Nevada State University

Anyway, Here's Wonderwall:
Discussions on Creative Writing, Memory, Queerness, and Worldbuilding in *Ten Thousand Silver Spoons*

Ruby Burch

ENG 498 01

Emily Hoover

April 19, 2024

Introduction:

> *"Consider the veteran prospector as a sower of names. Whether he was a "boomer" or a "loner," he had been in many rushes. He had stalked many claims, most of them worthless or nearly so, and every time he planted stakes, he gave the place a name."*
>
> -Charlton Laird
> *Nevada Place Names*

I love writing about Nevada. It's hilarious. I live in a weird place, and I have the pleasure of telling weird stories. Playing on ghost town playgrounds, coming up with names for brothels on eight-hour car-rides (I'll never forget the one we came up with for my mother: Michelle's Mischievous Mistresses). Every town in Nevada looks similar. Drive down Boulder Highway in the middle of the day, between Warm Springs and Russell, and the horizon line becomes indiscernible from Fallon's, Tonopah's, Beatty's. There are pieces of Vegas that still look like Pahrump.

I knew I wanted to complete an Honors Thesis in sophomore year. I had no clue *what* I wanted to write— all I knew was that I wanted to write something *creative.* It wasn't long, between lengthy drives up and down my state that I'd come up with the concept for *Ten Thousand Silver Spoons*— I wanted to write about the boom and bust I'd seen in stereo again and again through my travels. My state was in a constant state of *after,* and I wanted to write what I saw.

In this critical piece, I want to discuss the process work I did to get to the point where we are now with the manuscript. By looking to the theoretical and technical work I'd done in creative writing courses alongside my mentor Emily Hoover, I explore the choices I made in queering my story, and how trauma became a front-and-center topic.

Technical and Theory Work:

> *"Throughout I have fought my impulse, doubtless born of writing so many academic papers, to analyze, interpret, and explain, and particularly to justify my own behavior. "Love me," I want to say, "love these people, this story," even while suppressing the impulse to do so, for ultimately love is not the issue. If I have told the story well and true, the story that I alone have lived to tell, readers will understand it in their own ways and will enrich their understanding of the world we share"*
>
> -Lynn Bloom "Living to Tell the Tale: The Complicate Ethics of Creative Nonfiction"

I studied two texts over the course of my creative writing courses at Nevada State: *Making Shapely Fiction* by Jerome Stern first, and *From Where You Dream* by Robert Olen Butler second. Stern's lessons, or at least the ones we focused on in the course, surrounded the methods or 'shapes' an author could apply to writing a work of fiction. From allusion to endings to plot and to voice, Stern lists and defines literary devices— plus the few extra tools he's coined— that authors should use in their stories. Butler's lessons focused on reworking, or "re-dreaming" your fiction. Butler's text was derived from his lectures in which he engaged with both his own and his students' writing. Re-dreaming is the revision method that requires an entirely new, sense-driven approach. Re-dreaming could entirely be categorized as a threshold concept, meaning it is a difficult or complex concept that, once learned, transforms a student's understanding; quite literally, the student walks through the threshold of a door into a concept, and cannot return to their original state. This definition of "threshold concept" coming from Jan Meyer and Ray Land's 2003 publication "Threshold Concepts and Troublesome Knowledge", and then expanded upon by the various authors of Naming What We Know: Threshold Concepts of Writing Studies to apply specifically to student writing.

Jerome Stern and Writing What You Know (or Writing Where You're From)

The most significant lesson of Stern's for my development as a writer was "Write What You Know," which goes in tandem with Kevin Roozem's contribution to Naming What We Know: "Writing is Linked to Identity." Roozem's argument is fairly straightforward: any writing, fiction, academic or otherwise, is inspired by and enmeshed with the author's identity (51). Stern works to encourage students to write from their own experiences and validates that their experiences are interesting enough to write about (Stern 62). An excerpt of his that I pull from frequently when arguing or teaching "Writing What You Know" in workshops is:

> "Mark Twain made up stories, but he knew his Mississippi River, its people and its dialects. Hawthorn wrote about events that happened long before he was born, but he knew New England and its customs. Melville's fantastic voyages, although drenched in literary and encyclopedic sources, were launched from his own knowledge of the sea..." (63).

Here, Stern discusses the ways authors use their intimate surroundings to build their stories around. When I'd first read this, I'd been writing on Nevada for a while; but now, what I was doing was something writers had been doing for centuries before me. What had started as almost complaining into my draft as I described my beige desert turned into a fondness and a distinctiveness in my descriptive abilities. This argument of Stern's bleeds into the threshold concept "All writing is linked to identity". These authors knew so intimately their surroundings, that they became experts in writing on them. Whether we realize it or not, our writing is fueled by our experiences and unconscious biases— while the former was something that I was able to easily agree with, it took several readings and discussions on Roozman's argument for me to agree with and understand the latter. "Writing also functions as a means of displaying our

identities," he states. "Through the writing we do, we claim, challenge, perhaps even contest and resist, our alignment with the beliefs, interests, and values of the communities with which we engage" (51). When Stern asks students to write what they know, he is not asking for them to limit their stories to their experiences, but to rather use their surroundings to motivate the story— to become the world that the story operates in and to lay the rules the characters follow.

I started writing *Ten Thousand* in the winter of 2022 after a trip down from Washoe Valley, but inspiration didn't strike me until we were in Tonopah. Tonopah Station is an old, lopsided hotel casino made of wood dark as railroad ties and just as dusty. It's got low ceilings, defunct elevators, and an assortment of rental office space branching from it. Every time I've ever been to Tonopah station, the hotel is empty, and the world is gray. On a warm palette of rust, clay, and ancient brown, the sleepy, former mining town of Tonopah is just starting to wake up again. A plague of gentrification is stretching over the central Nevada desert, and soon this tiny town will shed its confederate flags and catch up to its distant cousin Beatty in adopting expensive new bars and bike trails. But in the meantime, this town— bisected by US 95— sits still as tourists and truckers whip through. This trip blends with many of the others; I can't remember if I was with my aunt, or my grandmother— but I do remember the almost vacant restaurant we sat in. The tiles that lined the windows were the same tiles I had on the kitchen counter at home— the kind that my aunts and cousins always pointed at in recognition. Only three tables in the dining room were occupied: mine, a family consisting of an older woman and her cluster of elementary school aged kids each with brightly dyed hair, and a single withered man sitting on his own. The restaurant is off of two ancient elevators and the cashier's cage, each still shining gold despite their lack of use; there's a counter with no one behind it but someone has lined up the saran wrapped baked goods beside the register each with a neon price tag. My

eyes always move up, at most places but especially while I'm visiting Tonopah Station; they move up the vaulted ceilings and over the ancient stained glass windowpanes they have hanging as decoration. I remember thinking about what a place this once was, and then I wanted to write about a hotel that also once *was.* As easy as that I'd used Stern's teachings, how often had I been to Tonopah? Enough to wonder what it'd been before me, at least.

Validation and Trauma Writing with Robert Olen Butler Elissa Washuta

At the start of our creative writing course, Emily told us that Robert Olen Butler was grumpy, but good. After my first reading of *From Where You Dream,* I felt he was not only grumpy, but aggressive too. Butler's biggest lesson for students was in redreaming, which means revising a story in a way that transforms it beyond recognition. By implementing sensuality, that is writing from the five senses and balancing that sensuality with the analytical. Butler argues:

> "Force yourself to write moment to moment through the senses only. Don't hassle your style at this point, don't agonize over the right word; just keep the flow of it through the senses… If you really do that rigorously, you'll find yourself flowing right down— at least into the foyer of— this great house that is your unconscious" (Butler 165).

Butler's sensuality is a threshold concept; once I'd learned it, I could only see where it was absent. Butler starts teaching sensual versus analytical writing in something called the "Anecdote Exercise." Students close their eyes and tell him a story once straight through, then again with his prompting. Butler promised to be gentle with his students, "When you vary from that [sensuality], I will gently identify the way in which you vary it and have you back up" (142). Though his facilitation of the exercise was far from. The three anecdotes: Sandra's brief interaction with a distant grandfather, Mary Jane's visit to see her deceased father at a funeral

parlor, Leslie's broken leg— each a trauma of some kind that Butler encouraged. The students can't get very far before Butler is cutting them off. "You've summarized that to a fair degree… Ok you understand the problem with that? … Let's do this… Don't try to remember…You're generalizing now…I just want you to see it and tell me what you see…" It's a tough read when all Butler does is interrupt his students at an incredibly vulnerable moment (153-154). When we did our own anecdote exercise, my professor held back from poking us the way Butler did; we were challenged but never interrupted. In the case of Mary Jane, her anecdote is based in a moment of trauma, and Butler is approaching it as a means of improving her writing. Her answers to his prompts are cut short, and she's never *quite* doing what he wants her to do.

"ROB: Tell me where in your body you sense your bother. Wait for it.

MARY JANE: Behind my shoulders.

ROB: Yes, but what part of your shoulders and what is the feeling on your shoulders?

MARY JANE: A sensation of warmth.

ROB: Is there really? Are your shoulders bare?

MARY JANE: It's March.

ROB: Don't try to remember, OK?" (154).

I worry that Butler's challenges unknowingly invalidate his students; he asks his students to divulge achy memories and then cuts them off and prompts them to give more.

Memory is something that's debated in Ten Thousand. When I started writing, I aligned more with Graham; how could someone ever forget the cruelty they'd experienced? I started writing from that place of hurt; Gage would have been all of the people who'd invalidated me because they *couldn't* remember (either what they'd done to me, or what had been done to the both of us). Graham responds to Gage's memories, or lack thereof, as though he's been betrayed.

Although, whether Gage remembers or not is not indicative of the trauma happening or not. Simultaneously, I worry myself that because I am not listing each instance of abuse in Ten Thousand that I am not proving enough– that my readers are going to be left thinking that nothing happened to give these brothers a reason to feel the way they do. In the case of Butler, I fear that by labeling memories and feelings as too analytical— like what happened with Mary Jane— that the memory itself becomes the evidence used against the person to disprove their trauma.

I spend too much time thinking about how I will prove to my readers– or more specifically, my immediate family– that my writing is legitimate. That queerness and anxiety have always existed, even in our valley— especially in our valley. That within the rises and falls of our desert there have been minds and bodies not exclusive to post-Obama liberal coastal bubble towns.

Elissa Washuta's *White Magic* discusses invalidation at great length. In this work she largely discusses the place of contemporary witchcraft and the occult in her life, and the ways that specifically white audiences interpret her to simultaneously— as an indigenous woman— be on the inside and outside of the spiritual. She writes how she is expected to know all the answers, and yet still be an *other* in this community. She writes:

> "The purpose [of researching the occult] would only be to convince you I'm not stupid. I couldn't convince any of my boyfriends, so I doubt I could convince someone looking at me through the thick veil of this page. Anyway, I don't care about Crowley or Salem, only about my own conjuring. I haven't memorized the entries in the catalog of demons. I don't even know the name of the one inside me" (15).

I feel too close to Washuta here. When I started collecting resources for this story, and for the women that I wanted to write on, I scoured over their archived diaries. But despite having them in lists in Google Docs and buried in my computer, I was filling a draining tub.

In conversations, I've described Washuta's approach to trauma writing by differentiating between the plot-pointing of trauma, and planes of trauma. So often in fiction, I've found that traumatic events for characters have been utilized as plot points— motivating factors that drive a character through a story. This isn't exclusive to fiction,

Queering Nevada:

> *We're not San Francisco. A bunch of damn queers want to build a town of their own and I don't like it one bit. As long as I'm county commissioner, it will never materialize. I'm very embarrassed and I'll do everything I can to prevent it. This is redneck country. When they get to the Nye County line, they cease being gays; they turn into queers.*
>
> -Robert Revert, Nye County Commissioner
> Death Valley Gateway Gazette, 1986

Transitioning to Sapphic Storytelling and Still Feeling Invalid

Like most writers my age, the very first thing I did while typing out my first words for this piece, I created a Pinterest board. Full of pictures of yellow motel rooms and abandoned mines. Putting an aesthetic to the story and spurring on inspiration. But even then, characters' names changed again and again. Development like this is normal for a story, I've seen it happen constantly with my own work, but for some reason when associated with *Ten Thousand*, it always felt amateur. When my characters, who'd already defaulted to being queer themselves, began gaining shape, I couldn't help but fear just how my readers—or more specifically: my parents and grandparents—would react to them. Would they feel insulted to see a town that looks like all the small towns they've known in their lives built by queer people? Would they even take it seriously? Would they open my book, laugh at the mere concept of women singlehandedly supporting a town's economy through their queerness, and shut it?

When I started writing *Ten Thousand,* I wanted Graham and Anslem to get together; it felt easy, and I was on a romance kick. At the time I hadn't even created Astoria or Wren, nor their stories– and when they popped up in my worldbuilding they continued to linger in the

corners. It wasn't until I'd decided to intertwine Astoria into Agar's puzzle that I built a backstory for her, and then over Winter 2023 when I was doing some serious drafting, I got Wren in there too. They became so much more interesting to me than Graham and Anslem, and to be honest I couldn't find much organic romantic chemistry between them– I felt more comfortable letting the unlabeled hang there. But writing a lesbian couple posed a few concerns for me, specifically the internal dilemma of not feeling like I was doing anyone *any* justice. Ultimate impostor syndrome; feeling like I'd jammed a sore thumb right into the center of my story and gone against the grain of the narrative entirely. That's probably my own neuroses, worrying that my family would read my story and immediately think "Why does everything have to be gay now-a-days?" I'm overly concerned with how my mother will interpret my story– she'll think me to be whichever character is speaking at the moment, and any maternal or mother figure in the story to be *her.* And then from there we'd collapse.

It felt for me to write about men at first. Many of my stories do this; they feature primarily men, with women on the fringes. Wren and Astoria demanded my attention– I'd written very few wild women, and while these two certainly aren't the most intense, they were much more *alive* than my first few iterations of Graham and Anslem. But writing them while *fun* was difficult to support. I've had a bitch of a time trying to figure out how to tell Wren and Astoria's story. I started writing diary entries from Astoria's perspective, which were dreamy, drippy, and vivid. I wrote from Astoria's ignorance, Wren's aching– even now as I write this my chapters for these women are in limbo:; loose in the manuscript bracketed by dates. I've been advised by many of my friends and colleagues to start creating pieces of evidence of their lives; evidence of queerness in Tinkle. It's fun to think of what pamphlets or buttons or advertisements for Wren's club might look like; of what queer community looked like in Tinkle. But my own

inabilities to self-identify, or accept my queerness, make writing a queer community feel like an intrusion. It feels like I am destroying something sacred, and that as an *outsider* I am doing nothing but hurting my readers. And then my friends hold up a mirror and remind me of the identities I pretend not to hold. If I could, I would've just written this entire story from Wren's perspective. Redreamed it entirely. I think it would've just been a bit more alive.

Finding conversations on the line between self-inserts and self-writing is difficult; I can't tell at which point writing about myself becomes cringe-worthy, and if there is research on that point. I've been able to find discussions on impostor syndrome in various spaces—JSTOR boasts zines on female-founded hackerspaces and articles on how women in veterinary sciences are sidelined. I can't search up "Self Insert" on JSTOR without finding a split between articles on the psychology of fanfiction, and reports on improvements in gynecological practices; the undeniable femaleness and invalidation bordering on neglect in both those subjects is worth studying.

This week, I met with Dr. Wille to talk about grad school and my ever intensifying frustration with not having unrestrained access to institutional archives— over a bright pink cup of rose tea, she showed me the databases she used to access California's special collections. As we fell into conversations on honors thesis, and finding validation, I had brought up this very phenomenon: why I have to start with writing men in order to write women. And for the first time, she offered to me that maybe this was merely a part of the process. That, in order to write, we write one half— flesh out the world and the rules— then see what's missing. I know what it is women are restricted from when I'm able to identify all the things the men in the world *can* do.

Remembering and Forgetting in Ten Thousand:

> *Every writer of creative nonfiction is an Ishmael who alone has lived to tell the tale-the true story that only he or she can tell. I write for the usual reasons writers write about anything important: to get at the truth; to make sense of things that don't make sense; to set the record straight.*
>
> -Lynn Bloom "Living to Tell the Tale: The Complicate Ethics of Creative Nonfiction"

The Politics of Memory

In her article "Living to Tell the Tale: The Complicated Ethics of Creative Nonfiction," Lynn Bloom discusses the moral dilemma or combining how an experience feels with fiction—asking if a writer changes names, they might as well be changing the very facts they're discussing (278). Throughout her analyses of Lee Gutkind's *Creative Nonfiction* and Robin Hemley's *Turning Life into Fiction*, I couldn't help but think of John Dufresne's *The Lie that Tells the Truth,* which came out a year after Bloom's publication. Each of these craft books discuss the ways that writing nonfiction could result in the very conflict I'm afraid of facing: familial disputes. "Do the same conventions of civility, courtesy, familial obligation- including tolerance and forbearance-apply in the writing of creative nonfiction as they do in real life?" Bloom asks (278). Bloom quotes Gutkin as he argues: "If you have half a conscience, there will be the urge to protect the people in your life. They never asked to be put on the page. You're not a journalist, exploiting others for their stories. But listen: It's your story too" (279).

About a year ago NPR was playing an interview with Ruth Madievsky on her new novel *All Night Pharmacy*, which follows an unnamed woman who is coping with her older sister's disappearance through addiction. I read the book and described it to my friend as "psychedelic." It was very dreamy, and I finished it in a day. As our sisters wade through abusive relationships,

sexual violence, queerness, there's a specific part that sticks out to me once they rekindle. A piece of art hangs over the older sister's head as they're on a FaceTime call: reading out "The Body Remembers" across an LA skyline. It's enough for our narrator, and readers, to know that one of the sisters has been able to label their pain, and in turn find validation (Madievsky 280). Differing experiences of abuse is a theme in *Ten Thousand;* Graham and Gage experienced chronic invalidation and shaming from their parents, and when Gage pursued his freedom over protecting Graham, Graham resents him for it. They don't come to a complete agreement on what they experienced, and it's even hard for me to label what they've experienced. There are parts of me that want to completely list out every instance—I feel the urge to list each potentially *harmful* interaction so that it might be validated. I think Madievsky does an excellent job of hinting about trauma, or abuse. Like my readings from Washuta, I related in brief snapshots. There were lines and mannerisms in abusers that I'd recognized, and those clues—flashes—were enough. I don't know why I think my writing needs to be any more explicit than the writing of authors I look up to; probably impostor syndrome.

The Tragic Backstory and Memory Hoarding

When I started writing *Ten Thousand,* every scene existed in a vacuum. The paragraphs all felt like standalone vignettes and when I moved onto the next one, I became blind to the last. I was excited to write this piece initially because it was the silliest thing I'd come up with as of late; two boys in pursuit of treasure build a friendship along the way, and I get to write about Nevada. But time was never something I managed well and as 2022 blended into 2023 I lost whatever thing it was that made this story silly. As it adopted angst and depth, it became harder to hold in my mind.

I think there's something to be said about the cognitive disruptions that come about when you're wading through a trauma. I didn't think I had PTSD, or even C-PTSD until the letters tumbled out of my doctors' mouths; it was easy to joke about, or find memes I related to online, but baffling when I heard it from people who were simultaneously validating and *not* all at once. No one ever told me how much I'd forget and how slow my thoughts could become. How stupid I felt all the time, how I'd write tasks down and forget them, how I'd lose hours staring into the most comfortable corner. When I ask the internet whether PTSD melts your brain it spits out a more or less "Yes?" My forgetfulness impacted nothing more intensely than my Honors Thesis, as it came to the forefront of my mind and threw pieces of itself out into the abyss of my brain. I have countless drafts on my computer, all in varying stages of completion, because I forgot the last one existed. Lines between prose and poetry were blurred and what started as character's dialogue turned into long, long ramblings of my own that went almost always nowhere. My brain decided the perfect time to disrupt my career and writing with memory was right now.

Washuta's writing on PTSD and trauma is comforting because, as I've discussed, trauma exists on a plane. It is not a point of tension, or the highest peak in a story's conflict chart. My therapist has been making me timeline the abuse I'd experienced in a narrative. I don't know how many narratives I'm going to need; she says I'll probably need multiple, and I think about how I'm not going to be able to afford multiples. *White Magic* comforts and haunts me too much these days; the way Washuta writes about her trauma and the violence inflicted upon her never exists in a single instance, but in multiples across paragraphs. There's an excerpt of Washuta's I like a lot:

> "Nobody ever told me about intuition. They told me to count my drinks and plan my routes home but never that the sensation of gut muscles constricting tight as snakes

> around rodents was really the way my body screams when it knows something that hasn't happened yet. I hid the rape pain in my hips, denying it for a year, until I took up fencing and the demands on my joints forced the pain to erupt into my flesh. I cried every day. I hid in the woods. I roamed campus at night like a ghost in a graveyard. I found a doctor who called it depression and then bipolar disorder but never fear of what happened and what might happen, never post-traumatic stress disorder, never the brain's storage of the worst violence its flesh knows, never anything but unmendable defects" (17).

In this excerpt, Washuta's pain transcends the single moment of infliction, and radiates out. It's comforting to see creative writing in which pain isn't limited to the tragic backstory. I read this excerpt again and again and wonder where I put my pain. I know of a few places it loiters but I think it hides in my eye sockets– in the watering, and the itching, and the peeling skin. I've been told to read *The Body Keeps the Score;* it comes up in *All Night Pharmacy,* online, in conversations– there's an excerpt in *Trauma Informed Pedagogies:*

> "Trauma is much more than a story about something that happened a long time ago. The emotions and physical sensations that were imprinted during the trauma are experienced not as memories but as disruptive physical reactions in the present" (van der Kolk 206).

I think those disruptive physical sensations van der Kolk describes are those same snapshots or moments of sensuality Butler is begging for in his anecdotal exercises. Asking his students again and again to offer him "a flash of memory" to thrust them into that sensual tangent that feeds the story; but it doesn't come off as asking for an example of sensuality that deepens the story, he just ends up asking the student to remember (Butler 155).

I wanted to write about the phenomenon of someone who forgets versus someone who remembers. But at that time, I didn't think I'd ever forget. I didn't think I was like Gage, who'd

been forced to compartmentalize and focus to survive; I aligned more with Graham in the oh-woe-is-me attitude his first iteration had. At first, I wanted him to be haunted by each occurrence of abuse. In my mind, Gage was the bad one for forgetting; at least Graham had the evidence that was his memory. That was until recently, when I'd not so much *remembered* but instead *labeled,* and wished I could go back to being oblivious. I didn't mean to become like Gage, but it happened. Pain got acronyms and reactions were cataloged and now that I can't chalk up my experiences to being unique, Gage's mind isn't something to be the antagonist anymore. And after my story grew and I'd imagined it over and over again, his memory stopped being a bad thing.

My family has always fought over stuff. My mother won't admit to it but it's true. When my grandmother left her husband, they fought over everything down to the brooms in the cupboards and the photos in the albums. There was one VHS tape of memories my grandmother managed to squirrel away from my grandfather, and I watched it so much that my cousin hid it because they claimed it made my grandmother sad to watch.

If there was a camera, I was in front of it, and if there was video of myself, I was watching. Obsessed with the mirror inside of the computer, I wonder why. I never felt the grief my grandmother had when she lost all her children's photographs. I won't know what it's like to steal back photos of your own babies, but that need to grab stayed behind in my hands. Now I have photos from years before me and faces whose names I don't know. I think it'll give me something of a glimpse into my identity or offer me a story to tell but I know nothing will come from it. The photos also served a validating purpose: I can see in my face that I've changed. Something has happened between the now and the then that isn't just imaginary. The tight

shoulders and parentified children were solidified behind a camera; my eyebags and terror a new development that proved I was in pain.

Something Emily had said during our meetings was how Cliff was a memory hoarder, and I think I'm the same; though I don't cling to memories that are my own. Because my brain has rejected the hard ones, I've adopted the ones with stories worth telling. Or at least adopting the idea of having a story worth telling– having people come into my room and see the thrifted post cards or images and assuming that they're related to a cool story someday I'll share with them, when in reality I'll put on a sheepish face and say:

"Oh, I got that at a thrift store in Santa Cruz."

Most of the pictures I have are stolen from albums, photo boxes, garages, desks– I wanted a piece of the memory and story that I didn't get to have. After divorces and rememberings and exiles, family photos became intellectual property stolen from the photographer– the *things* that hold the memory too quickly become the evidence of abuse, and then the things are destroyed.

Ready to Move On:

I was describing all the theory I'd been consuming to my friends, and all of this talk felt so out of place when compared to the piece that was actually created come the end of the semester. It reminded me of the memes of men who ramble on and on with a guitar in their lap, just to say: "Anyway, here's Wonderwall." My story is incomplete, and I keep waiting to be disappointed by that. I imagined myself torn to shreds over turning in an incomplete thesis—

even as I write this I am baffled at the concept that my thesis wasn't carefully curated with wicked intentionality. Then on the other hand I can't discount the work I put into this piece.

This is only the beginning for *Ten Thousand.* I don't think that, in the time I've been allotted, that there's anything else I can contribute to this piece that doesn't remind me of all its missing. I'm ready to let it evolve beyond this first draft into something even better. There are pieces of Tinkle's history that still deserve page time, the women that built the town deserve more lines. My plans going forward are to re-dream it as I've discussed; to work from Wren's perspective out, and let Graham's side cool down. It's time for some distance between myself and this piece. But, in the meantime, "Here's Wonderwall."

Works Cited:

Adler-Kassner, Linda and Wardle, Elizabeth. *Naming What We Know: Threshold Concepts of Writing Studies*. Utah State University Press. 2016.

Bloom, Lynn Z. "Living to Tell the Tale: The Complicated Ethics of Creative Nonfiction." *College English*, vol. 65, no. 3, 2003, pp. 276–89. *JSTOR*, https://doi.org/10.2307/3594258.

Butler, Robert Olen. *From Where You Dream: The Process of Writing Fiction.* Grove Press, 2005.

Buzan, Tony. "The Smartest Man is Hard to Find," Moonwalks with Einstein: The Art and Science of Remembering Everything, by Joshua Foer. The Penguin Press, 2011.

Carlson, Helen, and Charlton Lard. *Nevada Place Names: A Geographical Dictionary.* University of Nevada Press, Reno, 1974.

Madievsky, Ruth. *All Night Pharmacy.* Catapult, New York, New York, 2023.

Meyer, Jan H. F., and Ray Land. "Threshold Concepts and Troublesome Knowledge 1 – Linkages to Ways of Thinking and Practicing." Improving Student Learning– Ten Years On. 2003.

Peek, Fran. "The Little Rain Man in All of Us, "Moonwalks with Einstein: The Art and Science of Remembering Everything, by Joshua Foer. The Penguin Press, 2011.

Roozen, Kevin. "Writing Is Linked to Identity." Naming What We Know: Threshold Concepts of Writing Studies, Utah State University Press, 2016, pp. 50–52.

Stern, Jerome. *Making Shapely Fiction.* Norton, 2000.

van der Kolk, Bessel. *The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma*. Penguin Books, 2014.

Washuta, Elissa. White Magic. Tin House Publications, 2021, pp, 8-17.