the head some dark night in Sir Thomas Lucy's preserves, the world would have wagged on better or worse, the pitcher gone to the well, the scythe to the corn, and the student to his book; and no one been any the wiser of the loss. There are not many works extant, if you look the alternative all over, which are worth the price of a pound of tobacco to a man of limited means. This is a sobering reflection for the proudest of our earthly vanities.