PUBLIC DESIGNS FOR A PRIVATE GENRE:
COMMUNITY AND IDENTITY IN THE DIARY

by

LAURIE ANN McNEILL

B.A., The University of British Columbia, 1996
M.A., Queen's University, 1997

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

(Department of English)

We accept this thesis as conforming
to the required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

April 2004

© Laurie Ann McNeill, 2004
Abstract

This study analyzes the contemporary diary in English as an autobiographical form that intersects public and private spheres, lives, and narratives. I examine how the diary performs social actions both personal and communal, and thus both "public" and "private." I take this inquiry to three distinct sites of contemporary diary writing, studying these texts within the particular circumstances of their production and reception. Using both autobiography and New Rhetorical genre theories, my analysis considers what contemporary diarists do with the contemporary diary, and how the diary adapts to fit these various functions. I incorporate linguistic pragmatic and discourse analysis to illuminate how identity construction and audience design operate at both the micro level of utterance and the macro level of genre.

Chapter One discusses the diaries of May Sarton, Emily Carr, and P.K. Page, professional writers who use the "private" diary for both professional and personal functions. Chapter Two studies the diaries of Americans Natalie Crouter and Elizabeth Vaughan, and future Canadian Peggy Abkhazi, all civilian women who were interned in the Philippines and China by the Japanese during World War II. Trapped in a situation each clearly saw as historic, these women turned to the diary to keep public records that simultaneously served to write themselves back into subjectivity. In the third chapter, I consider diaries on the Internet, focusing on texts by Sara Achenbach, Justin Hall, and Steve Schalchlin. In analyzing these Weblogs, I discuss how the combination of the "private" diary and the public medium of the Internet challenges not only generic stereotypes but also traditional aesthetic and value systems that have determined whose life stories can be told.
As all the texts I consider are published diaries, issues of authenticity, privacy, gender, and literariness are critical to this thesis, and each collection of texts illuminates how these concerns influence audience design, generic function, and textual production and reception. Throughout this study, I examine how the diary, a form long dismissed as artless, a-literary, "feminine," and consequently irrelevant, has in fact social and cultural, as well as personal, implications.
# Table of Contents

Abstract .......................................................................................................................... ii

Acknowledgements ......................................................................................................... vi

Introduction: Historical and Theoretical Overview ......................................................... 1

Issues I: Gender, Publicity, Privacy, Authenticity ............................................................ 9

Issues II: Genre Theory, Audience, Community ............................................................ 22

Chapter One: Professionally Personal: The Literary Diaries of May Sarton, P.K. Page, and Emily Carr .................................................................................................................. 32

May Sarton: Diarist for Hire ............................................................................................ 35

“Dear unmet friend”: Genre and Audience in the Journals .............................................. 38

“What delights the reader”: Telling the Reader How to Read ........................................... 50


Art of the Diary: Identity Process, Literary Product ......................................................... 64

Emily Carr: The Diarist is in the Details ........................................................................... 82

A Matter of Public Record: The Shaping of *Hundreds and Thousands* ....................... 87

Portraits of the Diarist as Artist: The 1927 Journal ......................................................... 93

The Personal is Professional: Making Art(ist) in the 1930s ........................................... 99

Conclusion ..................................................................................................................... 112

Chapter Two: Personally Historical: The World War II Diaries of Civilian Internees .... 116

The Internee Experience ................................................................................................. 121

Something from Nothing: Effects of Internment Camp Production on the Diary .......... 126

Writing “Home”: Imagined Audiences and Diary Functions ........................................ 141

Self-Reflections: Private Performances of Public Mores .............................................. 157
Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge the significant support for this project provided by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and the University of British Columbia.

Earlier versions of portions this work have appeared in the following journals:


My committee members, Dr. Janet Giltrow and Dr. Valerie Raoul, have earned my undying gratitude for their careful readings and extensive feedback; I have benefited enormously from their input, assistance, and patience. My supervisor, Dr. Susanna Egan, has for over ten years been critic, mentor, advisor, and friend. Because of her I am still smiling and sane, and have stopped dangling my modifiers. I am privileged to have worked with such a distinguished and generous scholar.

Many individuals have helped me in myriad ways over the course of this project. I am grateful for the academic and social community provided by good friends and colleagues Manuela Costantino, Lisa Grekul, and Gabriele Helms. Dr. Eva-Marie Kröller has kept me up-to-date on diaries in the media, alerting me to sources I would not have found otherwise. I have profited from conversations with Dr. Lynn Bloom, Board of Trustees Distinguished Professor and Aetna Chair of Writing at the University of
Connecticut, who has generously shared her experience and works in process with me. My family, John, Sharon, and Sandy McNeill, has always been ready with encouragement, consolation, advice, and lots of good wine, all of which have been instrumental in my accomplishments.

Finally, I would like to thank my husband, Doug Manarin. Without his support—technical, domestic, and emotional—this dissertation would not have been written.
Introduction: Historical and Theoretical Overview

As a life-long diarist, I have always paid attention to diaries—writing them, reading them, and buying blank ones for future personal volumes. Over the last decade, I have noticed that diaries in all forms are increasingly available. Some anecdotal findings: Helen Fielding’s fictional journal *Bridget Jones's Diary*, published in 1996, was a best-selling book that spawned many imitators; later, as a film, it became a box-office hit. About the same time that Fielding reinforced the popular association of diaries with navel-gazing, boy-crazy girls (though in this iteration, the “girl” is in her thirties, updating the stereotype to reflect ‘90s “reality”), diaries went digital, appearing for the first time online in 1995. By 2003, hundreds of thousands of individuals were posting daily portraits of their lives for millions to read. In 2002 “blogging’s” place in the cultural mainstream was confirmed when Garry Trudeau featured the phenomenon in his comic strip, *Doonesbury*. Newspapers have run series of articles to address particular issues, entitling these series “diary of a (drug addict, recovering alcoholic, summer vacation, politician running for office...)” The North American incarnation of the reality TV series Big Brother features a “Diary Room”; this “room” is in fact a camera that records participants’ “private” confessions, venting, or breakdowns, away from the eyes of the other house members but broadcast to millions of TV viewers. The self-help industry has built an empire on “journaling,” selling how-to guides and magazines devoted to the art of keeping a diary for self-improvement. In addition, this field supports the brisk sales of blank journals—and even “fill-in-the-blank” diaries. The personal, often domestic records of daily life that the diary showcases have become big business.
It seems that the diary has permeated the contemporary moment. Its omnipresence substantiates Rachel Langford and Russel West's claim that the diary is "central to contemporary cultural practice" (7). But what does "the diary" mean in this particular place and time? In other words, what concept of this genre do contemporary writers, readers, publishers, and marketing firms seem to share? How do these popular conceptions influence production and reception of diaries, shaping what people say—and what they can say—in their diaries, as well as what personal and public uses they imagine for their texts? Notably, despite all the myriad appropriations of the diary, some of which I have catalogued above, particular attention has not been paid to the diary itself; no commentary is made on its features or generic regularities. Instead, the diary as a form may be overlooked for its content, reinscribing the idea of the text (or language) as a mere transparent vessel for the more important, and totally distinct, contents inscribed within. In these contemporary applications, the term "diary" is invoked as shorthand for particular kinds of narratives, perspectives, and subjects, rather than to connote the genre in particular. Relying on popular notions of the diary as intimate, private, unmediated, spontaneous, daily, and thus "true," these contemporary allusions or instances build on the prevalent desires in Western (particularly North American) culture for voyeurism, exhibitionism, confession, even domesticity, on which the current "age of memoir" (Gilmore 16) has been founded.

This renaissance of the diary in multiple permutations invites consideration of the diary as a genre and as a product and producer of this cultural moment. Beginning from the idea, articulated by New Rhetorical genre theorists among others, that form and content cannot be distinguished, my study will look at three distinct sites of contemporary
diary writing, examining in each instance the genre itself as well as what diarists do with it. Chapter One discusses the literary diaries of writers May Sarton, Emily Carr, and P.K. Page. Chapter Two studies the diaries of Natalie Crouter, Peggy Abkhazi, and Elizabeth Vaughan, all civilian women who were interned in the Philippines and China by the Japanese in World War II. In the third chapter, I take my inquiry to diaries on the Internet, focusing on texts by Sara Achenbach, Justin Hall, and Steve Schalchlin. In each case, I examine how diarists address audiences, take on multiple identities, and build communities within the pages of their texts, as they imagine their diaries serving public and personal functions, often simultaneously. Though not all of the diaries were written in contemporary times, all have been published for the first time in the last three-and-a-half decades (Carr’s text is the earliest, with Hundreds and Thousands first printed in 1966). Sarton’s first diary, Journal of a Solitude, was hailed as “the watershed in women’s autobiography” (Heilbrun 12) when it was published in 1973, indicating a potential moment of change for the reception of public personal journals. Significantly, all of the internment diaries were published in the 1980s, after decades of disinterest from publishers. Thus the moment of reception, at least, is contemporary, and these diaries can be considered as representative examples of what I call the “Age of the Diary.”

Since all of the diaries in this analysis have been published, and indeed have been written or revised for publication, I consider throughout the shifting definitions of “public” and “private,” investigating how these expectations of the diary influence both production and reception of these texts. As writers of what I have termed public personal journals, that is, diaries that record diarists’ personal lives with the intention of making these records public, all the diarists I discuss have to negotiate their audiences’
expectations of the diary. In particular, public personal diarists must address their readers' potential resistance to "public" (i.e., for publication) diaries, since such texts explicitly challenge the concept of the stereotypical diary that has been so useful to the general public.

Because I embark on an examination of the diary as both a genre and a form of life-writing, my approach in this work has been informed by both autobiography studies and genre theory. I was aware from the outset that genre studies have many potential pitfalls. By concentrating on the genre alone, I risk adopting an a-historical perspective or imposing rigid generic categorizations, both of which have been typical of traditional genre analyses, as critics Karlyn Campbell and Kathleen Jamieson, Carolyn Miller ("Genre"), and Peter Medway have pointed out. Incorporating New Rhetorical genre theory, however, allows me to focus on genres within their social, historical, and cultural context; indeed, these contexts are vital to the understandings of genres as "social actions," that is, as recognizable responses (actions) to recurring situations (C. Miller "Genre" 151). New Rhetorical genre theories challenge traditional definitions of and approaches to genre, moving away from formalist understandings that have focused on discourse features and taxonomies. Such traditional definitions establish "closed sets" of discourse types and have treated genres as abstract products, disassociated from the time and place of their production. Dividing form from content, genre theories in the past have, as Amy Devitt argues, made "genre a normalizing and static concept" (574).

In New Rhetorical genre theory, textual features remain important considerations, but they do not tell the whole "story" of a genre. Medway argues that "genres are still expected to display characteristic textual forms, so that linguistic analysis and the study
of discourse features remain highly relevant. Identifying patterns of text format, syntactical and lexical choice, and discursive ordering, however, is no longer considered sufficient for pinning down the genre" (123). For example, a Web diary can have formal and substantive features identical to those of May Sarton’s diary, but the context of these two texts is different. That difference is enough to trigger questions about whether or not these diaries are actually the “same” genre or not, despite their similarities in appearance. While not “abandoning earlier conceptions of genres as ‘types’ or ‘kinds’ of discourse,” Freedman and Medway explain, new genre theories attempt to tie “similarities in content and form” to “broader social and cultural understandings of language in use” (“Locating” 1). Genre, in this definition, cannot be separated from context, and in fact that context shapes and is shaped by genre (Freedman and Medway “Locating” 10).

In her groundbreaking work “Genre as Social Action,” Carolyn Miller describes genre as “a complex of formal and substantive features that create a particular effect in a given situation” (153) and as the “conventions of discourse that a society establishes” (163). Genres are responses to situation that are mutually recognized by all participants. For instance, the internment diarists I discuss in Chapter Two recognized their imprisonment in a Japanese camp as a situation that the diary could record; the rumored indictments against diaries suggest that their captors also recognized the genre as one, potentially dangerous response to this situation. (Decades later, the internees’ families, editors, and publishers also recognized this response, indicating that this exigence continued to be understood.)

---

1 Exigence is a combination of desire and obligation, the feeling that it would be unnatural not to do something, that motivates individuals to act in a particular situation. The term, from classical rhetoric and reinvigorated by Lloyd Bitzer’s 1968 article “The Rhetorical Situation,” has been used by New Rhetorical genre theorists to indicate the “socially recognized way” a speaker or writer can “make his or her
Because genres respond to situations, and situations will change in different historical, cultural, and social contexts, these theories see genres not as static but "dynamic" (Devitt 580; Freedman and Medway 9; Todorov 20), "provisional" (Freedman and Medway "Locating" 10), and subject to evolution, development or decay. As Richard Coe and Aviva Freedman argue, "The genre has evolved (and continues to evolve) by a process of discursive selection: it exists because it works, in some sense or other, as a response to the situation" (138). The combination in this study of texts all known as "diaries" but that range from traditional (literary diaries) to innovative (Internet journals) highlights the flexibility of genres and their responsiveness to context. In writing and posting their lives online, Web-diarists engage a different evolution of the genre than either internment or literary diaries, as a form of response particularly well-suited to their specific situations. "The forms may change," Devitt notes, "but the generic label stays the same" (575). How that "generic label" is employed and understood by diarists and writers is a central concern of my analysis. Understanding "genre" as a "rhetorical means for mediating private intentions and social exigence" (C. Miller "Genre" 163), I can examine how diaries respond to the particular needs of writers in particular contexts and consequently explore how "private" genres participate in "public" societies.

I will return below to these theories and the concepts that have been key to my own work, but first want to consider some of the reasons why such a study is valuable, what an analysis of contemporary diaries can contribute to understandings of genre, cultures, and autobiography. In academic treatments of the genre, the diary spent much

intentions known" (C. Miller "Genre" 158). Carolyn Miller sees exigence as "a form of social knowledge" that "provides an occasion, and thus a form, for making public our private versions of things" (158). She continues, "It is an understanding of social need in which I know how to take an interest, in which one can
of the twentieth century being ignored by literary scholars (an oversight chronicled by Bunkers and Huff 1-14; Lensink “Expanding” 39-44; Podnieks Daily 13-44), dismissed by autobiography theorists (Lejeune “Autobiographical Pact” 4-5), and relegated to the status of biased but useful source-book for historians (Chapter Three this volume). Challenges to the literary and autobiographical canon that began in the 1970s invited a reconsideration of the diary both as literature and as life-writing (Bunkers and Huff; Mason; Nussbaum). Similarly, changing ideas of “History” as objective and official discourse saw a re-evaluation of the diary and other personal narratives as viable historical sources and records in their own right. These disciplines and fields have also interrogated traditional hierarchies of literatures, subjects, and genres, querying such categories as “high” and “low” forms (or, by extension, “public” or “private,” or their associated binaries of literary/domestic, masculine/feminine, etc.). Carolyn Miller makes a significant claim when she argues that not only traditionally literary or “high” genres (such as those based on Aristotle’s three kinds of rhetoric) but also everyday genres “tell us something theoretically important about discourse.” Paying attention to such “de facto” genres as “the letter of recommendation, the user manual, [or] the progress report,” she adds, “is to take seriously the kinds of rhetoric in which we are immersed and the situations in which we find ourselves” (“Genre” 155). Such a statement, first published in 1984, would not have been self-evident for its time, nor might it be even in 2004.

In her study of commonplace books, another “de facto” genre, Susan Miller observes that such “ordinary writing” “shows us to ourselves, precisely as products of the texts we produce” (21). Because of this interplay between producers and products,
examining such “ordinary” texts offers insight into both individuals and cultures. In Miller’s words, “Society’s ‘workings’ become visible in the purposes, imagined audiences, content and outcomes of the texts that specific cultures make possible,” even ones that have not been recognized as texts (4). Similarly, autobiography theorists Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson point to “everyday autobiographies” as sites from which to observe concepts of and possibilities for subjectivity that circulate within cultures at particular moments. Performing “backyard ethnography” (Getting a Life 16-17), they demonstrate the importance of focusing on “the everyday practices of autobiographical narrating” (17) in which we can read individuals aligning themselves with or resisting received stories and models of subjectivity. A study of the “everyday” genre of the diary, which is “everyday” both as commonplace and daily, therefore has the potential for insight into a culture’s values, attitudes, even power structures. Further, in a genre typically associated with the “private,” we can see how diarists internalize these dominant discourses, particularly when they write their “private” diaries knowing that others will read them. Such diary performances become even more nuanced as diarists try to perform the genre “diary” convincingly at the same time that they make their “private self,” which the diary supposedly unveils, mirror the intended audiences’ mores.

Philippe Lejeune, who was initially instrumental in barring the diary from considerations of autobiography but has subsequently become a diary scholar and archivist, now investigates why “ordinary people, who are not writers, write a diary” (“Practice” 185). He notes that studies of the diary, including such canonical works as Alain Girard’s 1963 Le Journal intime et la notion de personne or Béatrice Didier’s 1976 Le Journal intime, have “blind spots” because they consider only published diaries. He
explains, "Publishing privileges texts by writers or prominent personalities" (186) and thus leaves out the vast majority of diaries, those by "ordinary people." Lensink sounds a similar note of caution about approaches to studies of the diary, drawing attention to the "polite divide in diary scholarship between the attention given to journals written by 'literary' women and those of 'ordinary' women" ("Emily" 82). My study is guilty in part of this same sort of privileging, with a chapter on the diaries of professional writers and one on diaries of people in an extraordinary historical situation that makes otherwise "ordinary" people "prominent" for a time. But my final chapter on Internet diaries seeks specifically to address this gap, and to explore how the "ordinary" writings of "ordinary" people use similar literary and generic strategies as the "prominent" or famous diarists to write themselves and, by extension, to produce the culture in which they exist. Or, to turn that formulation around to avoid any kind of hierarchizing, including these different kinds of diarists in one study allows for comparisons that may show unexpected similarities between the writings of amateur and professional authors and demonstrate how these different diarists incorporate the public and the private in their hybrid texts. Since all are public personal diarists, writing in a form considered artless, the playing field is partially leveled, allowing similar (but not equal) access to lay and expert writers under particular sets of conditions.

Issues I: Gender, Publicity, Privacy, Authenticity

Among the many issues that I pursue in this study, gender is a key concern, both because the majority of the diarists I examine are women and because of the diary's traditional association with the feminine (e.g., Blodgett; Culley; Hogan; Huff "Profoundly"; Jelinek;
Juhasz; Lensink “Expanding”; Raoul “Echo,” “Women and Diaries”; Wink). For this focus, I take a page from Harriet Blodgett, who asks in her study of Englishwomen’s diaries, “[h]ow might the diarist’s gender have played a role in [her] diary keeping?” (2). In other words, I consider how these particular women use their diaries in their particular situations to address, challenge, or even reproduce contemporary attitudes about gender, among other functions, rather than arguing that the diary itself is a particularly “feminine” form or that women write diaries differently than do men (cf. Podnieks Daily; Raoul French, “Women and Diaries”; Simons). Due to the continued popular stereotype of women’s diaries in particular as private, and the private text as the most authentic form of diary (associations that I will expand upon below) my discussion of gender also intersects with the related issues of privacy and authenticity.

Additionally, the preponderance of women diarists in my study arises in part out of the situations on which I focus. Far more civilian women were interned than men, for example, and many of the civilian men who were interned and who kept diaries turned their diaries into retrospective autobiographies or official histories if they published them at all (e.g., Hartendorp; Hind). The already gendered space of a civilian, as opposed to military, concentration camp thus lent itself to a study of internment diaries by women. Certainly both male and female writers publish their diaries, or have their diaries published by their heirs. But looking specifically at female literary diarists enables me to ask how the diary operates in a semi-official, partially professional or “public” capacity to extend and comment on these writers’ work in other texts, as well as taking on personal functions more typically associated with the “private” (feminine) realm. What do these women authors in particular, who in all three cases were working against gender
types, need the diary to do for them? Finally, the Web has been considered a “masculine” space, in part because of the lingering association of technology with a “male” domain (Green and Adam xiv-xv), and because of the Internet’s “roots” in the “male world” of “the military, the academy, engineering and industry” (Scott, Semmens, and Willoughby 5). The popularity of the “feminine” form of the diary in this “masculine” space might consequently seem a disjunction. However, the vast numbers of both male and female Internet diarists suggest that actual practices contradict these traditional gender associations. (Thus far, no studies have been done to determine actual numbers of diarists or their gender).

The interconnected issues of concepts of the public, the private, and the authentic are also central to my analysis. These concerns have significant effects on the production and reception of public personal journals, informing the uses diarists imagine for their texts and the ways in which they will realize these functions. Tangled in associations of public with “publication” (and therefore “inauthentic”) and private with “secret” (thus “authentic”), such categorizations affect what readers expect from diaries and diarists. Though the popular belief prevails that a “true” or “authentic” diary will be private, that is, not meant for external readers, with an inherent connotation of secrecy, diary studies have shown that this perception is a contemporary and inaccurate stereotype of diary practices both historically and in the present moment. Pre-nineteenth century, it would be erroneous to consider the diary as “private” in any sense of the word. In seventeenth-century England, Puritans and Quakers were advised to keep spiritual diaries, which imagined God as the ultimate reader but that would also be read by devotees’ spiritual advisers (Fothergill Private 17-19; Gannet 110-111; Podnieks Daily 19). Cynthia Huff's
studies of English diaries ("Private Domains" and "Textual Boundaries") as well as Margo Culley's and Suzanne Bunkers's analyses of American diaries show that in the nineteenth-century diaries were commonly kept and read by multiple family members as ways to inscribe a collective as well as individual life story.

Cinthia Gannet notes that the genre's mid-nineteenth century shift to greater introspection coincided with Romantic ideals of the Self as singular, autonomous, and private, as distinct from public and communal; this shift was bolstered by the emerging field of psychoanalysis, with its attention to the unconscious and the possibilities for unlocking the "secrets" of the self through (self-) analysis (Gannet 141). Valerie Raoul traces a similar rise in early nineteenth-century France of the journal intime, a form of diary that is "mainly concerned with the narrator's personal, everyday life" and "is initially written in private and for his own benefit, rather than for publication" (French ix). Lorna Martens describes a "wave of publications" of journaux intimes initiated in France during the 1880s and '90s that changed public attitudes towards and awareness of the personal diary (115). She explains, "With these publications the intimate diary became an established public fact. [...] It was not until after these early intimate diaries were published that writers started to regard the intimate diary as a publishable literary genre, and, like Gide, [began] to write 'sincerely' for the public" (116). Since these early examples were all published posthumously, however, the diarists' sincerity or motives were not challenged. The death of the author before publication of his or her "private" text, which meant that the diarist had no control over the public version, upheld the reading public's ideals of the diary as unmediated and "authentic." (I will return to these
issues of control and authenticity in the posthumously published diary in discussing Emily Carr’s *Hundreds and Thousands*.)

The publication of these intimate diaries, an act which should invalidate these texts as private or authentic, instead reinforced the concept of the “pure” diary as totally private, and spawned multiple (public) practitioners of this (private) form. This disjunction between the fantasy of the diary’s “privacy” and the growing field of published diaries supports Kathryn Carter’s argument that nineteenth-century diarists and consumers operated under a “willful denial about diary writing and its alleged privacy” (“Cultural” 251). The insistence on the diary as private served the “ideological function” of upholding “a certain model of selfhood that contributes to the consolidation of public and private spheres necessary to mid-century notions of class and gender” (251), rather than reflecting actual practice. In other words, the idea(l) of the “authentic” diary as private was a public construct, if not a fiction, that served public interest by separating public and private selves, writings, and performances.

The notion of “privacy” seems to be inseparable, in popular if not scholarly readings, from the idea of “audience”; that is, a private diary should not be written for any kind of audience or reader. Blodgett’s justification of her decision to include only “private” diaries in her study demonstrates this conflation of privacy and audience. She defines the parameters of her study thus: “personal diaries not written or revised by the diarist for publication or intended for immediate reading by a second party” (13). Notably, her definition, which equates “private” with originality or spontaneity (unrevised), does not exclude an eventual reader, just an “immediate” one. This distinction suggests that the diarist must be in seclusion to write, or her text may be
"contaminated" by this immediate audience, whose presence would unduly influence the diarist. But even in diaries not meant for publication, the writers still imagine readers; because they write in language, which is always addressed (Bakhtin "Problem"), their diaries are inherently directed to an addressee. Andrew Hassam reminds us that "one cannot not imply an addressee," whether or not a diarist intends for her text to be read by an actual reader ("As I Write" 37). Though the journal intime, for example, may not be intended for publication or even a particular addressee, Raoul points out that "a virtual other is always present as hypothetical narratee, even when the narrator claims to be writing for himself alone" (French 43). As Elizabeth Podnieks reports, "Of all the literary genres, the diary is the only one that, to be imaged 'authentically,' must be written with no consideration of an audience beyond the writer herself." However, she concludes, "the diary, no matter how private it is assumed to be, has from its inception comprised its own self-conscious tradition. It is arguable that there has never been a time when all diarists truly wrote unselfconsciously, unaware of the implications embedded in the act of writing itself" (Daily 18).

The idea of a diary as totally "private," for "one's self alone," then, is a construct without basis in actual practice, driven by ideological rather than generic concerns. Hassam notes that "value judgements" that are ideological become part of assessing the formal characteristics of a genre. In the case of the diary, where "privacy" (and "authenticity") have become the norm, readers expect that the writing style will be "abbreviated" with a "fragmented structure" reflective of its unmediated, artless, "private" nature. If a particular diary has instead "a discursive style and unified structure [these] suggest that the diary has been written for publication, and this becomes translated
as a suspicion that the diarist is not being truthful. [...] Our current cultural moment thus privileges the *private* diary" (Writing 23-24). Aesthetic or stylistic concerns mask investments in the diary’s authenticity or sincerity, as Carter also indicates, and establish norms for style that develop over time into guarantors of authenticity. This complex interplay of actual and stereotypical practices informed by non-textual concerns highlights the arbitrariness of the public or private label, and provokes calls by contemporary diary scholars to abandon this classification system. Carter concludes that, even in an unpublished diary, “we cannot erect a meaningful division between public and private” (“Cultural” 254), and Podnieks similarly insists that “this distinction may hold true in certain cases, [but] a closer examination of diaries [...] exposes the myth of genre specificity. The diary we conceive in theory does not necessarily exist in practice” (Daily 13). Bunkers rejects the public/private distinction as a “false dichotomy” in “actual diaries,” because the “diary is often both public and private” (Diaries 18). Finally, “[t]he terms ‘public’ and ‘private,’” Gannet suggests, “don’t really account very well for the complex personal relations among diarists, their subjects, and their audience” (141), and Raoul observes that the distinction between internally- and externally-focused diaries does not reflect contemporary diary practices or expectations (“Echo” 16).

The concept of audience is essential to discussions of the diary, not only because of its contentious presence or absence but also because of its influence on how the diarist imagines using her diary. Rather than introducing “taint” or artifice to the “pure” diary, audience is an integral component of the text from its inception. Culley argues that “The importance of the audience, real or implied, conscious or unconscious, of what is usually thought of as a private genre cannot be overstated” (11). This is because this addressee
or, more accurately, these addressees, allow the diary to perform functions that engage with the public realm, that is, the world external to the diarist. Culley's observations would help us see, for example, that a civilian internee can reconstruct her pre-war community from which she is physically and temporally divided, allowing her some degree of continuity with her former life and identity. She can also take on the position of war correspondent or scholarly observer in her diary, identities that take shape in genres such as the research paper or news bulletin that are traditionally public, and from which the diary borrows. A Web-diary can articulate an identity based on the elements of everyday life by building an active, responsive community that shares values in common.

A professional writer can react to criticism in the pages of her journal, crafting responses that outline the artistic methodologies or theories informing her "public"—here, "professional"—work in non-diary genres. The kinds of audiences the diarist addresses, and the kinds of responses she imagines from those audiences, thus determine who the diarist imagines her selves to be in the moment of writing, even in a diary not meant to be published.

Diary functions, identities, and communities blur the theoretical division of "public" and "private," even in journals written explicitly for publication. However, the entrenched belief in private/authentic diaries means that diarists who write for publication, whether immediate or posthumous, or who decide to make diaries originally not meant for publication into public documents, have to contend with readers' expectations of privacy. In each chapter I discuss how public personal diarists negotiate the minefield of authenticity and privacy in a public text, writing diaries that serve their interests as well as their public's. I observe the ways in which these writers acknowledge
generic precedent by explicitly discussing their motives in writing a diary for an external readership, and/or conforming to stereotypes of diary style or content. In order for their texts to be accepted by the reading public, which could reject public personal journals as narcissistic, false, and manipulative, diarists need to retain the appearance of the stereotypical "private" and "authentic" diary even while they openly write for publication.

The definition of "authentic" applies in these personal narratives not only to the text but also the experiences they inscribe, confusing as well the sometimes artificial boundary separating "text" and "life." The diaries in this study have been evaluated as textual acts, measured against the current standard for the diary, and as types of narratives and subjects. Do these public personal journals provide "authentic" portraits of everyday life? Of the struggles of a woman artist? Do they match the public's expectation of a woman's experience in war? Such expectations for the "authentic" content of diary narratives, not just the style or privacy, indicate that generic expectations extend to include expectations of acceptable subjects—that is, both writing subjects and topics—and authorized narrators. These sequestered expectations grow out of and perpetuate the binary classification and legitimating systems that rank the diary, and often women's diaries in particular, at the bottom of traditional evaluative scales. The categorizations of public and private discourse have resulted in canons and other hierarchies that have led to the exclusion of the diary, among other "everyday" forms, from critical consideration, and indicate contemporary cultural attitudes towards and valuations of genres and their practitioners. The persistence of the public/private binary provides further evidence that, despite the diary's ubiquity in popular culture, it remains under-theorized and relatively
unexamined, so that reader expectations are informed by stereotypes (based largely on fictional diaries) rather than the myriad variations found in actual instances of diary-writing.

Expectations about authenticity also connect to the issue of editing, as Blodgett’s definition foregrounds, and remain closely tied to the reception of public personal diaries, as well as to considerations of control (does the diarist do her own editing, or is her text shaped for publication by an external editor? Is the text revised during the diarist’s lifetime, or after her death?). Readers, and often critics, including Blodgett, Fothergill (“One Day,” Private), Hampsten, and Lensink (“Expanding”), resist or suspect diaries that are too consciously “arty,” or that have been revised or rewritten. In “One Day at a Time,” Fothergill suggests that “The relatively unmanaged nature of the final [diary] text, free from the master-minding of the [retrospective] autobiographer, becomes a promise of a particular kind of authenticity” (90). That promise comes from believing that the text has not been rewritten: “in the case of a published diary, the first draft is the only draft we want” (90). On the other hand, Wink counters critiques of “ordinary” diarists who adopt “fancy” styles, noting, “We need to think about how decorative language, word play, jokes, and metaphorical statements make the writing effective for the writer and allow a writer to have her say. […] We must also accept that, as in more formal autobiography, the writer is in control of the way she will tell her story” (xxii). The image of a diarist, especially an “ordinary” diarist, carefully choosing her words or employing literary techniques clashes with constructs of the “authentic” diary as spontaneous and artless.

However, as Lensink observes, this suspicion of editing, like the consideration of audience, is applied on a sliding scale, depending on whose diary is being considered,
and how it is being catalogued. Contrasting the critical and popular reception of the diaries of Anais Nin and Civil War diarist Mary Chestnut, Lensink remarks on “the chasm that permitted the ‘literary’ Nin to fictionalize while the ‘historical’ Chestnut had every word scrutinized for veracity” (“Emily” 86-87). This chasm, she concludes, “kept at bay the troubling possibility that ordinary women’s journals could be re-assembled in order to dissemble, could be less authentic autobiographical voices than feminist scholars of both history and literature had believed” (87). Literary diarists, then, may be held to a different standard or a different kind of “authenticity,” based on expectations of their diaries as “literary,” than “ordinary” diarists, who need to remain “ordinary,” plain-spoken, without literary pretensions. Indeed, as I will discuss in Chapter One, readers and publishers expect a degree of literariness and aesthetic sophistication from artist diarists that would invalidate the “authenticity” if found in the texts of other diarists.

Diarists intending publication will be acutely aware of these suspicions. In a 2003 essay, Lensink describes her experience of being “duped” by a rewritten version of the diary of an “ordinary” woman. Lensink assumed she had read the original diary because the revised version is a “text constructed to appear so ordinary that its extraordinary qualities seemed all the more luminescent” (“Emily” 82). In her study of Henriette Dessaulles’s diary, which the diarist substantially reworked long after the original was written, Raoul observes that diarists who act as their own editors may consciously retain markers of authenticity. Noting that Dessaulles copied original grammar and spelling errors as well as entries critical of her stepmother and religion, Raoul concludes that “[h]er restructuring of her own narrative seems to have respected the expectations of a reader engaged in the intimate contract” (Distinctly 48). These particular instances
demonstrate that authenticity can be deliberate and cultivated, textual performances that indicate diarists' awareness of model diaries (and literary precedents) and reader expectations, and their desire to conform—for various reasons—to the notion of "authenticity."

In my own study, the issue of editing is particularly relevant to the discussion of literary and internment diaries, since all these texts were published by conventional means and therefore have gone through the editing process that accompanies publication. P.K. Page's Brazilian Journal is significant as a personal diary that Page revised years later to become a public "literary" diary, and I examine how she, like Dessaulles, reproduces convincing "diary style" in this reworked document. Similarly, Peggy Abkhazi made substantial changes to her original internment diaries in preparing them for publication, and I consider how these changes indicate Abkhazi's beliefs about what the public would expect from a diary, and from a "war" diary in particular. In analyzing Emily Carr's Hundreds and Thousands, I compare manuscript versions of the diary with the posthumously published edition, exploring how this particular diarist's public image was shaped by a series of editors to conform to public expectations of an "authentic" diary and an "authentic" artist and public figure. Web-diaries, with their potential for untraceable revisions and their virtual archives that may disappear without warning, raise distinct questions about the role of editing. However, my analysis shows that Internet diarists are just as aware as Dessaulles or Abkhazi of readers' desire for unmediated and spontaneous prose in a diary, indicating that print stereotypes and expectations carry over to cyberspace.
Finally, Raoul’s conclusion that Dessaulles had respected the “intimate contract” draws attention to what has become a recurring thread in my study. Throughout I consider or evoke legalistic or economic metaphors, both my own and those of other critics, to describe the relationship that diaries establish between readers and writers. Raoul speaks of the “diary code” (*French* 10), while Lejeune articulates the broader “autobiographical pact” that covers all autobiographical writings (though, in Lejeune’s original application, not diaries). I propose a “New Deal” that governs the emerging diarist-reader relations on the Internet. Genre theorists describe how particular genres assign roles for readers and writers (C. Miller “Genre”; Ivanic), roles that will be implied because of participants’ understanding of the genre—a kind of “generic contract” into which participants enter. This accumulation of references to implicit or explicit understandings that guide readers and writers of diaries signals the significance of this concern to my analysis. Though these “contracts” may be surprising in a genre that, in its “purest” form, is not supposed to have readers, the presence of these understandings demonstrates that the diary, like any other genre, is implicitly designed for a range of recipients, real and imagined. Pacts and codes that assure readers of authenticity or of interpretive frameworks show how everyday genres address audiences and how audiences know both what to expect of the genre and what the genre expects of them as readers. They also remind us that issues of genre, audience, function, and content cannot be considered independently of each other or of the context in which texts are produced and received, for contracts may not be intelligible in all places and times.
Issues II: Genre Theory, Audience, Community

In their introduction to *Genre and the New Rhetoric*, Aviva Freedman and Peter Medway outline a brief history of and antecedents for New Rhetorical genre theory. One of the central questions this theory helps answer, they argue, is “What does participation in a genre do to, and for, an individual or group?” (“Locating” 12). This question is foundational to my analysis of public personal journals, in which I investigate what the diary genre, in its flexibility, can do for diarists, and how the genre shapes the identities diarists take on and the audiences they address through their texts. In order to answer this query, I use this genre theory along with linguistic pragmatics as another way into a primarily literary analysis. These investigative tools, which operate at the micro level of the utterance as well as the macro level of genre, bridge the individual and the collective or communal, showing how genres are ways of “acting together” that consequently build and maintain communities (C. Miller “Rhetorical” 67, paraphrasing Kenneth Burke).

Just as authenticity, privacy, and publicity are interdependent issues, so too are concepts of audience, identity, and community. For the sake of clarity, however, I will artificially separate them here in order to define these key ideas and the technical terms that I will use in my analysis. My understanding of audience—which I also term “addressee” and “reader” throughout the study—builds on Herbert Clark’s theories of audience design and community knowledge. Though his analysis focuses on spoken discourse, the principles of his theory can be applied to written situations as well (cf. Giltrow “Genre”; Giltrow and Stouck). Clark argues that utterances, which do not designate merely sentences but include as well the “speaker, time, place, and a set of circumstances” (Clark xiii), are designed for particular audiences. In the choice of
utterance and its content, speakers assign the roles of participants, including the addressees and listeners (side-participants), and overhearers, who may be eavesdroppers or bystanders (Clark and Carlson 217-24). Participants will be expected to “take part in” the conversation (218), with the highest expectations placed on the addressees, who “are the ostensible targets of what is being said. Ordinarily, they are the participants for whom the speaker has the most direct and obvious goals in designing his utterances” (220). While participants will be the focus of the speaker’s utterance, however, she will also “design [her] utterance with overhearers in mind” because she will “realize that overhearers can nevertheless form conjectures or hypotheses” about the speaker’s meaning (220), even though they, unlike participants, have no responsibility in the conversation.

The designation of roles through utterance design provides a way to consider how diarists, writing for themselves and others, can project multiple, simultaneous audiences for their texts. In a public personal journal, diarists may address particular kinds of readers specifically, but will design some or all of their entries to be understood by a wider range of participants, even overhearers, striving for maximum accessibility depending on the function that a particular entry serves. Audience design can be traced by analyzing the community knowledge the speaker calls upon in designing his or her utterance. Diarists, like speakers, “decide how to say what they say on the basis of what they know, believe, and suppose that these hearers, in their assigned roles, know, believe, and suppose” (Clark and Carlson 217). This common ground is central and essential to audience design and, by extension, to successful communication, and is based on
community membership (36); each community will have "distinct areas of knowledge" (36).

Knowledge that is assumed to be shared may be signaled by presupposition, statements that assert information rather than introducing it. Taking as common ground or "shared or non-controversial knowledge" (Grundy 10) what they assert, presupposing expressions draw upon the speaker's assumption that her addressees share her worldview and experiences. Thus when Web-diary writer Jane Pinckard writes, "so i didn't have tickets to the show last night, but we were headed there anyway. if it didn't work out, we could always just have a drink with jee before she left for her trip" (22 Nov. 2003), she assumes readers know the meaning of "the show," "jee," and "her trip," articulating in consequence a very particular imagined reader. Presupposing expressions unite listeners or readers who either do share the speaker's knowledge base or who can infer the expression's meaning (as the majority of Pinckard's could do, since they can follow her narrative even without understanding the specifics). However, they can also be divisive or alienating, distinguishing insiders from outsiders; by mentioning but not telling, presupposing expressions make "outsider" listeners or readers aware that they do not know what is being referred to. Because they are not being told and the speaker assumes or acts as if the listener should know, the (polite or dominated) listener is put in the position of not being able to ask for clarification (and, of course, readers of print diaries have no opportunity to pose such questions). To do so would draw attention to their status as outsiders or perhaps suggest that they had not paid attention when the information was originally conveyed.
By creating explicit levels of address, distinguishing insiders and outsiders through presupposition could also be a strategic method of creating a sense of intimacy amongst participants (listeners or readers). Forced by this strategic assumption of intimacy or confidence to “go on as if they do know” (Giltrow “Ironies” 219), listeners or readers must act as if they do indeed have the background knowledge that the speaker implies they do, and try to make their own repairs and inferences from the discourse that follows. Because the speaker has all the information, leaving the listener to play “catch-up,” a confidential conversation rife with presupposition keeps the power in the speaker’s court, privileging the speaker’s world-view or assumption of shared experience. This privileging constructs addressees who should want to share that world or that community’s values, if they do not already, and who care about what the speaker is presupposing, and therefore want to know what the speaker assumes they do know. In that light, presupposing expressions could be read as oblique invitations to become part of that community. Common presupposing expressions, which act as “presupposition triggers,” include definite reference, deixis, proper names, and anaphorics, references that force readers to look back within the preceding text to retrieve the original.

Audience design may also be seen in a speaker’s disclosing or non-disclosing attitudes towards listeners, which indicate the roles of overhearers as either bystanders or eavesdroppers (Clark and Carlson 218-22). A disclosing speaker (or writer) appears to address one audience with whom they share specific information but simultaneously includes other audiences who may not have this knowledge in common. For example, if I state, “I learned about the song from Sheila,” I am assuming as shared knowledge what “the song” refers to, and who “Sheila” is. If I know that one of these references will fail
for a by-stander, and I wish that person to understand, I can choose to introduce this missing information, perhaps by adding parenthetically "(Sheila runs the local radio station)." Adopting this attitude of disclosure would allow me to make an outsider a potential insider by extending community knowledge to him or her. Conversely, by electing not to disclose, I can exclude participants other than the specific addressee. My understanding of these attitudes follows from Grice’s concept of "conversational maxims," which assumes that all participants in a conversation will co-operate to communicate meaningfully and effectively; as Clark and Carlson argue, the speaker has a responsibility to design her utterances to be understood by all participants (208). Basing her strategies of disclosure on which role she has given the listener, the speaker may make her comments comprehensible by building on knowledge she knows the listener shares, or by supplying the appropriate information to convey that knowledge to the listener.

In addition to presupposition and attitudes of disclosure or non-disclosure, I look for audience design and community knowledge by examining a text’s cohesion. Cohesion, as theorized by M.A.K. Halliday, is a process of discourse that produces text, channeling the text’s “flow of meaning” into a “traceable current of discourse” (Halliday 311). Created by reference, ellipsis, conjunction, and lexical organization, cohesion establishes explicit relationships across text. For example, in “Peter arrived at 6:00. He was exhausted,” the pronoun “he” in the second sentence creates an anaphoric relationship to “Peter.” The reader or listener knows what entity that pronoun refers to because it has already been introduced, and therefore the two sentences are linked together, creating a text. These relationships are based on “non-structural resources”
instead of grammatical structures and, along with the structural features of information and theme, comprise text through ties that connect words, clause complexes, and even passages.

Cohesive ties require readers or listeners to think back to what has already been written or said in order to understand how the present utterance relates to previous ones. When no such relationship exists between an utterance and its predecessors, a text lacks cohesion and a "gap" is created (Halliday 309). For instance, in the following text, no cohesive ties connect the two sentences: "Peter was exhausted. The price of gas in Peru was prohibitively expensive." Because nothing in the first sentence suggests a relationship to anything in the second, the reader or listener has no resources from the text to supply the missing information that would make these two sentences relate to each other. Like presupposing expressions, cohesive gaps can cause tension between the actual and the imagined addressee, since both project an addressee who has sufficient background knowledge to draw upon to follow the speaker's references without the speaker needing to explain; speakers may (willfully or not) overestimate that common knowledge. By pointing out what the speaker or writer assumes the listener or reader knows, gaps provide further evidence of a text's intended audiences. In a public personal journal, gaps can also indicate a truly private space, an event or emotion that cannot be made public. They therefore highlight the limits of this particular mode, or the strictures under which public personal diarists operate, by suggesting what can and cannot be said in public at the time of writing (or publishing).

This attention to community knowledge further indicates the ways in which texts construct communities and take on identities that correspond to those communities. Even
in writings not meant to circulate (at least not initially, such as the diaries by Carr, Page, and the internment diarists), writers build and maintain communities, as Peter Medway ("Fuzzy Genres") and Susan Miller (Assuming the Positions) have demonstrated. In his study of architecture students' notebooks, Medway argues that "although no one else is normally meant to see these books, so much of the writing employs a publicly accessible discourse. [...] If not directly communicative, the writing is still a practice ground for communication. The texts do not reflect the privacy of their production and use" (144). This public orientation, he explains, "springs from the positing of a particular sort of potential audience" (144). Similarly, Miller describes how private writings, texts not originally intended for publication, allow writers to try on different subjectivities that address various subject positions and societal roles. In each entry, commonplace writers "shift their discursive positions and adopt multiple stances towards graphic identities" (75), moving through these identities as they address different audiences. Such performances further obfuscate the public/private divide, since they prepare writers for public interactions, or bring public discourse or mores into the "private" space of the text (notebook, commonplace book, or diary). Consequently, private or ordinary texts can have social, cultural, even political consequences for the writer and the "public."

The close connection between community and identity articulated by genre theorists bears similarities to the notion of relational identity that has been posited by autobiography scholars. Drawing on work by feminist theorists, Paul John Eakin explains that no individual can tell his or her life story, or construct an identity through that storytelling, without speaking or writing from a cultural position within a community. Despite the "myth" of the autonomous self that traditional autobiography
promotes, that self is "neither singular nor first," but plural and collective (43). Eakin argues that "the self is defined by and lives in terms of its relations to others" (46). Community and identity are therefore crucial considerations for diaries as a genre and as life-writing, and thus will be central to my attempts to answer what participation in the diary genre does to and for diarists.

When searching for imagined audiences and communities in a written text, particularly one that must also pretend to be written without any kind of audience, as is the case with public personal journals, these linguistic elements and textual features provide key insight into the work that diaries (and diarists) do. Such analysis makes tangible what otherwise might remain intuitive. For example, I might feel that Emily Carr, as an artist who believed she was misunderstood and ignored, would want to address a reader who understood Carr's position as an important figure in the art world. Using linguist-pragmatic analysis, I can track the ways in which she projects this particular reader and, by extension, takes on the identity of "esteemed artist." Further, these lexicogrammatical features can indicate ways in which the diarist conforms to expectations of the "authentic" diary—practices particularly relevant to literary and Internet diarists, who face the most potential resistance to their public personal journals. Since the diarist will be aware that to some degree readers still expect a text and a narrator that remain unconscious of an external reader, she can use gapping and presupposition to simulate the style of a diarist writing for herself alone. Conversely, such features in an internment diary, as I suggest in Chapter Two, may be textual inscriptions of the diarist's situation, in which she is writing under pressure, in partial secrecy, as a prisoner in a concentration camp. These features serve, then, as additional
methods to place a text in the context of its original production (and of any reproductions) as well as its reception, and to consider the cultural implications of each diary.

In the chapters that follow, I explore the diary’s role in contemporary North American culture, reading these texts as consciously literary and autobiographical acts that tell us a great deal about the diary genre and the possibilities it holds for diarists. Examining these diaries as variations on and responses to the stereotypical diary, I consider how this tension between expectation and actual practice is productive in each instance. By complying with some elements of the traditional diary but subverting the expectation of privacy, public personal diarists can participate in a literary tradition, allowing them access to the genre’s readers and cultural currency; however devalued that currency may be in some circles, it still exists. Diarists can therefore take on particular identities, address a range of audiences, and participate in communities that the genre makes available. The diaries of professional writers, civilian internees, and “Netizens” reveal how a variety of writers, in three distinct situations, build on the diary’s traditional functions and associations to make the form work for them in roles that are personal and public.

A final note on terminology: throughout this study I use the terms “diary” and “journal” interchangeably, as has become common practice in diary criticism (Carter Small 5-6; Culley xiv; Gannet 100; Nussbaum 130). As Kathryn Carter explains, “Although the Oxford English Dictionary declares that a ‘journal’ connotes ‘something more elaborate than a diary,’ it is misleading to believe that there are two types of daily writing.” She calls such distinctions “spurious,” noting that in actual practice, “both terms
are applied to such a variety of texts and styles that attempts at categorization prove fruitless” (Small 5-6). In exploring the phenomenon of Weblogs in Chapter Three, I will return to the subject of naming and classifying, and consider some of the ramifications of particular nomenclatures for diary acts. But my discussion concurs with Carter’s analysis: a diary by any other name is still a diary, and thus I incorporate both terms.
Chapter One: Professionally Personal: The Literary Diaries of May Sarton, P.K. Page, and Emily Carr

Professional writers who are also diarists and who choose to publish their "private" texts, either during their lifetime or after their death, craft personal records that by necessity overlap with their professional, "public" lives and identities. Because even in their diaries professional writers are, as Lynn Bloom argues, "never off-duty" ("I Write" 25), their personal journals serve functions both literary (that is, professional) and "private" (that is, personal, or "non-writerly"). Literary diaries, texts "that are deliberately conceived as aesthetic works and written with an eye towards posterity and publication" or that "have largely been produced with literary intention and often for an audience beyond that of the diarists themselves" (Podnieks "Introduction" 4) invite considerations of what the diary form can do as a literary as well as personal form, for readers as well as diarists.

The production of diaries by professional writers differs in several significant ways from that of those by non-literary diarists, whose texts are the subjects of the remaining chapters, and these differences shape how these diarists write and to whom, and what uses they imagine their diaries serving. Firstly, unlike such diarists as Peggy Abkhazi, Natalie Crouter, or Steve Schalchlin, literary diarists create and publish texts in other genres besides the diary, and thus their personal writings become one part of a writer's larger body of work. Aware that they address an audience familiar with their professional writings, these authors may use the diary to comment on, control interpretation of, or direct new readers to their work in other genres, thus blurring the boundaries of the public and the personal. These diarists have already established textual personae, are used to having their texts read, and have an existing relationship with a
readership, factors that influence how they will be seen, and how they see themselves, in their self-inscriptions. Finally, due to their celebrity or reputation as professional writers, literary diarists are much more likely than private citizens to have their “private” writings published, a likelihood of which they are usually cognizant as they write. This situation, in which celebrity or public identity combines with the daily writing of a life, distinguishes the literary diary from other instances of the form, and raises questions about the personal and professional roles the diary performs for these diarists.

Literary diarists, using the diary genre to respond to personal and professional exigence, confront popular and critical readings of the diary based on assumptions of the “literary” and the authentic. Even though the literary diarist writes in a genre that has less literary value than her published or professional works, in both her own eyes and those of her critics (Podnieks *Daily* 9-10), she still crafts her diary as a text, a piece of work that requires skill and attention, and that has value. “With their heightened consciousness of literary form,” Elizabeth Podnieks argues, professional writers are also “more aware of the aesthetic possibilities of the diary” (5), and thus turn their professional skills to honing their diary craft. However, she notes that literary diaries have raised red flags for readers looking for “authentic” journals. In many readers’ eyes, Podnieks explains, the literary diary, “[b]y virtue of being literature, [...] could not also, or still, be a genuine diary” (3). Similarly, critics believe that “the diary is either a spontaneously uncrafted document or a carefully crafted text. [...] if the diary in question is artistically motivated, it cannot be a diary per se” (4). Aware of the potential resistance to this form as literature

---

2 That is not to say that diarists who are not professional writers do not use literary techniques in their diaries. On the contrary, my analysis of both internment and Internet diaries will show that these non-professional diarists are also very aware of a reading public and shape their texts to meet generic and literary expectations. But as professional writers, diarists such as Sarton, Page, and Carr have to contend
and as a (non-literary) diary, and the expectations inherent in both kinds of criticism, literary diarists who choose to publish their private writings need to ensure that their journals are an acceptable hybrid of the personal and the professional. These associated binaries (public/private, genuine/fake, spontaneous/crafted) weigh upon the production and the reception of these texts and raise expectations of and for diarists and readers. Because of these factors, literary diaries complicate issues of writerly identity, audience design, and generic compliance.

In this chapter I will consider how three literary diarists address issues of authenticity and "appropriateness" in their public personal journals, using traditional diary style and functions to serve the needs of the reading public as well as their own. Professional writers and artists May Sarton (1912-1995), Emily Carr (1871-1945), and P.K. Page (1916-) all wrote diaries for publication; Sarton and Page published their texts during their lifetimes while Carr left specific instructions for her diary's posthumous publication. As female literary diarists, and as female artists who were all in some way unconventional, this trio of writers allows us to ask questions about what the diary can do specifically for women writers. As a marginalized genre, often dismissed, considered artless and therefore inconsequential, the diary has the potential to be an instrument of subversion and resistance. It provides an (un)authorized space that allows unconventional voices, such as those of a woman writer, or painter, or a lesbian, to tell their own stories and to shape their identities as authoritative, professional artists.

The diaries of all three writers serve this function, among others, of creating acceptable artistic identities for the diarists, and my discussion will explore the ways in

with expectations of their diaries that may arise out of the public's experience of their other writings; their diaries must be literary as well as personal, since they will be compared to their "professional" work.
which these diarists constructed identities in writing and projected communities that would support those identities. Sarton, a prolific writer with a minor literary reputation, uses her serial diaries to build up her reputation with a huge popular audience, and to craft her identity as an accepted literary authority. In *Brazilian Journal*, Page, an established and award-winning poet, charts her transition from textual to visual artist in a chronicle that gradually establishes her as an authority on visual art in addition to poetry. Carr discusses both her painting and writing in her diaries, which were collected, excerpted, and published as *Hundreds and Thousands*. Writing from the position of a marginalized, unrecognized artist—a woman, a Canadian, and a British Columbian—she adopts the non-professional, private space of the diary as a forum in which she articulates her theories of painting, and later explains the process of her transformation into a writer. This role of the diary as adjunct, even guide, to these writers’ other works, suggests a public as well as personal function for the genre, indicating that the diary can have roles “both personal and communal” (Bunkers “Introduction” *Diaries* 19), even for public figures writing diaries for publication.

**May Sarton: Diarist for Hire**

During her sixty-year career, American May Sarton published 53 books including poetry, novels, nonfiction (memoir, biography, journals, essays), plays, children’s books, and screenplays (Ockerbloom n.p.). Despite the breadth and extent of Sarton’s oeuvre, for the majority of her career her work did not receive consistent critical attention, though by the early 1990s several major critical studies had been published.³ Commercially and

popularly, however, Sarton was a significant success, largely because of the eight journals she wrote for publication. Sarton created diaries that are conventional in form, but untraditional both in their publication, which was immediate rather than posthumous, and in their serial production. Her decision to write and publish a series of diaries suggests that the production of her journals arose not out of the personal reasons typically served by the diary form, but from commercial and/or professional—in other words, "public"—motivations.

Sarton thus challenges several defining characteristics and features of the diary, and therefore could expect resistance to her texts from readers anticipating the stereotypical "private" diary. However, she manages to comply with her readers' generic expectations and overcome audience resistance to this relatively novel take on a conventional genre. By making her texts seem intimate, thereby satisfying expectations based on an unpublished personal journal, Sarton anticipates and deflects readers' suspicions about the journal-for-publication, encouraging them to read these journals as unmediated stories of a real life. She also includes self-reflexive commentary on her journal practices to legitimate and explain her task and her product. As one of the first and few contemporary professional public diarists in English, Sarton worked at the frontiers of the diary genre, developing the "public personal journal" into a form that has become acceptable to diary readers and critics.

Sarton’s diary series began in 1973 with *Journal of a Solitude* and ended over twenty years later with the posthumously published *At 82* (1996). Sarton wrote *Journal of*
a Solitude to correct the myth of self and the “false view” of her life she had created in her enormously popular 1968 memoir Plant Dreaming Deep. In the first journal, and the seven that follow, Sarton creates new myths that she does not destroy, continuing to construct her identity as a “solitude” but promising to expose the “rough rocky depths” and furies of her inner life instead of creating an idyll (Journal 12). Though these volumes vary in the events and times they describe, they follow a consistent pattern set up by the first journal. They are consciously literary, and rely on several recurring themes or “leitmotifs,” as Sarton calls them, that shape her descriptions of the daily and domestic. She writes frequently, though not daily, with each short entry (rarely longer than two pages) recording such ordinary events as the weather, appointments, meals prepared and consumed, illness and treatments, visits or conversations with friends, mail received, chores performed, and errands run. The dailiness of the diary genre and its focus on the personal allow her to foreground these concrete details of her real life with her readers. By offering this privileged view into her interior world, Sarton gives her audience the sense that she has opened up the private space of her home to them and invited them to share it, thereby creating in her diary identity a public figure who can also be a friend, even an intimate confidante.

I will focus my discussion on Sarton’s first three journals, Journal of a Solitude, The House by the Sea (1977), and Recovering: A Journal (1980), in which Sarton, at the beginning of what became a series of public personal diaries, articulates the process of identity and audience construction that she will follow in the subsequent volumes. In these early texts she works to establish, expand, and maintain an audience specific to the diaries, rather than to her work in other genres, and I will analyze how she creates and
responds to readers' desires and feedback while maintaining their belief in her texts as personal, spontaneous, and transparent. In these diaries she also explicitly addresses the writing process in general, and diary style in particular, both demonstrating and theorizing how the diary as a genre should be produced and received. Examining her more self-reflexive passages for their instructional and justificatory messages gives insight into how Sarton uses a personal genre for professional purposes.

"Dear unmet friend": Genre and Audience in the Journals

The public nature of Sarton's journals from their inception means that the diarist must satisfy her readers' expectations of the diary genre while still making her text accessible to them. Doing so requires complex negotiations of intimacy and explanation, of discourse that confers insider and outsider status on readers without alienating newcomers to Sarton's diary community. These negotiations take place at the levels of genre and utterance, with the microcosm of the utterance contributing to the success (or "authenticity") of the macrocosm of genre. In attending to the microcosm, we can begin to see what constitutes community knowledge shared by Sarton and her readers, and how Sarton uses that knowledge base to address audiences and to convincingly perform "diary" in a published format.

Using linguistic-pragmatic analysis to examine how Sarton soothes readers' fears or suspicions about her enterprise and maintains her constructed community, I will focus first on the opening entry of her second published journal, *The House by the Sea*, since in this book Sarton addresses both "converted" readers (fans from *Journal of a Solitude*), and new ones who must be made to feel part of the intimate circle. Because the opening
entries of diaries, as Sarton’s text demonstrates, plunge the reader into the world-view of the diarist, they provide excellent sites for inquiries into audience design and community knowledge. Ripe with presupposing expressions, particularly definite reference, such entries construct a reader who is familiar with and, more importantly, who cares about the entities inscribed. Though actual familiarity is impossible, since readers are just beginning the narrative, they can infer what these definite references point to, and thus the presupposition is successful. The combination of presupposition and inferencing so prevalent in the initial entries of diaries takes a page from the opening passages in fiction, which similarly produce “the sensation of inferencing.” This sensation, as Giltrow argues, evokes the need for the reader to be in a state of not-quite-knowing but prepared to proceed as if she did, and “may arouse a familiar feeling of beginning a story” (“Ironies” 218), thereby alerting readers to the text’s generic codes.

The presupposing expressions also indicate that, though the story of the diary is just beginning for the reader, the diary picks up in medias res, as generic convention dictates, thus acting as a marker of the diary’s authenticity. The individuals, events, and places that the diary chronicles should not therefore be introduced because they have an existence that predates the sudden start of the diary, and because the diarist writes “in-the-moment,” privileging what is happening at the time of inscription rather than immediately providing the background. Beginning in this fashion means that Sarton’s public personal journals start as readers expect them to. Notably, in several journals

---

4 Though diarists often begin their diaries to coincide with a significant occasion such as a birthday, or announce the diary’s commencement with an explicit statement of purpose, they typically then continue with their narrative from the present moment. While they may provide some background or context for the entry, they do not typically start at the “very beginning,” as a retrospective autobiography usually does. So in terms of the narrative or “plot” of the diary, diaries begin in medias res.
Sarton employs a preface to provide explanatory information and background, and continues to begin the actual journals with “on-the-pulse” style entries.

In this opening entry, Sarton creates a feeling of intimacy through strategic use of presupposition, which assumes the existence of a common knowledge between herself and her readers. Those readers who do not share this knowledge base—yet—will recognize the existence of a community that does, to which they do not belong. By using insider references, which presume shared knowledge, and adopting a disclosing attitude towards her readers, which acknowledges a lack of familiarity or information, Sarton invites readers into her confidence, thereby meeting readers’ expectations of the diary genre as intimate or confessional. As the first entry (following a preface) to this groundbreaking journal, this passage sets the tone for the whole text, introducing the themes that will shape the entries to come. Its structure and style also announce that this text is a literary journal, the work of an established, professional writer who is letting readers into her “private” space, a space already fraught with complications of the public-private binary. The journal begins:

Wednesday, November 13th, 1974

At last I am ready to start a journal again. I have lived here in York for a year and a half, dazzled by the beauty of this place, but I have not wanted to write about it until today. Perhaps something cracked open in Europe (I went over for a month in mid-October); for the first time I can play records, and poems are shooting up. For two years I have not been able to listen to music because opening that door had become too painful after the hell of the last two years in Nelson. (18)
Throughout this passage Sarton projects a reader who is on intimate terms with the diarist, and she constructs her identity in relation to her diary community as both professional writer and public figure and intimate, open friend.

Sarton alternates between accommodating her readers, supplying them with the information they need to understand her utterances, and leaving them in the dark, an exchange that alternately alienates and unites her readers, and that creates “gaps” in the cohesiveness of her text. Sarton’s opening entry features several such gaps, which require readers to have knowledge outside of the text in order to comprehend a reference. Consequently, these gaps, along with her presupposing expressions, create tension between her actual reader, who can use only the text and information Sarton has provided to make sense of the passage, and her imagined audience, that, in contrast, has pre-existing knowledge of the diarist and the events of her life. For example, the final sentences of the passage call upon a series of weak or non-existing lexical ties to explain why Sarton had stopped listening to music. “That door” refers to “music,” though the relationship between these two elements is unexplained, since music is not traditionally associated with or conceived of as a “door.” No tie exists between “music” and the double presupposing statements of “the hell of the last two years in Nelson,” nor does any tie connect music and the “poems [that] are shooting up.” The oblique explanation draws on community knowledge that Sarton knows her actual readers cannot have, since she has not given it to them; her published record of the Nelson period, Journal of a Solitude, does not delve into a “hell” that silenced the music in her house. Margot Peters’ 1996

---

5 Lexical ties are established through word choice. For example, repeating words, using synonyms, or incorporating collocations, words that “have a more than ordinary tendency to co-occur” (Halliday 310), all create lexical cohesion.
biography of Sarton, published after her death, gives the only published explanation of what Sarton means in this 1974 entry.

However, Sarton soothes the potentially alienated reader by combining such gaps and definite expressions with explanations, easing the tension between real and imagined audiences, and making new readers and community members feel able to participate. Though the gaps and presuppositions will still alert the reader to the fact that she is witnessing a speaker addressing a reader who is not her, Sarton’s strategies of accommodation allow readers to pose as that imagined audience, to go on, as Giltrow notes, “as if they do know” (“Ironies” 219). For example, Sarton constructs a reader who would know that she had been in Europe during the time she was not keeping a journal, and who would therefore make sense of “Perhaps something cracked open in Europe” even though this utterance has no cohesive relationship to the preceding sentences. In this case, though, she provides her readers with a clearer explanation, “(I went over for a month in mid-October),” an explanation that clears up the problem of indeterminacy without foregrounding the need for such detail. Since she constructs her addressee as one who would have this background knowledge, telling him or her the Europe story again would violate Grice’s maxim of quantity, which claims that speakers should provide only the amount of information required for their utterance to be understood by the intended audience. Giving more information than necessary can be a social faux-pas, in which speakers offend their addressees by supplying background or context that they will already have. By explaining only parenthetically, though, Sarton can salute her imagined community who would in fact already know what she meant, while giving potential
members, presently by-standers to this exchange, the information they need to understand and belong.

Since Sarton could have avoided creating the gap in the first place by saying instead, "Last October I went to Europe for a month, and perhaps something cracked open during that trip...," this strategy of pretending the reader knows more than she in fact does, and only supplying the necessary information as an apparent afterthought, gives the passage a confidential tone that highlights the distinction between insiders and outsiders. Imagining a reader who could fill in the blanks and, more importantly, would care to, Sarton makes clear that her projected reader is on intimate terms with her, so intimate that she does not need to explain everything but can assume her reader knows what she means. This assumption of intimacy, this taking of the reader into her confidence, creates an insider position for the reader, who could thus feel the potential to know in fact what she can only infer. Sarton’s fan letters, as I discuss below, corroborate this sense that her audience recognizes Sarton’s diary community of readers-cum-friends, and they want to be part of it, to occupy these insider positions Sarton creates for her audience.

Similarly, the presupposition-triggers in Sarton’s opening sentence, “At last I am ready to start a journal again,” demonstrate that she projects an audience already familiar with her diaries. The change-of-state verb “start” indicates that she has not been writing a journal, but the iterative “again” signifies that she has kept one in the past. “At last” suggests that the gap between journals has been long, and that the start of this journal has been anticipated (by her fans? by herself?). By indicating the existence of a prior journal, these items establish Sarton’s history as a serial diarist. This passage also gestures to the
role of Sarton’s journals in her literary career, since her return to journal writing coincides with her return to her professional writing; “poems are shooting up” after a two-year break caused by the unexplained “hell” of her last years in Nelson. Clearly, Sarton’s journals-for-publication do not function as therapy, a role frequently assigned the genre in the twentieth century, since she does not write publicly during the hell period. Instead, Sarton promotes these journals as literary works, produced alongside poetry as part of a serious literary output, a more public and professional function for the diary than would be associated with a therapeutic use. This distinction establishes and reinforces Sarton’s identity as a professional writer and dedicated artist at the same time that it invites readers to think of her as a friend, a special role created for the literary public personal journal Sarton has developed.

The presupposition and failed cohesion also allow the public personal journal to meet traditional expectations of the diary; if the diary is assumed to be for oneself alone, the diarist typically does not need to explain herself or introduce events and people, because she has the necessary background knowledge to understand. Sarton’s style in this passage, then, is reassuringly familiar to readers who may be uncertain about the “sincerity” of a journal written for publication. Additionally, the passage’s many time deictics, along with the present tense, are implicit markers that distinguish the diary from other narratives. Beginning with the date, including the year in addition to the month and day, locates the text in a very particular temporal location, giving the reader a context for the speaker and her utterance, a context supported by the indexical “today” in the second sentence. These deictics foreground the moment of writing, projecting a reader who
shares the moment of textual production and in doing so enters the diarist’s intimate space.

Making her audience feel involved and included was vital to Sarton’s success as a literary diarist and, consequently, to her success in taking on the textual identity of a professional writer, an identity she needed her public to recognize and accept. By publishing these diaries, Sarton made herself into an icon and created a large popular market, which Peters describes as a “loyal band of admirers who bought everything she wrote, no matter what the quality” (325). In addition to the lexicogrammatical strategies that seemed to incorporate the reader into the text, Sarton encouraged her readers to participate quite literally in their production by including and responding to several fan letters in each journal. This published correspondence, incorporated into the diary narrative, gives readers the impression that their letters were integral to the process of writing the diary, and thereby invites more response. This mutual construction of reader and writer becomes part of the process of identity in Sarton’s journals, in which the imagined reader has the chance to “speak,” creating an audience that almost literally shares her world and her experiences in it. Choosing letters that reflected her values and lavished praise upon her, or that allowed her to respond to criticisms, Sarton reinforces her idea of the imagined reader and at the same time maneuvers herself into the identity the reader has constructed for her.

In a study of over thousands of letters sent to Sarton over fifty years, Carol Virginia Pohli finds three central motifs in readers’ responses to her texts: recognition, shock (“the discovery of shared values” [216]), and affection.⁶ Pohli reads Sarton’s

---

⁶ These letters are now held with Sarton’s papers in the Henry W. and Albert A. Berg Collection of English and American Literature, The New York Public Library.
emotive fan letters as proof that “the typical reader of May Sarton’s work mirrors her own values and expressive methods” (216). As one reader exclaimed, “Reading your journals has been like looking deeply into myself” (qtd. in Pohli 224). Many letters begin, “Dear unmet friend” or “Dearest May” (216), emphasizing the reader’s sense of intimacy, identification, and correspondence with this writer who has consistently foregrounded “women’s daily life” (214) and imparted a literary value to women’s personal experience.

What unites Sarton so closely with her readers in her journals may be this attention to domesticity, to the daily, to the experiences of the individual self (depression, joy, rage) that readers will likely have experienced themselves and that the diary genre is particularly well-suited to represent. Because the diary records events in the moment, accounts of the ordinary and the extraordinary may sit side-by-side in an entry, without one being privileged over the other. Consequently, these portraits of a woman’s day-to-day tasks are nestled in among vignettes of life as a professional writer and its flashes of celebrity, giving readers a comforting sense of familiarity within the exotic. For example, the journals emphasize that Sarton, like her readers, has to cook, clean, weed, pay bills, and go grocery shopping in addition to publishing novels and meeting with literary figures. She does not set herself up as an exalted public person who has no connection to the everyday life of private citizens. In mythologizing her personal, daily life, giving a sense of ritual to the domestic, Sarton creates texts that addressed an audience who saw their own lives mirrored by the author’s. Writer and reader reflect each other, conflating the roles of reader and author, blurring “real life” and textual identity.

This construction of the personal relationship between reader and diarist begins in Journal of a Solitude. In this text, Sarton describes letters, the majority from “middle-
aged women” (46), who write of their joy at finding Sarton’s literary works, because they identify with the suffering she describes, whether in fiction, poetry, or her memoir. They find relief, Sarton imagines, in discovering “that we are all in the same boat” (46). Since “we” inherently evokes some kind of community, it merits closer attention: Who does this “we” include? “We” could refer to humanity in general, in keeping with the Everyman theme so prominent in this journal. But given the context of the remark, the pronoun makes an emphatic connection with Sarton’s women readers. Much of this first journal explores problems particular to women, and especially to women artists, a topic to which Sarton returns in each subsequent volume.\(^7\)

Though she mentions correspondence from men, the letters to which Sarton gives the most time are from married women who struggle—and usually fail—to combine a married life with children and a creative self.\(^8\)

Though Sarton had created many sympathetic and sentimental portraits of marriage in her fiction, as a self-constructed “solitude” and self-described “middle-aged single woman” (40) (her lesbianism is never directly addressed in this volume), she is outside the constrictions of married family life. Her identification with...
this group therefore cannot be total; for these fans, Sarton assumes the identity of a non-conforming exemplar, a sympathetic and uncritical listener who has dared to live without compromising her creative life.

Her solitary, even outsider, status does not, however, deter Sarton from constructing a diary community that views her as both a public figure and a confidante. “If I represent anything in the public consciousness,” Sarton explains in Recovering, “it is as a solitary. It is my solitude and what I have said about it that has made the link, and made so many women and men I do not know, regard me as a friend in whom they can confide” (81, emphasis added). Both public and private, an entity in “the public consciousness” and a real person, Sarton uses her journals to participate in and perpetuate communities her texts have created, allowing her to identify as an artist, a woman, a guru to thousands of readers who will view her sympathetically, even with love. She makes frequent reference in her first volume to “friends who I have never seen who know me only through my work” and whose unsolicited gifts make her feel “cherished” (69), suggesting that readers will be befriended and appreciated. Moreover, she extends to them the promise of the full disclosure and intimacy that is the basis for friendship as well as an “authentic” diary. She notes that her work is valuable, despite its lack of critical notice, because it contains the possibility of “true communion” with her reader (67), a notion that takes community identification as its basis. In Journal of a Solitude, two women fans who show up unannounced at Sarton’s home are not described with the invective that follows such events in later volumes; here, Sarton notes her dismay at herself, for telling these strangers about her depression, for imposing on them by inviting

sent by married women with children, while a smaller percentage represents “nuns, single women, and gay men and women” (29).
them into her confidence even though they had never met before. The promise of intimate communication between diarist and reader, who is portrayed as a close friend, seems fulfilled by Sarton’s description of this encounter and by her representation of her readers throughout the first, tone-setting journal.

These letters from and encounters with readers compelled to reach this “unmet friend” literally enact the figurative dialogue that Sarton initiates in her journals, where the diarist “chats” with her unseen readers, exposing her “private” life in a personal narrative that she makes accessible for her audience. Sarton creates this feeling by complying with generic expectations of the private diary, thus constructing a textual space in which readers are made to feel “at home” and personally connected to the diarist, who writes especially for each individual reader and who mirrors the reader’s own experience. That Sarton’s readers clearly conflate life and art, believing in the textual subject “Sarton-the-diarist” as identical to the living (writing) Sarton, is an indication that she has succeeded in making her public journals seem authentically personal and intimate, or in other words, authentically “private.” While the fact that Sarton received responses to all her writing, not just to the journals, suggests that readers identify with

---

9 Sarton’s outlook on her fans’ sense of intimacy with her was ambiguous at best. As early as After the Stroke (1988), Sarton railed at the demands of her fame: “I wish sometimes I had never written all those books that attract people to me like deer to a salt lick. I am almost licked to death” (243). Later journals, particularly Endgame (1992) and Encore (1993), are full of anger at intrusive fans who send cards or gifts that Sarton feels must be acknowledged, or who telephone or come to the house uninvited and unannounced. Placing these comments in a journal for publication that has encouraged such intimacy may be a way of discouraging similar behavior from her fans, but it also shows the complications of publishing one’s “private” life and space. And, as Peters rightly notes, Sarton complained bitterly about these invasions of her privacy, yet continued to invite them. “A true solitary,” Peters observes, “would not publish photographs of her house so that fans could zero in with binoculars or camp on her doorstep (a not infrequent occurrence), or declare that a room without flowers throws her into deep misery, so that fans rush her flowers, for which she must thank them. A true solitary would not complain publicly about solitude, inspiring hundreds of people to try to relieve it” (303). The fact that “hundreds” of fans rushed to Sarton’s “aid” highlights the problem of scope of address in a journal for publication. Sarton’s journals sold thousands of copies, yet created a sense of intimacy that apparently seduced many readers into feeling these texts were created for or addressed to them alone. Both reader and writer, perhaps, fell into thinking
authors who write in genres other than autobiography, it also raises particular questions for a professional writer who creates autobiographical texts across time. The "professional diarist," unlike other professional writers who publish successively and also receive critical and fan responses, is in the unique position of creating an "I" that readers believe is "real," and whose identity they have literally bought into.

"What delights the reader": Telling the Reader How to Read

Sarton’s construction of her readers as intimate acquaintances and the journals as open to their input helps her to uphold the confessional quality of the diary genre even in the public realm. By bringing the reader into the production of the journals, Sarton seems to lay bare the process of writing, reinforcing the idea that the journals, though for publication, provide honest and transparent transcriptions of the diarist and her life. The potential for the reader’s feedback to be quoted in a future journal provides incentive for fans to keep writing, ensuring that Sarton knows what readers are looking for in her journals. Similarly, Sarton includes friends’ and colleagues’ commentary on the journals that are being written, and acknowledges that repeated appeals by friends and fans compel her to write another journal (1992). Early in Recovering she records, “I told Carol[yn Heilbrun] I was keeping a journal again and she told me to ‘tell it like it is’ about the depression, ‘bring it out,’ whereas I have felt a kind of reluctance to do so” (19). Including this feedback and encouragement gives readers a sense that Sarton’s texts are to some extent “diaries-on-demand," open to readers’ input, and flexible enough to meet both Sarton’s and her audience’s needs. This exposure of the active involvement of

of the diary in its conventional form: intimate, personal, solitary, meant only for the eyes of loved ones if any at all.
a reading public is at odds with what would be expected of the traditional diary genre, both because of popular belief in the form as private (i.e., not collaborative) and as artless and spontaneous, not written to satisfy readers' requests. Consequently, Sarton must provide readers with ways in which to receive and understand what she is doing with this genre, the personal public journal.

While personal diarists frequently comment on their diaries as they write them, expounding on their style, motivations, imagined audience, or purpose, Sarton's journals suggest that a published personal diary requires more such explanation, justification, and self-evaluation, perhaps in anticipation of the actual reader's difficulties or objections. Throughout her diaries, but most consciously in the early journals before her style and generic niche have been established and institutionalized through commercial and popular success, Sarton explains what she thinks her public wants to read about, articulating her concept of the diary genre. This ongoing discussion and explanation of her writing reveals her understanding of the diary as a genre, and her sense of identity as both a professional writer and a diarist.

Such expository passages can be usefully characterized as what Giltrow calls meta-genre, talk or writing about genres by writers and readers. Commentary on genres is frequently found, Giltrow argues, at contested sites along "community boundaries" ("Meta-Genre" 187), where various genre users, including insiders and outsiders, co-exist. Meta-genre is also, I suggest, to be found in struggles with generic boundaries, where genres are being established and delineated. By advising and even prescribing how writing should be produced, what it should look or sound like, such commentary on or discussion typifies a genre. The appearance of such commentary is perhaps unexpected
in a genre so frequently characterized as artless, without rules, fragmentary, and personal rather than professional. In providing explicit descriptions of her methodology, Sarton informs her audience how her journals are meant to be read, stating up-front her “authorial intention” in order to direct interpretation and reception. Such direction helps establish Sarton as an authority on the genre, an authority she deserves not only as a professional writer but also as a professional diarist. As she becomes more prolific in this hybrid genre, of which she is one of the few and first practitioners in English, she senses the potential to become a model, and embeds analysis of her narrative practice into her diary to direct future emulators. The meta-genre within the journals creates and maintains Sarton’s identity as a “serious writer” by pointing readers to her “real” writing in other genres and giving her a self-authorized space in which to respond to her critics.

Giltrow characterizes meta-genre as a site where “language-users give accounts of themselves” and what they do (203). Given traditionally dismissive attitudes towards the diary genre, attitudes that assume, as Raoul notes, “a private activity of no public or commercial value” (“Echo” 17), people who write diaries professionally may feel a particular need to account for and explain what they are doing when they write a diary for publication. Sarton’s guidelines therefore may also be a way to legitimate the act of journal-writing, by indicating that this genre, at least in its published form, does have guidelines for production. In other words, diary writing is an art and does have requirements: not just anyone can successfully produce a diary for publication, a notion that contradicts popular belief in the diary as an unschooled, Everyman activity. Sarton’s ongoing self-reflexive discussion can then be read as arguing that the journals of a professional writer, never “off-duty,” are in fact literary and therefore worthy of critical

10 See also Giltrow’s discussion of meta-genre and emergent genres in “Meta-Genre” 197-98.
reception. Considered in light of Sarton's perpetual complaint that she had been ignored by the academy, this meta-genre could very well be a demand for legitimacy in the eyes of readers and, more importantly, critics. Using the personal diary to accomplish such professional aims, Sarton demonstrates the subversive potential of a marginalized genre. In this textual space adored by popular readers and ignored by critics, her claims to authority and artistic identity may not meet resistance, and consequently may gradually become accepted in a wider public sphere.

Sarton's meta-genre begins in earnest in *The House by the Sea*. While Sarton does reflect on her writing in *Journal of a Solitude*, she does not provide the more abstract theorizing on diary-writing featured in the subsequent journals. In *House*, Sarton moves beyond her own experiences of journal writing to typify the genre, making recommendations about the genre in general rather than commenting on her own style. This commentary creates multiple and simultaneous levels of audience design, since Sarton addresses unseen critics as well as her popular readers. In her analysis, she defends the public personal journal as a distinct genre with its own generic codes, though it closely resembles the private personal journal and even carries over, she argues, its expectation of full, unmediated disclosure.

With the publication of this second journal, Sarton has started a new enterprise, a diary series, that will need some introduction and explanation. Though precedent for a published serial diary exists, most notably in Anais Nin's seven volume production (1966-85), Sarton wishes to distinguish her own texts, especially since she finds Nin false and narcissistic (Peters 386). Given that Sarton too writes in a genre characterized by contemporary readers and critics as a vehicle for confession and self-analysis, as navel-
gazing rendered in prose and of interest primarily to the diarist, she is equally open to the charge. As Raoul has observed, the twentieth-century connection between diaries and narcissism (and, by extension, with women, who are stereotypically associated with both) has, in fact, little to do with psychoanalytic understandings of the term. The link arises because “[t]he adjective ‘narcissistic’ has been widely used to denote self-contemplation or self-absorption as personality traits and autoreferentiality in literary texts” (Raoul “Echo” 17-18). Having made her self-absorbed and self-contemplative daily record available to the public, and indeed assumed that such a record has a value equal to that of her literary works in other genres, Sarton acts to pre-empt criticism by providing self-exegesis as well.

Early on in House, Sarton writes that she has agreed to be an advisor to two Ph.D. students from a local college; one of the women, Norma, is working on personal journals. Reading drafts of Norma’s thesis causes Sarton to muse about “what keeping a journal is like and what it demands of the writer” (78). Being asked to supervise a doctoral student in itself bestows authority on Sarton as a writer, and specifically as a writer of personal journals, even though by that point she has only published one. By introducing her meta-genre with the Ph.D. student anecdote, Sarton reinforces her own authority to produce such commentary, which also serves to establish her own genre, the public personal journal, though her comments seem to reify more traditional expectations of the diary. She offers the following advice and reflection:

If the journal is to have any value for the writer or any potential reader, the writer must be able to be objective about what he experiences on the pulse.

For the whole point of a journal is this seizing events on the wing. Yet the
substance will not come from narration but the examination of experience....Secondly—and this is curious—what delights the reader in a journal is often minute particulars. (78-79, emphasis in original)

Sarton articulates her concept of the diary as a combination of measured reflection and spontaneous creativity, what she earlier called “vivid momentary insights” (Journal 28). Her description reinscribes the myth of diary writing as a transparent, unmediated, instantaneous activity, with the diarist hastening to record “on the pulse” and “on the wing.” Since she emphasizes the need to “seize” events in the diary in the instant of their occurrence, both her characterizations additionally reinforce the idea of the diary as artless or “loose,” a notion that would be prevalent in public opinion but that would be counter to her pursuit of literary status.

Sarton’s acknowledgment of this contemporary diary expectation signals her willingness to uphold that expectation as part of her mission to construct diaries that will be valuable to the reader. Noting that “the reader” wants to see “minute particulars” in a journal, she justifies her own inclusion of tedious detail and domestic minutiae: she is giving this imagined reader what she wants, and what will be most valuable to her. By describing as what “the reader” wants exactly what her own journals provide, Sarton strategically makes her journals the modern standard for the public personal journal, using the authorizing mode of meta-genre to sanction her generic practices. She is therefore more than qualified to comment on the genre as an authority.

Significantly, in this passage Sarton configures the generic diarist as male, invoking a masculine model for writerly authority that potentially undermines her own
projected authority as model diarist. Her choice of pronoun within this meta-genre suggests the ambiguous status of the diary as a professional or literary product for a woman writer, particularly when *House* was published in 1977. Though the diary was later celebrated by autobiography critics as an inherently “female” form of autobiography (Hogan “Engendered,” Lensink “Expanding”), when Sarton began her series the diary was still generally considered a marginal genre, devalued because of its association with the domestic and the feminine (Raoul “Echo” 17). Despite Sarton’s invocation of a masculine writerly authority embodied in “he,” this passage indicates that meta-genre can bestow or assume an authority that a woman artist—here, a minor writer, lyric poet, and lesbian “solitary”—would not otherwise have. Meta-genre therefore has a crucial role in these journals in legitimating the genre and, by extension, the writer.

As in this passage, Sarton’s meta-genre throughout the journal series argues for the value of the public personal journal, for the usefulness to other individuals besides the diarist of seeing life “on the pulse.” Emphasizing that the personal journal has value is a key statement for a professional diarist, whose writing activities would be considered less than literary by the academy whose attention and good opinion Sarton relentlessly sought. In *Journal of a Solitude*, Sarton explains that “One must believe that private dilemmas are, if deeply examined, universal, and so, if expressed, have a human value beyond the private” (60). The universal application of personal problems means that her journals perform a sort of public service, in which her own life provides an example for her readers. Sarton continues to characterize her writing activity in this light, highlighting

---

11 Sarton could certainly also be using “he” here as a sex-indefinite pronoun, in keeping with the standard usage of the time. However, this choice of pronoun is jarring both in this text, which is so preoccupied with representing women’s experience, and in this passage, which articulates what Sarton is doing in her own journal.
the journals' service to the reader rather than focusing on their personal value to the
writer. She constructs herself as part of a tradition of writers who have used their craft to
better humanity. "If there is an art to the keeping of a journal intended for publication yet
at the same time a very personal record," she explains, "it may be in what E. Bowen said:
'One must regard oneself impersonally as an instrument'" (House 28). By arguing that
the public personal journal provides a public service, these statements of purpose answer
any charges of solipsism or narcissism that the diary genre engenders.

Using her own experience as the basis for her authority—she is after all a
commercially successful, published diarist—Sarton lays the foundation for new
understandings of the journal genre that would address her own style and interpretation of
the genre. However, Sarton has to continue this explanation, justification, and theorizing
through her journal series, indicating her perception of continued resistance to or
dismissal of her diaries (though certainly not by the general reading public, who snapped
up each new volume). In the final entry of Encore, which would be her penultimate
journal though she thought it would be her last (329), Sarton returns to meta-genre. She
reflects on the journal genre as she has used it, and responds to criticisms she has
encountered about the journals, demonstrating the variety of imagined readers she
addresses in the diary. Noting the enduring opinion that a journal written for publication
is somehow "suspect," Sarton rejects the belief "that a journal must be private and written
for the eyes of the writer alone," responding that poems, for example, are also "highly
personal" but are published. Further, she argues that "The journal written for publication
is a genre in its own right" (330), and supports this claim by naming several other
professional writers and diarists, including André Gide and Frances Partridge, who kept public personal journals.

These authors’ texts establish precedents for her own, and their mention also lends the authority that these established authors, Gide in particular, would bestow on a genre. Acknowledging precedent is, as Giltrow notes, another role of meta-genre, acting as both a rationale for guidelines and an incentive for generic conformity through examples of successful methods (“Meta-Genre” 187). Here the invocation of precedent also reinforces Sarton’s self-construction as “famous writer,” since she places her journals in the company of Gide’s and in an ongoing literary tradition. The fact that this meta-genre comes at the end of what was possibly her final journal is significant, suggesting Sarton’s last stand on the issue, which required her explanation and defense even after seven journals had been published. Though most diarists do engage in some level of meta-commentary (Virginia Woolf, another of Sarton’s models, was particularly self-reflexive and evaluative), most diarists do not write serially for publication; therefore, they do not have the pressure to explain and justify themselves and their texts to a potentially critical reading public. Because Sarton’s journal is written for publication, her readers and critics may be looking more closely for missteps, for “inauthenticity,” for too much awareness of the reader, all of which might suggest that Sarton has not been telling her readers the “truth.” Even though Sarton, as evidenced by her commercial success and devoted audience, has convinced her fans to accept her generic novelty, she still needs to persuade a critical readership to take her seriously and acknowledge the value of her writing and/in this genre.
Sarton’s meta-genre plays a key role in her construction of identity in the journals, allowing her to clarify and solidify her identity as an authoritative writer in other genres, particularly poetry and fiction. She incorporates into her journals meta-generic commentary on these other modes of writing, in which, despite her lengthy and prolific career, she does not necessarily have an established authority or reputation. Her comments on modes of writing in the journals echo and extend the meta-genre she articulates in interviews and essays and explores at length in Writings on Writing, published in 1980. But in the journals, Sarton has a safe space in which to take on, unchallenged, the identity of a successful, knowledgeable professional whose comments have merit and applicability; in this guise, she carries over her identity as “guru” or teacher. The journal’s role in this capacity serves several functions. It directs readers of the journals, already ardent fans of Sarton’s writing (and of Sarton herself), to the diarist’s other work. Sarton peppers her journals with references to, discussion of, and quotations from her poems and novels. By the later journals, excerpted poems often stand in for entries. By including these references, Sarton alerts readers to her body of work, with the potential effect of making her writings in other genres as popular as her journals. Having established herself to her journal audience as a writer, Sarton can comment on aspects of writing to a readership that already considers her an expert author, unlike the academy that she feels has dismissed her. This constant self-referencing also helps to establish and maintain Sarton’s identity as “professional writer,” not just “professional diarist,” giving credence to her value as a public figure with a private life worth reading about. Writing to her created community of friendly readers in a genre that
she has made her own, Sarton uses her literary journals to convince the public of her value as a writer.

As a professional writer publishing her journals as she wrote them, Sarton used her diaries for public as well as personal functions. Playing out her intimate dramas for audiences of thousands, Sarton deliberately built upon and blurred her readers' expectations of the diary genre and of the division between "public" and "private" life, experience, and text. Writing for audiences including critics and other writers as well as private citizens, Sarton addressed these groups strategically in her journal series. At the same time that she answered her critics, she fostered a sense of public intimacy between reader and writer that engendered a level of public support and renown that she had not been able to achieve through her writings in other, "professional" genres.

Because she wrote her journals for publication as a series, Sarton differs from literary diarists P.K. Page and Emily Carr, who kept multiple diaries but published only one volume (Carr's journals were excerpted to make a single text, while Page's narrates a single time period of her life). Though these literary diarists did not therefore create an industry out of their journals as Sarton did, they still used these texts to perform both professional functions, as contributions to their body of literary work, and personal ones, as artist's notebooks, substitute communities, and "rehearsal spaces" for their public identities. Isolated in Brazil, P.K. Page in particular needed the diary for personal reasons, and only much later recognized its value as literature.
P. K. Page: Still-Life in Process

In 1987, Canadian poet P.K. Page published *Brazilian Journal*, a record of her time in Brazil in the late 1950s as an ambassador’s wife. Written during a time of “poetic silence” for the diarist (*Brazilian Journal* 195), the journal also charts Page’s movement from literary to visual artist. Unlike Sarton’s twenty-year journal series, or Carr’s lifelong though sporadic diary writing, Page’s public personal journal stands alone, a finite record of a momentous occasion, what Philippe Lejeune calls a “partial diar[y], devoted to a single phase and organized around a particular area of experience” (“How” 101). This focus on a particular episode rather than a life in progress suggests different uses for the writer’s diary, for the personal journal intended for public consumption. While Sarton’s journals were written explicitly for immediate publication, Page’s *Brazilian Journal* was originally a private, that is, not-for-publication, diary that she put into publishable form thirty years later, creating a further complication in the “public personal diary” genre. Her revised edition, a combination of her original diary entries and letters home, marks this journal’s transformation from non-professional, “private” text to an award-winning literary work by a well-known public figure. Page’s decision to reconstruct a diary for her commemorative text, rather than write a retrospective account, is a significant comment on the roles that this literary form can play.

Page, who won the Governor General’s award in 1954 for her poetry collection *The Metal and the Flower*, has published a novel, a short-story collection, and books for

---

12 According to Sandra Djwa, Page’s biographer, *Brazilian Journal* combines Page’s original diary with letters she had written to her mother, aunt, and the adult children of her husband Arthur Irwin. When Page compiled the manuscript for the published journal in the 1970s and 1980s, she referred to her original journal and the letters sent home as well as any information which she had from diplomatic sources, (for example, official itineraries). Unfortunately, the original diary has been lost. (personal e-mail from Djwa).

13 *Brazilian Journal* won the 1987 B.C. Book Prizes Hubert Evans Award for non-fiction and was a finalist for the Governor General’s Award for Non-fiction in 1988.
children in addition to her volumes of poetry. As Brazilian Journal demonstrates, she is as well a respected visual artist whose paintings and drawings have been exhibited across Canada; the National Gallery in Ottawa owns several of her pieces. Her popular reputation, however, rests on her literary productions, and we read her diary of artistic transformation largely because we know her already as the poet P.K. Page, rather than as the artist P.K. Irwin. Tellingly, the back cover of the published edition of the journal includes one “blurb” for the journal, by writer Michael Ondaatje, but also adds two comments of “Praise for the poetry of P.K. Page,” and the journal itself is prefaced by one of Page’s poems. Brazilian Journal therefore depends on Page’s reputation as a poet while also providing her with an arena in which to exhibit a separate public persona as a visual artist and display an artistic identity with which her public is less familiar. The published diary straddles Page’s public and private identities and spheres, inviting readers to experience, intimately, Page’s lesser-known identity as a visual artist. The literary diary lets Page try on her artistic identity in writing, combining and continuing her professional writing career at the same time that it advances her artistic one.

Like Sarton, Carr, and the majority of literary diarists, Page did not originally consider her diary as literary or connected to her professional work. Since the diary was not poetry, the genre in which she had established her professional identity as a writer, she believed it “didn’t count” (“Artist’s Statement” n.p.). In the documentary Still Waters: The Poetry of P.K. Page, Page reflected that despite “the voluminous journal that [she] kept” she felt that she had stopped writing altogether in Brazil. Her comment draws a clear distinction between “real” writing (poetry), writing that “counts” and therefore has

---

14 When Page exhibits her artwork, she does so as P.K. Irwin, or, occasionally, P.K. (Page) Irwin, combining yet separating her two artistic identities.
worth (aesthetically and materially), and writing that has no value, makes no professional or commercial contribution to a writing career, and hence does not matter. However, after its publication this text became part of Page's distinguished literary oeuvre, connecting her dual careers as a successful writer and visual artist, both of which were well-established by 1987, the year the diary was published. Her decision to publish this diary three decades after its original production, and to publish it as a work of literature alongside her other professional writings, suggests a new valuation of this genre’s literary and personal uses.

As a diary written originally for particular functions and audiences (both real and imagined), and, later through publication serving additional purposes and reaching new readers, Page’s *Brazilian Journal* illustrates how the diary genre can serve both the public and the personal, and, for literary diarists, the professional as well. The conditions of this diary’s dual productions highlight how the personal diarist who goes public needs to make her text fit the expectations held by her actual audience, that is, the reading (and buying) public. Page adopts a different stance in her journal from Sarton’s, making no claims for self-exposure or confession, and therefore does not have to make her diary fit that particular mold of personal diary. However, since she elects to publish this account as a diary, she needs to be aware of the genre’s conventions and adapt her narrative accordingly.

The genre’s multiplicity of functions enables *Brazilian Journal* to incorporate elements of the travel diary, memoir, and Künstlerroman into what is, *au fond*, a personal record of an extraordinary time in the diarist’s life, an experience so exotic, so foreign, so “surrealist” (9), that it demands marking down for the future. Since her particular text
combines these functions and genres, though, Page must negotiate between these various forms and the expectations they carry when she moves her diary from the personal to the public and professional realm. These various textual purposes allow Page to adopt a range of identities, some as brief as a few sentences, others developing over several entries. In this discussion, I will examine how Page uses traditional diary style to shape her narrative and meet audience expectations, at the same time that she uses the form to (re-)construct her identities in an unfamiliar space and time. I will focus on Page’s development of her identity as artist, which forms the “particular area of experience” on which the journal is based, and illustrates the congruence of personal and professional concerns that the journal supports.

**Art of the Diary: Identity Process, Literary Product**

Page’s version of the literary diary, like Sarton’s, confounds the diary’s traditional generic code of spontaneity and privacy. By both openly revising and publishing her diary, Page makes the “authenticity” of her text doubly suspect, particularly since she does not distinguish in the published version between what material is original and what has been added or “fleshed out” (*Brazilian Journal* n.p.), giving readers the impression of a seamless text written during the actual experience of 1957 to 1959. Page convincingly adopts the stylistic and generic conventions that audiences expect in a “real”—private, sincere, transparent—diary, thereby countering any resistance to a “false” diary, a text that has been consciously shaped for an audience. Her entries are dated, feature the present tense for the moment of writing, and adopt a “casual” style, most notably by dropping the subjects from sentences, an efficiency that creates an intimate or
confessional tone by imagining a reader who can fill in the missing agent. Heavy use of
deictics and off-hand, unexplained references—the mentions of individuals or events that
appear "off-stage"—create the loose ends so characteristic of the stereotypical diary. For
example, we never find out what happened to Page's first art instructor; he simply
disappears. Similarly, Page notes with regret that she has not reported the loss of her
monkey Benjamina, a story that she ends up never telling, creating the lack of full
narrative closure that readers have come to expect from a diary.

Further, Page manages a nod to the voyeuristic desires that reading a "truly
private" diary excites, even in the published version. She includes (or retains)
circumspect references to an unnamed ailment from which she suffers and which requires
surgery, thereby indicating a truly private space and creating a textual silence that will
pique but not satisfy her audience's curiosity. (Unlike Sarton's or Carr's readers, Page's
fans do not yet have a biography to turn to for answers, though Djwa is in the process of
writing one.) Writing for herself alone, as in the stereotypical private diary, Page would
not need to name or explain these references. Thus this silence protects Page's privacy
(from her readers) at the same time that it convinces these readers that the text has not
been written with them in mind. These reassuringly familiar features enable readers to
suspend disbelief or suspicion, and immerse themselves in the diary, identifying with its
narrator, seeing her as "real." Putting her experience into diary entries and paintings,
Page puts readers into her shoes, so to speak, making them experience Brazil and its
transformative powers as Page had, thereby creating the illusion of "real time." This
process seems to bring the reader closer to the actual, lived experience, despite the
audience's awareness that this journal is a reconstruction.
Page’s diary, both in its original and reconstituted forms, is one of few written records of her Brazilian experience, since her arrival in Brazil corresponded with a period of writer’s block. Page alludes to this problem but does not name or explore it in the diary. Instead, her journal charts her movement into drawing and painting, which substituted for poetry (Still Waters). Part of the journal’s value, then, is as a “period piece,” a textual memento of a time, place, and person that no longer exist. As Page notes in her preface, in the thirty years since the journal was written the world that she described has vanished: “language has changed; Brazil has changed; I have changed” (n.p.). Page supplements her written text with several of her paintings from that time, adding a visual narrative that shows the diarist/painter’s attempts to capture this elusive experience and place. Like the photographs of May Sarton’s home and pets that have been included in her journals, Page’s facsimile paintings help situate readers in a place they themselves have not experienced (even readers who have been to Brazil will not, of course, have seen the country through Page’s eyes). The two narratives offer complementary versions of Brazil, reinforcing the notion that for her no single record can completely capture or convey her experiences.

The diary genre allows Page to give us glimpses of Brazil rather than trying to be exhaustive in her coverage, emphasizing the personal nature of her experience. Unlike a traditional retrospective narrative, Page’s diary can focus on epiphanic moments, recording what mattered at that instant without having to tie each entry into a larger story. (The suicide of Herbert Norman, for example, forms the subject of one entry but is never mentioned again, and in a diary such narrative “untidiness” is not only unremarkable but generically sanctioned.) These snapshots of experience are closer, perhaps, to poetry, her
professional medium; they are also closer to the framed images that she comes to create as a visual artist. Throughout her diary Page constructs Brazil as a dream-like place, a fantasy totally removed from the “reality” of her Canadian self. Since Brazil seems to defy explanation, the diary snapshots Page provides, postcards to her selves, may be the only way to write of this experience. Flexible enough to include travel diary, dream sequence, dialogue, and field notes alongside personal reflections, the diary acts as an ideal medium for recording a country and an experience that change in the instant and that resist literal transcription.

Because the diary features individual entries that stand as their own narrative in addition to contributing to the text’s larger story, the genre is more provisional than a traditional retrospective autobiography, allowing for a panoply of identities to co-exist without their having to be submerged into a single narrative or authoritative voice. The search for self and self-knowledge that Page undertakes in her journal makes the diary an ideal genre for her narrative, given the diary’s traditional use as a vehicle for discovering one’s “true self” or any hidden aspects of personality. Page’s many identities in this one text demonstrate that, on the contrary, the diary allows for the exploration and construction of multiple and simultaneous subjectivities, and thus the literary diary provides a most suitable artistic vehicle for this poet-turned-painter.

Page’s loss of poetry, coupled with her arrival in surreal Brazil, caused a rupture in identity that the early pages of the diary capture. The opening entries indicate the confusion in the diarist’s written identity, and confound readers’ expectations of the

---

15 Page characterizes her memory in a similar fashion, noting in an interview that it is “not like a tape” because it “doesn’t roll”; instead, her memories are “these very hypogogic, sort of little isolated bits very strongly coloured” (Still Waters). The diary genre, with its fragmentary nature, therefore seems particularly suited to Page’s memory-mosaic.
contemporary journal as an "I"-centered genre. Page's diary does not use "I" until the bottom of page six of the published version; even then this reference is oblique, coming as part of a description of "our" arrival. Page is remarkably absent as an individual as she describes her arrival in Brazil, containing her diary persona as part of the unit "we" of the Irwins, an ambassadorial couple. This absence of "I" and of the sense of self the pronoun projects speaks to the identity crisis Page undergoes in coming to Brazil. Taken out of familiar surroundings, community, and language, and, more devastatingly, unable to write poetry, Page experiences a destabilization of identity, part of a general identity trauma Denise Adele Heaps calls "language shock" (360). She is coming to Brazil not as P.K. Page, internationally-acclaimed poet, but as Mrs. Irwin, wife of the ambassador, a public role that dominates these early pages, crowding out the individual, private voice.

Page does resurface, but initially only in her designated role as head of the domestic household. A. goes off on business, leaving Page literally and linguistically isolated in the palacete. Her diary is the one addressee who Page knows will understand her—none of the servants speaks English, and Page's Portuguese is rudimentary—and in whom she can confide, but the "I" that emerges in these entries, for example in the hilarious "Episode of the Goat" trilogy, remains stuck between subjectivities. Page chafes against the confines of "Mrs. Irwin," grumbling, "What a terrible fate to have no interest or conversation other than servants" (17), yet with the writing "all dead" (34) she cannot resume her writerly identity by working in any of the literary genres that she considers "professional," particularly poetry. Writing in the diary is a reflex, providing an outlet for the trained impulses of her writerly identity, but this kind of writing is a poor substitute for her professional work. Diary entries, such as the very literary "Goat" series,
may satisfy her literary itch, and ensure that the material of life that can be the subject of future poetry is not lost. But since such writing does not "count," it cannot counteract her complete immersion into "Mrs. Irwin." Even the act of writing, then, once key to her sense of self as "poet P.K. Page," is destabilizing, sparking the loss of identity inherent in her "language shock."

As Page carves out her individual place in Brazil, however, she begins to write herself into her own story, emerging as an "I" who plays roles both public (Mrs. Irwin) and private (P.K. Irwin, the painter). Page's self-narrative really begins with the discovery of her interest in and talent for drawing and eventually painting, interests that she shares with A. but that become her own realm, as poetry had been, quite apart from the duties and role of the ambassador's wife. From its first entry, the journal creates a way of seeing Brazil and Page's time there through the lens of visual art. This attention to the language and imagery of art prepares the reader for the diarist's artistic metamorphosis; the accumulation of these references textually enacts the process of (self) discovery Page is undergoing. Her careful transition into artist benefits from the ad-hoc nature of the narratives in diary entries, which can move through a vast range of topics without transition or apparent logic. The diarist simply records what passes through her mind in the moment of writing, and thus the diary enables the new identity to emerge without introduction or rationalization, simply as an element (and product) of the narrative in process. In keeping with typical diary style, Page can nestle references to art in amongst descriptions of activities or weather, tagged on to entries detailing trips, meals, flora and fauna, or conversations, thereby making the presence of art an everyday experience, in the sense of being both commonplace and omnipresent. The daily entries
that add up to a larger narrative let Page illustrate the cumulative nature of her “translation into paint” (195).

By slipping in these references, often giving them no more weight than any other item in an entry, Page gradually turns what might be read primarily as a travel diary into an artist’s notebook, a transition that supports the identity performances she rehearses later in the journal. She combines ekphrasis and facsimiles of her drawings with her critiques of art exhibits and descriptions of meetings with other artists, creating a sense of her self as an increasingly active member of an artistic community. Once she begins her forays into drawing and painting, her whole way of seeing seems to change to reflect her infatuation with visual art. At a party, she sees two girls sitting “composed like a drawing” and regrets not having her pen with her (62-63). Her post-operative recuperation strikes her as so dream-like and static that she thinks of the time as “a painting, perhaps” (108). In 1958, Page experiences an artistic epiphany. She notes, “Suddenly saw one of the very beautiful Brazilian girls with quite new eyes. Saw her as a work of art. From that moment on my whole point of view has changed—become Brazilian” (163). The transition into visual artist goes hand-in-hand with the transition into Brazilian.16 Recording these experiences in the unfolding narrative of the diary, Page builds her self-construction as a visual artist, moving from a passive recipient or critic of others’ art (she attends and reviews art shows throughout the diary) to an actively-creating artist in her own right. The private space of the original diary allows her

---

16 But see Heaps (355-59) for her interrogation of Page’s simultaneous identification with and aesthetic distancing from Brazil and Brazilians. Page’s “tendency to aestheticize experience” (358) and her lack of “engaged political commentary” (357), Heaps argues, suggest that the diarist was “somnambulant,” akin to the “terrible tourists” she herself had condemned in her poetry. However, in “Foreign Exchange: Taking Brazil at Face Value,” Giltrow reads Page’s disengagement as the stance typical of the travel diarist. As a genre, the travel diary releases its narrator from “the deepest psychological occupations” (72), recording only “the surfaces of experience” (75) without personal inquiry into or engagement with what she sees.
a sanctioned realm in which to try out her artistic identity, just as she tries out various artistic tools and techniques.

Despite her sudden identification as Brazilian and her sense of seeing with "new eyes" (163), in her diary Page constructs her vision of Brazil through the work of Western artists. These references evoke her desired (artistic) community by establishing "communal common ground," the "facts, beliefs and assumptions" that are "universally held" in a particular community (Clark and Schaefer 257). Thus, motorcycle troops in formation "might have been a painting by Rousseau the douanier" (13); the country's white buildings remind her of "the ruins in a John Piper painting" (15). Sloths have "Henry Moore faces" (50), and the city Florianopolis is "like a series of Dufys" (104). On a call to the apartment of the Swiss minister, Page "entered a Matisse painting" (35). Chronicling a near-farcical official trip to Brazilia, Page singles out one event as "like a Chagall painting" (153). The weight of these names, and the artistic context they provide, anchor Page's experience of Brazil firmly to the world and practices of Western visual art, as well as to Western travel literature. Markers of a culture from which she has come but that she does not always find paralleled in this exotic country, these references give both Page and her reader ways to see and interpret her experiences, so that gradually both Brazil and visual art become "foreign...yet familiar" (168). These comparisons with her "home" culture position Page, and consequently her readers, outside of the Brazilian culture, despite her "Brazilian" eyes; the audiences she addresses share these cultural touchstones and perspectives. At the same time, however, these artistic allusions demonstrate Page's full membership in the artists' community she
imagines, since she displays what counts as community knowledge and what kinds of art are valued by that community.

Recognizing her transformation into “Brazilian” and the concurrent shift from writing to painting that she is undergoing, Page responds to this situation by turning to her diary, a mode that will allow her to capture, shape, and interpret this transition for herself and, later, for her reading public. Using her diary as a canvas, Page paints her self-portrait, eventually substituting the paintbrush for the pencil as she turns from poetry to visual art. The portrait that the diary genre produces is no static representation but a series of images that creates layers of subjectivities, each remaining visible within the frame of the final, published version of the journal. Zeroing in on an entry’s particular self-construction allows us to read Page in process, to watch her move between and into subjectivities that continue to evolve: ambassador’s wife, famous Canadian poet, tourist, fledgling painter. As Page takes on the identity of a visual artist, she at first finds it an uneasy fit, similar to her sense when paying an early official visit that “the whole thing is make-believe and that I am dressed up in my mother’s clothes” (29). Over time, however, Page wears this mantle easily, a change apparent both in her increasing artistic activity and, more subtly, in the lexicogrammatical structures of her diary entries. Two passages illustrate the development of Page’s artistic identity, one that eventually conveys the authority and expertise that Page’s writerly identity had before she became unable to write poetry. In the first passage, from June 1957, Page records the discovery of her artistic skill. In the second, written in August of the same year, she describes her “first day of paint” (74). This latter passage marks a definite point of transition for Page, who has by that point, one senses, become an artist. The comparison of these two passages,
and the identities inscribed within them, demonstrates the diary’s potential for subversion, as Page rewrites herself as “artist” against the narrative identity of “ambassador’s wife” that has been dominant in the diary. Writing the original diary in a time and place in which her acceptable public role would be as supportive wife, Page uses her journal to resist this positioning with growing confidence.

In the passage in which she begins her second artistic career, Page carefully constructs herself as a reluctant or accidental artist, and her talent as something entirely unselfconscious, not under her control. These characterizations continue throughout the journal but are most prevalent in the early days of her artistic forays. Moreover, she inscribes her artistic self-discovery as sponsored and initiated by her husband, A.

Have been drawing with a felt-nibbed pen. A totally new concept in pens; I bought one in Ottawa to mark our boxes and trunks, and duly unpacked it here and put it on the desk in the library. It was on the desk when I gave Salvador his notice. My Portuguese still leans heavily on the dictionary. I was nervous. He was grand. It took me a long time. I doodled as I talked and I fell in love with the nib, which is very black and totally indelible.

“What’s all this?” A. asked later, picking up the doodles from the desk. “That’s me firing Salvador.” “You could draw,” said A. “Surely, if I’d been going to draw, I’d have drawn by now.” “No,” said A. firmly. “You could draw.” And the next day he returned with a roll of drawing paper so beautiful in itself that there was no way I could put a mark upon it. But since then I’ve been trying to draw, to recreate the wonderful
shapes of the leaves and the intricate patterns of mosaic tiles. I think I might be able to draw if only I could...what? If only I could. (59)

In the subsequent scene, Page strikes a much more proactive note:

Standing on the black and white marble squares outside, we overlooked a clutter of roofs moving in a dozen different directions—high gables, low gables, wide gables, narrow gables—all red tile. Spent two hours drawing like someone demented. Helena draws with great sensitivity. She drew the façade of Sao Antonio's with its curlicues delicately, elegantly—rather the way she writes. [...] 

 Ended the morning at a shop that sells paints. I bought some gouaches. On reaching home I put some dirty red paint on all those tiles and felt very content.

  Bedtime. My first day of paint. As well as the aforementioned dirty red on the tiles, I have added putty colour to the facades and laid a thin and mimsy sky. There is now a pale ochre wash on the jack-fruit and the house is pink. I like these gouaches. The colours are vivid, they mix easily and are what you will—transparent or opaque. But I am overwhelmed. I hardly have enough time to draw. How will I have time enough to paint? (74)

 Both passages create tight cohesion through lexical ties that cluster around art—drawing in the first passage, painting and colours in the second. These clusters of art-related vocabulary, like the journal’s many artistic similes, begin to accumulate a textual history, activated each time they are used, giving the notion of Page as an artist more and
more weight. In the earlier passage, “draw” is paired with the playful verb “doodle,” and these associated verbs appear nine times in nineteen sentences. By the time of the second passage, the verb “draw” is made equivalent to “paint,” suggesting Page’s development out of amateurish artistic methods; these two verbs occur seven times in sixteen sentences. This frequent repetition of art-related verbs conveys the sense of urgency and preoccupation that drives Page on. She is in these passages literally overwhelmed by art, with little room for exophoric\textsuperscript{17} references to “I,” suggesting her total absorption in or identification with art as her identity. Since in this time period she is only an amateur, the art she produces is like her diary, non-professional, private, but absolutely integral to her sense of self. Just as Page acknowledges that “one part of me doesn’t exist when I don’t keep notes” (236), these passages imply that her need for self-inscription may be met through art as well as writing, substituting for the now-“dead” poetry. By choosing to capture this artistic epiphany in the pages of her journal, a choice that demonstrates that she considered it important enough to set down for posterity, Page makes a commitment—albeit tentatively—to explore her potential. Including this oblique statement of intent in the diary, rather than in an immediately public genre such as a letter, Page can test out this new talent and identity without risking personal or professional face.

In these two passages, as in the rest of the journal, the seeming inescapability of all things art—at the level of language and reference—corrals readers into identifying with Page as an artist. Further, Page accumulates presupposing expressions around her

\textsuperscript{17} Unlike anaphoric references, which force readers or listeners to look for the referents in the preceding or following discourse, exophoric references point outside the text for their meaning and reference. The meaning of pronouns such as “I,” for example, will not be introduced in the text itself, but relies on context for its definition.
artistic subjects, drawing readers into her artistic productions. These expressions allow, and perhaps even force, readers to position themselves with Page behind her easel, looking at “the intricate patterns of mosaic tiles,” “the façade of Sao Antonio’s,” and “the house” as they take shape from her pen and paintbrush. Page’s reference to “the jackfruit” in passage two forces readers to go back to the previous entry for its first mention, a span of fifty-four sentences that cover a range of topics unrelated to art, including discussion of the weather, a party, and her friend Helena’s idiosyncratic religious practices. This weak tie amidst these presupposing expressions may not even alert readers that they should look back over the text to identify the reference. But its self-assertiveness, its suggestion that readers will know to what she refers, does make readers think of Page’s art as an ongoing production, even career, just as Sarton’s “at last I am ready to start a journal again” alerts readers to the existence of her other diaries. Page’s use of definite expressions that draw on situational rather than textual explanation help make readers feel as if they participate in the moment of Page’s drawings. As an artist’s notebook, the diary gives us “to-the-minute” drawings that heighten our sense of personal involvement in the narrative and identification with the diarist.

The differences in Page’s self-constructions between the two entries highlight the provisional nature of textual identity/identities. By exposing these self-constructions as a process, the diary genre emphasizes that Page’s identification as an artist is cumulative, on-going, tentative, the kind of subjectivity “dress-up” that Susan Miller describes. In the first passage, Page inscribes herself as totally amateur, with no sense that she harbors any serious artistic aspirations. She strikes a self-deprecating tone by repeating “doodles,” marks on a page that are unconscious or mindless, and certainly not “artistic.” She
counters any potential charge of conceit or questions about the appropriateness of her move into visual art by embedding her discovery of drawing within a story of a domestic matter, the realm of which she has, to this point in the journal, been quite appropriately in charge. Her recreated dialogue insists that what she has done is not drawing, but something else: “me firing Salvador.” Page also switches focus from herself as agent, giving agency and authority first to the pen and then to A. The pen itself, with its felt nib, rather than her talent for drawing, is the “totally new concept.” Page’s discovery of the pen emerges, again, from domestic duty, since she bought it for packing their belongings and has rediscovered it while unpacking them. She configures both the instrument and the initiative for her drawing as arising, then, from the carrying-out of her duties as the ambassador’s wife. The art arises out of her Mrs. Irwin role, erupting and disrupting that identity, giving Page a new persona to adopt to stand in for her (professional) writerly artistic self, one that her diary supports and enables.

By recording her conversation with A. as dialogue, rather than paraphrasing, Page also avoids assuming any voice of authority or taking any responsibility for becoming an artist. Instead, she concedes that authority to A., literally giving him voice. She credits him with the discovery of her innate talent and with providing her with the means to explore this hidden skill, bringing her paper “so beautiful” she at first does not want to ruin it. Similarly, Page avoids artistic hubris by using “could” five times, with her own three uses of the modal demonstrating how she starts to share A.’s belief in her talent. In contrast to A.’s two “firm” pronouncements, the repeated phrase “You could draw,” which he supports with the purchase of the drawing paper, Page’s initial “could” resists his faith; she “could not” touch this paper. Her subsequent attempts at drawing, though,
lead her to think, "if only I could," indicating her willingness to believe in this possibility, however hesitantly. By its fifth, italicized repetition, "if only I could," the modal evokes a sense of desire and potentiality: she indicates the possibility that she may have such a talent, and indeed she quite fervently yearns to have it, though nothing has yet been accomplished that proves its existence. By the end of the entry, Page has stopped "doodling" and gotten down to work, even if she's still only "trying."

This passage's delicate maneuvering and tentative self-assertions carry over into subsequent entries that begin to give Page's identity as artist some shape. Picking up on the language of the initial entry, Page subsequently describes herself as "playing" with the pen, though she does note "how quickly and easily [she] draw[s]" (62). Having "[fallen] in love with" the pen, she creates the sense that her coming to art is something unpredicted and unpredictable, that is, like Brazil, quite separate from reason. She continues this suggestion in other entries, noting that she is "totally preoccupied" with drawing (63, 159); it is "like an illness" (63); her "eye" has become disconnected "from [her] heart or head." When she draws, she "attacked [the drawing] like a crazy woman" (72); she has already called a guest who admires her drawings a "crazy woman" (69). Echoing this first scene in which A. inspires her to take art seriously, she attributes her artistic illness to some outside force, to "something mad [that] is happening to me" (64). The accumulation of these comments over several entries gives form, however hesitant, to Page's emerging identity as a visual artist.

This refusal of agency may indicate the tension in Page's diary between her addressee and potential overhearers, listeners of whom she is aware but is not directly addressing. Even the original diary, though not meant for external readers, is a semi-
public space in which performances might be seen and judged, as Medway has already shown. While Page's intended audience, the artistic community she has constructed and addressed, may accept and applaud her attempts to paint, other readers may not. Her initial caution about announcing her talent and her plans to develop it thus allow her to step into the subject position of artist without encountering resistance.

By the time of the second passage, however, Page confidently constructs herself as an artist and writes to an artistic community, both the imagined community she may have projected in the original diary and the real readers she addresses in the published version. Her audience design suggests that the artist subjectivity has taken over from the poet in managing the writing of the journal, which becomes predominantly a painter's story. While Page still suggests a lack of control or reason to her art, describing herself as "drawing like someone demented" and "overwhelmed" by both painting and drawing, she also writes herself into this scene as a legitimate artist. She knows what techniques and tools she prefers, asserting "I like these gouaches," and projecting expertise in her discussion of how to use them. She participates as a full member of an artistic community, no longer under the direction of A., but painting alongside her friend Helena. Notably, Page compares Helena's painting style to her writing, likening the "great sensitivity" in Helena's drawing to "the way she writes." Page has not previously introduced Helena as a writer nor associated her with writing of any kind. This presupposition, relying on background knowledge about Helena that readers do not possess, ends up creating a community for Page of women artists who write and paint. They hold authority in more than one genre, and do so in addition to carrying out their domestic duties.
Indeed, the domestic scene and Page’s ambassadorial duties become increasingly secondary to her narrative of art, though she does need to perform a juggling act between her personal interest in art and the duties she must perform as the ambassador’s wife. Her question at the end of this passage—“How will I have time to paint?”—underlines how important art has become. Despite time constraints imposed by her husband’s office, Page will make time for art; her language suggests she has no choice but to find “time enough” for both painting and drawing in addition to being Mrs. Irwin. Her diary, in both its original and published forms, provides her with a semi-private space in which to make such assertions without fear of not being taken seriously. By the time the diary was published, Page had established an artistic career and a reputation as a legitimate artist. In the diary’s pages she can be an artist first and an ambassador’s wife second, giving the diary an important function for this woman in a society with rigid gender roles where she is seen as an adjunct to her husband.

Brazilian Journal fulfills a number of roles for Page that serve both public and personal functions. Page’s version of the literary diary, because of its focus on a single experience and era of her life, offers a different perspective on the genre than that provided by Sarton’s journal series, which became a part of the writer’s life as it was being lived. While Page’s diary still creates identities that unfold over time and that are taken on and off to suit discursive situations and imagined narratees, her text has an externally imposed structure that dictates its beginning and its ending: her diary’s narrative has no existence that predates or outlives her time in Brazil. This textual experience, once dismissed as “non-writing,” became an esteemed part of her professional oeuvre, considered by the diarist and her reading public as “literature.”
While Page’s diary remains more circumspect than Sarton’s about many personal issues, concentrating primarily on the diarist’s experiences as tourist and fledgling painter, it still invites readers of her poetry and fiction to listen to her thoughts and feelings, to share, day by day, in this momentous time of her life. Because Page did not write poetry during this time, the diary cannot contribute to the understanding of her poetry, as Sarton’s diaries do through their pages of exegesis of Sarton’s poems. However, *Brazilian Journal* offers a guidebook of sorts to Page the person as well as the artist. Page’s decision to recreate and publish her diary well into her established dual careers as artist and writer suggests, as with Sarton, the particular professional advantages of letting the public read one’s diary. In its role as adjunct to professional work, the writer’s public personal journal becomes for Page and Sarton an “authorized biography” in process, narrating the story they choose to tell of themselves in a particular moment. Their choice to make these diaries public during their lifetimes indicates the literary value they came to attach to such “non-writing” work as well as their acknowledgment of their readers’ and fans’ interest in their “private” lives.

Emily Carr, on the other hand, anticipated that public interest, and indeed encouraged it, but was not willing to make the “private” public until after her death. Her diaries, excerpted and published as *Hundreds and Thousands*, constitute yet another version of the public personal journal. Carr imagined from the 1930s onwards that she would publish her diaries, but until she died they were “private”; the vast majority of her diaries still are, in fact, since the collected edition represents only a fraction of the
original journals. So while “the audience hover[ed] at the edge of the page” (Bloom “I Write” 23) for Carr, too, that imagined audience was one to whom this diarist knew she would never have to answer. Her diaries became her last word on many personal topics, adding another perspective on herself, supposedly more personal and intimate, to her body of autobiographical writings.

**Emily Carr: The Diarist is in the Details**

Not only writing but also reading diaries can be a therapeutic exercise for diarists. Diarists’ encounters with other diarists can illustrate the public functions that these personal texts serve, as well as shed light on how a diarist is perceived by her community, how her diary selves play on the larger stage of the reading world. In *Endgame*, the journal of her seventy-ninth year, May Sarton struggles with aging, illness, and the fear that she has lost her creativity. In the midst of a dark period, she records,

> I have been browsing happily through the pile of magazines [...] and got an electric shock of joyful recognition when I saw a painting by Emily Carr reproduced in *Newsweek* and the notice of a retrospective show in the National Gallery of Canada at Ottawa. [...] Emily Carr is a hero as a painter who was unable to paint for fourteen years (as Rilke was unable to write for twelve) and then found her palette and her brushstroke and did such remarkable work. She is a different hero in the journal, the woman alone, fashioning a strong inner life in spite of depression and the hard

---

18 Opposite Contraries: The Unknown Journals of Emily Carr and Other Writings, published in 2003 and edited by Susan Crean, makes significantly more of the manuscript diaries available. However, Crean too has left out material, for “reasons of excess and repetition” (16).
struggle to make her work known and accepted. It was a special grace that I came on her yesterday again. (76)

Reading about and feeling comforted by Carr in 1992, almost fifty years after Carr’s death, Sarton participates in a “conversation” with the painter made possible only because of Carr’s public role as a professional artist, a role that meant her “private” journals were published posthumously. Recording this moment in her own public personal journal, Sarton extends this conversation to her own readers. Struggling to reconcile the demands of everyday life with the creative life, Sarton evokes Carr as a successful model, a woman artist who, like herself, came into her own artistically only late in life and struggled for critical recognition. Seeing Carr as a “hero,” a “woman alone,” who suffered from depression and critical neglect, Sarton suggests as much about what she needed to find in Carr at this point in her own life as she does about the painter. Through Carr’s self-constructions in her journal, which Sarton contrasts to the public “hero” of the painting world, Carr becomes a model or inspiration for the poet, despite their separation by genre, geography, and generations. Sarton’s comments underline the notion of private and public selves and genres, since she suggests that Carr is one kind of “hero” in her public role as a painter, and a “different kind of hero” in her personal diaries, where she outlines her struggles. This division creates a false dichotomy of genres and identities for Carr, whose diary writing was in fact an integral part of the process of her painting and of the formation of her public stories of self. Like Sarton and Page, Carr created diaries that served functions and addressed audiences both “public” and personal, as she chronicled her development as an “artist.”
Best known for her visual art, Carr was also a prolific writer, publishing *Klee Wyck* (1941), *The Book of Small* (1942), and *The House of All Sorts* (1944) before her death. *Pause* (1953), *Heart of a Peacock* (1953), and her "official" autobiography *Growing Pains* (1946) appeared posthumously, as did her journals, under the name *Hundreds and Thousands*, in 1966. This flurry of publishing activity in the five years before her death suggests that Carr only became a writer later in life, a perception that Carr reinforces. In *Growing Pains*, for example, Carr describes how a severe heart attack forced her to put down her paintbrush and take up her pencil in 1937 (359-60). This version, in a chapter entitled "Alternative," distinguishes not only between the visual and textual periods of Carr's career but also between her professional and personal writings. In fact, however, Carr did not suddenly turn to writing in 1937, since she had been keeping a regular journal since 1927, and had been crafting short stories since the 1920s, even taking writing courses to hone her talent (Tippett 220). Her suggestion that writing was her artistic salvation when she had to stop painting (although in fact she continued to paint and sketch up until her death) fails to acknowledge her journal writing as "real" artistic activity. Though Carr considered her diary a non-professional textual space, her decision to publish it indicates that, like Page, she came to recognize the diary's value to her literary *oeuvre* and her public persona.

The story Carr tells in "Alternative" also makes writing, whether personal or professional, secondary to painting in her career, a position her written works have continued to occupy in critical reception. Despite her Governor-General's Award for *Klee Wyck* in 1942, Carr the professional writer remains eclipsed by Carr the painter and Carr the larger-than-life public figure. Her journals, as Sarton's reactions indicate, have been
read largely for insight into her paintings and methodology, with almost no attention to
_Hundreds and Thousands_ as literature. But this lack of critical attention to the journals
belies their central role in Carr’s development as both a visual and textual artist, and in
her very sophisticated “public-relations” campaigns, which her critics and fans continue
today. With Carr’s diaries, the complex interplay of public and private writings,
functions, and identities takes center stage.

One must read Carr’s public-private texts and identities against the extensive bio-
mythography that has increasingly accumulated around her. Sarton’s appraisal of Carr as
a “woman alone,” struggling to find her artistic voice in spite of depression and critical
neglect, encapsulates many of the enduring popular myths or perceptions about Emily
Carr, painter, writer, and diarist, myths that Carr herself engendered in her professional
and personal writings. Carr shares with Sarton a remarkable talent for self-mythologizing,
perpetuated by a few stories that resurface in each of Carr’s public textual appearances.
In _Growing Pains_, she outlines what she calls her “struggle story” (360), the tale of an
artist who overcomes rejection, apathy, sexism, elitism, illness, financial problems, and
old age to find a fresh way of seeing and painting. This tale is Carr’s foundational myth,
a key element in all her professional writings and in the extensive mythology, and
iconography, that has built up around her, particularly in Western Canada. Since her
death in 1945, Carr has gradually become legendary, an alternatively and often
simultaneously celebrated and controversial figure invoked by many groups including
feminists, environmentalists, First Nations activists, historians, and art critics.
Posthumous reception and use of Carr have turned her into a _cause célèbre_. “No other
Canadian artist, dead or alive,” Susan Crean observes, “approaches Emily Carr’s renown” (Laughing One 16). Crean continues,

Dogs, cats, children, ships, and buildings have been named after her, as have projects, schools, [...] studios, and art centres all over the country.[...] Poets, playwrights, songwriters, dancers, and actors have been fascinated by her persona and her story [...]. A dozen plays, several suites of poetry, a ballet, a television musical, one large-scale modern dance, at least two major musical compositions, and several song cycles have been written about her or for her, not to mention the documentary films, the biographies (seven, at last count, directed to various age groups and markets), the picture books, CD-ROMs, and web sites. (16)

This laundry list of legacies, indicating the range of uses to which Carr as a figure has been put, highlights the public’s interest in the personal, in this case. Having come to know Carr as such a legendary public figure, readers want to find the “real” Carr, the private self of the artist, between the pages of her journal. With its posthumous publication, the journals were Carr’s last word to her admirers, who were, like Sarton, eager to find the “different hero” that Carr could be in “private.”

My analysis will focus primarily on Carr’s journals from 1927 and 1930-1934. Hundreds and Thousands begins with a pared-down version of the 1927 diary chronicling her part in a National Gallery exhibition and her first meeting with the Group of Seven, events which marked Carr’s entry into public consciousness as an artist. Though she had been painting professionally for over 35 years, her career blossomed following the 1927 exhibition. This journey was significant as well for Carr’s on-again, off-again diary
habits, since it was Lawren Harris who suggested she keep a journal in order to help her paint (Hundreds and Thousands 102). In the journals from 1930-34, Carr returns to life in Victoria as a landlady yet attempts to craft an authoritative artistic persona for herself in the “private” pages of her journal. Since Carr was at the beginning of her artistic renaissance in these years, she would have been unlikely at that time to imagine the possibility of publishing her diaries. Her early published diaries therefore add further nuance to the “personal public journal” genre I’ve proposed, since these diaries, like Page’s, began as “private” (i.e., not for publication) and became “public” over time, as the diarist herself became a public figure.

A Matter of Public Record: The Shaping of Hundreds and Thousands

By publishing their diaries during their lifetimes, Page and Sarton used their personal writings for public effect, controlling their public and popular image through this ostensibly private genre. Since Carr decided before she died that she would allow her diaries to be published, she shares motivations with Sarton and Page, who incorporated their “private” diaries into their professional careers. However, Carr chose to publish her diaries and her autobiography posthumously, leaving any final editing decisions to her friend, editor, and literary executor Ira Dilworth. Unlike Sarton and Page, she therefore did not have control over the published version of her personal writings. Carr died before correcting and revising her diary manuscripts as she had planned, so any analysis of Hundreds and Thousands and its construction of the diarist must therefore take into account the editorial work of Dilworth and his successors. Before turning to Carr’s use of
her journals I will therefore outline briefly the publishing and editing history of the diaries.

Carr’s letters to Dilworth\(^{19}\) in late 1944 chart her increasing concern with publishing her journals, and reveal the *carte blanche* she gave him to “fix” them up. She writes that her manuscript diaries will be his Christmas gift, establishing their personal and economic value. In one missive, she explains, “She’ll\(^{20}\) *Hundreds and Thousands* be yours eventually by law and by dedication but by Christmas present she’ll be even a little more *personally* yours” (Sat. night Nov-Dec).\(^{21}\) In these letters she discusses her own despairing evaluation of the diary’s quality. “Its bad, Eye [Dilworth],” she concludes December 15, 1944. “[I]f you agree let it be between you and me and the furnace.” She articulates her plans to correct, revise, and rewrite, but by Christmas Eve 1944 she notes that she has not managed to finish in time to give the manuscript as a Christmas gift as promised. She explains, “I’ve been too sick.” By March 1945 she was dead, and the manuscript was left to Dilworth to straighten out as Carr had wished.

However, Carr’s wishes, as laid out in her correspondence with Dilworth, were vague and contradictory. In the draft of a letter to Dilworth in November-December 1944, Carr states, “I give to you the right to cut out any sections of *Hundreds and

---

\(^{19}\) The Carr-Dilworth correspondence is held in the Inglis Collection, British Columbia Archives; Carr’s 1944 letters to Dilworth will be found on microfilm A1224, Box 1, Folio 10. For precision, I have parenthetically cited the dates assigned these letters.

\(^{20}\) Carr’s use of “she” to describe her diary in this letter suggests her identification with her diary as a projection of herself, an externalized discursive identity similar, perhaps, to “Small,” the child persona she sometimes adopted in writing to Dilworth. Given Carr’s personification of the diary at other points (e.g., addressing it as “little book” [61]), this description indicates at the very least her sense of the diary as personally as well as professionally valuable, and therefore a meaningful gift to bestow upon one of her dearest friends. I would like to thank Valerie Raoul for drawing my attention to this pronoun choice.

\(^{21}\) In an earlier letter from September-October 1944, Carr listed the dedications for her forthcoming books. For *Hundreds and Thousands*, she wrote, “To Ira Dilworth my friend?” Above this line she has added, “I’ll be dead then remember” (“Tuesday eve” Sept-Oct 1944). Carr’s use of the title “Hundreds and Thousands” here and throughout the correspondence from Autumn 1944 seems to contradict both Blanchard’s and Tippett’s claims that the title was not Carr’s choice for the journals.
Thousands you think [illeg.] & unworthy. I trust your judgement so much ahead of mine because it is the judgement of a scholar. [...] Cull H & T all you like.” But she does not include this clear statement in the letter’s final version, in which she says instead, “Know what is poor & what is good. But *don’t let me drivel into sentimentality, Eye!*” (Sat. night Nov.-Dec. 1944). Dilworth, as Carr’s literary executor, would of course have eventually found amongst her papers this draft version containing these more specific instructions. But Carr initially simply asked him to use the judgment that she so trusted and that Dilworth had exercised fully in editing her other manuscripts. Before he could shape up the journals, though, Dilworth had other Carr manuscripts to work on. He turned first to *Growing Pains*, which appeared in 1946, then *Heart of a Peacock* and *Pause*, both of which came out in 1953. Blanchard notes that Dilworth collaborated with the publisher William H. Clarke to edit the journals, but Dilworth died in 1962 before completing the task (265); Edythe Hembroff-Schleicher speculates that he had only finished revising about ninety pages when he died (296). Clarke continued the revisions, with some help from Dilworth’s niece, Phylis Dilworth Inglis.

Many hands, then, have been at work on Carr’s diaries. This reality directly contradicts the claims made in the preface to the published version, in which Clarke states that “the publishers have refrained from tidying up the author’s sentences, but have

22 The extent of Dilworth’s editing is the subject of great debate. See Blanchard 265, 274-75, Tippett 256, 258, 268-69, 281-82, Hembroff-Schleicher 278-87. Carr discusses his role in *Growing Pains*, muddying the waters further with this explanation: “My Editor never altered my wording arbitrarily. Occasionally he suggested re-phrasing a sentence, always explaining why. He never added or omitted anything without consulting me” (365). In his introduction to *Heart of a Peacock*, Dilworth defends his editorial practices, noting, “In a very few cases I have grafted a passage from one version [of a sketch] into the other where I felt the passage added something really striking. Otherwise I have done only ordinary editorial work (punctuation, paragraphing, etc.)” (xii). In the 1997 CBC Life & Times documentary *Emily Carr: A Woman of All Sorts*, Tippett now declares that Dilworth substantially changed Carr’s manuscripts, particularly *Klee Wyck*. While Dilworth’s editorial role in *Hundreds and Thousands* was relatively small, his history of revising Carr’s work established a precedent for William H. Clarke and the other editors who succeeded Dilworth.
sought always to preserve the eccentricities of her style” (x). Instead, the version of Carr’s journals that *Hundreds and Thousands* presents is truncated, silently revised, and consciously shaped. Paula Blanchard notes that “[w]e should be aware that the Emily Carr of *Hundreds and Thousands* has been tidied up and made presentable, rather like Small [Carr’s child persona] before a birthday party” (266). Blanchard describes at length the kinds of changes editors made to the manuscript. She notes that “[s]pelling and punctuation have been corrected, and dates have been moved or added, sometimes without clear substantiation; occasionally they have been deleted, even when the manuscript is clear. Beyond these small variations, the editors took out passages that were redundant […], or maudlin, or spiteful about people she knew […]. There are also a number of passages that reveal her corrosive dislike of people-at-large” (265). Blanchard describes as well such omissions as “several affectionate entries on Willie Newcombe […] perhaps [omitted] at his own request” (266), entries on church services (266), and “negative words” (265). She concludes, “much of what is missing from the published journals is trivia, and from a literary point of view it made sense to delete it” (266).

This appeal to the “literary” (a concept apparently so universal that Tippett provides no definition) to explain these editorial decisions signals one way that Carr’s journals have been packaged and received by others, who may believe that the trivial and the literary are dichotomous and should remain quite separate. Though Blanchard, and the editors whose decisions she explains, may have thought *Hundreds and Thousands* benefited from such pruning of the trivial, however, Emily Carr as diarist would not have agreed. Throughout her diaries Carr extols the virtues of “trivia,” recognizing that the daily record of such small details made up the very fabric of the story of her life. In the
author’s preface to the published journals, she discusses the significance of the title *Hundreds and Thousands*, specifically addressing the value of the quotidian. This preface, as Tippett and Blanchard have noted, was not written for the journals themselves but accompanied a series of unfinished autobiographical sketches that Carr had written that have never been published. Carr’s papers hold several drafts of this preface, indicating it was a work to which Carr kept returning. Central to all versions, however, is the notion that the small, often overlooked elements of life add up to greater significance. In the version Clarke publishes with the journals, Carr writes, “Why call this manuscript *Hundreds and Thousands*? Because it is made up of scraps of nothing which, put together, made the trimming and furnished the sweetness for what might otherwise have been a drab life sucked away without crunch” (v). Referring to the small candies from which she has taken her title, she continues, “It was these tiny things that, collectively, taught me how to live. Too insignificant to have been considered individually, [...] the little scraps and nothingesses of my life have made a definite pattern” (v). Carr’s interest in and valuing of “little scraps” of life provide some of her motivations for keeping a diary, the perfect genre for storing away the “tiny things” that make up the everyday. Safely recorded in the pages of her notebooks, these “scraps” accumulate into a life story through which Carr can leaf and discern the “definite patterns” she consistently sought. From Carr’s perspective, the story of Carr the artist can only be told in the context of these daily details, the “trivia” that Blanchard sees as problematic for a “literary” text.

Certainly, Carr’s editors had decisions to make in order to create a document that was economical to publish; omissions were inevitable in condensing fourteen years of
journals into less than 400 pages. But in dismissing some entries as trivial, both Blanchard and Carr's editors display particular expectations for what the diary of a professional artist and writer should be, and what kinds of writing or content will be valued by the reading public. While the diary is popularly conceived as full of such "trivia," and therefore not worthy of literary or critical evaluation or consideration, the diary of a public figure and artist should, apparently, consist of something more substantial. Further, by describing the editor's substantial revisions to Carr's writing as "small variations," Blanchard reinforces the idea that Carr's writing needed fixing; Carr's self-characterization as an unschooled writer hopeless at the mechanics of the English language is well-known and pervasive. More significantly, Blanchard's attitude reiterates the idea that such changes to a diarist's language have no effect on the identities that she performs in writing, a notion that in turn re-encounters the self as a stable entity quite disconnected from the act of writing. Such responses also reinforce assumptions about the diary as an artless mode useful to readers for the historical information or raw personal data it supplies but not in any way literary, beliefs that in Carr's case are compounded by her cultivated reputation as an inadequate and unskilled writer.

Clarke's patently disingenuous claim that *Hundreds and Thousands* has not been substantially revised indicates an awareness that the reading public anticipate and desire a diary that is "authentic," unmediated and unaltered, a direct translation into prose of the diarist's "true" voice. Since *Hundreds and Thousands* appears after its writer's death, it

---

23 However, Carr was also consistently resistant to attempts to correct her writing. "Flora is correcting and it galls me," she wrote October 3, 1940. She continues, "Ruth and Flora have helped me but their way of expressing is not my way" (310, emphasis added). So, on the one hand, Carr announces that she is a bad writer and should be helped, but on the other, she complains that these errors are part of her writing and personality and thus should not be fixed. These conflicting complaints indicate Carr's concerns about keeping her own original "voice" at the same time that she strove for professional and critical acclaim, for which she felt, perhaps, that good grammar was necessary.
is less likely than Sarton's diary series or other public personal journals to be thought of as narcissistic or as calculated self-promotion. Because Carr would not be alive to see her diaries made public, she would, readers might assume, be able to speak her mind freely, and the published diaries therefore represent the “true” Carr. But as the complex history of this manuscript's journey into publication demonstrates, the Carr that we encounter in the published diary has been fashioned or packaged for the general public by both Carr and her editors. Her published diary is a particularly constructed text, but one that carefully hides its seams and stitches to uphold readers’ belief in its authenticity, so that they feel, as Sarton does, that they “know” Emily Carr through her “remarkable journal” (At Seventy 184). Because the Carr that readers want to know has made her reputation as a professional artist, her editors have made the Carr of the diaries very much an artist first and a private person (friend, daughter, sister, woman) second.

**Portraits of the Diarist as Artist: The 1927 Journal**

*Hundreds and Thousands* opens with Carr’s 1927 journal of her trip to Ottawa to meet the Group of Seven. Though Carr, as Blanchard notes, had kept diaries intermittently since childhood, she “hit her stride as a journal writer” when she began her record of the trip East (208). Seeing 1927 as a “point of liberation” for the artist, Blanchard correlates Carr’s “new fluency with words” with her renaissance as a painter (208), and certainly the year and the trip marked a new phase in Carr’s artistic careers; Crean calls it “the year everything changed. The legend of Emily Carr begins there” (Laughing 198). The journal starts with Carr on the train, a perfect *in medias res* opening that combines the excitement of a travel narrative with the promise of a Künstlerroman: having “left home
Tuesday night” (3), Carr is leaving her old world behind, literally and figuratively. The published version of the 1927 journal documents Carr’s meeting and socializing with Eric Brown of the National Gallery and the Group of Seven artists. Particularly significant to this experience is her visit to Lawren Harris, whose work shocks and inspires her. His encouragement and advice begin an important stage in Carr’s artistic growth and initiate a mentoring friendship that lasted the rest of Carr’s life. With this journey, Carr moved onto the national stage, and therefore the journal of this occasion made a logical choice with which to begin the published diaries of a well-known public figure.

Recognizing the importance of these events to Carr as an artist, her editors constructed an “artist’s diary,” beginning with the journal’s sub-title, “Meeting with the Group of Seven,” and cut entries that dealt with Carr’s more domestic and personal life. Since we as readers “meet” her en route, we encounter her artistic persona first, the woman artist on her way to her exhibit, and only come to “know” the domestic Carr at the end of the 1927 journal and in those that follow. Pages of sharply-worded portraits of her fellow train passengers have been omitted, along with cutting remarks about “amateur” painters she meets during her stay in Ottawa. Any mentions of non-artistic business that she undertook during this trip, including a day at the beach with unnamed friends and a trip to Toronto to visit her friend Carol Pearson, have not been included. These omissions create the idea that Carr’s time in the East was spent entirely on art, a pattern of focusing that the rest of the published edition maintains. While Sarton, writing in the ’70s and ’80s, celebrates and uses the domestic to connect to her readers, Carr’s editors in the ’60s omitted many references to the day-to-day in favour of entries that deal with painting. The change in attitudes towards domestic material demonstrates the
different ideas about appropriate material for an artist’s (particularly a woman artist’s) diary that have circulated in these particular places and times.

Certainly, Carr provides ample material for a focus on art, as she describes the exhibition and her conversations with other painters. Though Carr was not a fledgling artist by any means, having painted for decades and studied art in England and France, her diary gives the impression that she is overwhelmed by what she sees and hears during her trip. Her first meeting with Harris inspired the entry that opens so memorably, “Oh, God, what have I seen? Where have I been? [...] Something has called out of somewhere. Something in me is trying to answer” (6). This much-quoted passage sets the tone for this journal of artistic self-discovery and rejuvenation, a process that begins here but continues for the rest of her life. For Carr, the journal supports and extends the sense of community she experiences as an artist, for perhaps the first time in Canada, during this trip.

In the private pages of her diary, Carr can show her alternating bravado, pride in her work, and self-deprecation, her sense of inadequacy as an artist who is also a woman and a Western Canadian. She is cautious in this journal about her position as an artist, at least in contrast to her recognition of the male artists of the Group of Seven. She invariably describes them as huge talents, physically and spiritually ascendant, looming over this small old woman from the West. She emphasizes their masculinity, consistently describing them as “these men” (5-13), who are “big and courageous” (5), “interesting and big and inspiring” (5), “steady and strong” (5), “soaring up, up!” (5), “big, earnest painters” (10), “big and broad” (11), “swirling” and “rising” (6), unlike the “foolish little artists filled with conceit that one usually meets” (5). Their paintings are “higher and
bigger” (5), “revealing the big, grand things of our country” (6), and constitute “the biggest, strongest part of [her] whole trip East” (19). In contrast, she worries that they will find her “small and weak and fretful,” made “small and mean, poor and petty—bitter” by “carps and frets and worries” (8) that she, unlike “these men,” has not been able to rise above. She fears they will be “dissatisfied” (5) with her paintings and think them “dead and dull” (9) in comparison to their own. This self-deprecation, an element of all Carr’s journals but most overwhelming and pointed in this one, indicates how Carr’s desire to be accepted as an artist needed to begin with herself, a job the journals will perform for her from 1930 on.

Carr’s deprecations about her own art and position as an artist in this journal extend to other women painters as well, demonstrating the extent to which Carr has subscribed to her era’s dominant discourses on gender and art. These public values, the values of the male-dominated art world, inform her criticism of herself and the women artists she encounters during this trip. Meeting Pegi Nichol, for example, Carr writes, “[she] paints too, Indian things, but they’re feeble. Poor kid, she’s so enthusiastic, a dear little soul, and perhaps it will carry her on. She’s young” (9). Her language in this entry embodies the dismissive attitude Carr herself encountered—she records on more than one occasion being told that “women can’t paint”—and that she perpetuated. Carr can only be confident of her own artistic talent by comparing herself favourably to an artist she clearly sees as inferior. Reflecting on her trip, she extols once more the virtues of the Group, and concludes, “There are a few others [painters] worth while and some fine women” (13, emphasis added). When Carr thinks about painters, she too does not think of women; her afterthought, “and some fine women,” as well as her dismissal of Pegi
Nichol as a “poor kid,” suggest that the imagined artistic community Carr addresses is not peopled by women artists, who are exceptions, but not often exceptional. She muses, “I wonder if these men feel, as I do, that there is a common chord struck between us. No, I don’t believe they feel so toward a woman” (6), but shortly afterwards she records that Harris tells her, “You are one of us” (8). Recording this remark in her diary, Carr can inscribe herself as a painter who is also a woman, rather than as a woman painter, an identity that she dismisses, in deference to the art community she admires and has now joined. As a place to inscribe her selves in process and write authoritatively from the position of “artist” in an epoch hostile to a woman doing so, the diary does not force Carr to reconcile within herself the contradictions of being a woman painter.

Carr’s delight at Harris’s declaration of community membership shows her ambiguous and unreconciled attitude toward her actual, lived community, in contrast to her textual one. The communities she addresses in her diary are ideal, not only because they share Carr’s passions, beliefs, and values, but also because they represent silent approval of and support for her art. After a day with Harris in his studio, during which he gives her technical tips and suggests books for her to read, Carr says, “I wonder if he realizes how I appreciate his generosity and what the day meant to me in trying to solve the riddles and mysteries that I’ve plugged along with alone for so long” (16). Being a woman from the West has meant isolation, a sensation that this journey, and later this journal, help to ameliorate. However, though Carr expresses longing for a “soul pal” (55) and repeatedly bemoans her solitary state, both personally and professionally, she also consistently sets herself apart, establishing herself, in Timothy Dow Adams’ turn of phrase, as a “group of one” (41). Like Sarton, she embraces the identity of a “solitude,” a
role that helps define her as an artist, but at the same time she deplores the loneliness of her solitary state. Even when she is invited into a community, as she is by Harris, she makes herself separate, never a total insider. Carr uses the diary to assert her individuality at the same time as she revels in her newfound community. This genre, with its provisional, cumulative record, is particularly hospitable to such conflicts in identity; in her journal, Carr can simultaneously occupy different, even contradictory, positions, writing herself both as part of a wider community and as a “natural-born solitaire” (76).

This “early” journal sets up many of Carr’s enduring self-characterizations as a passionate Westerner, committed to “the country and the people” (12) who has been ignored and isolated for her refusal to compromise her vision or her allegiance to the West. However, the journals that follow show Carr growing more confident in her sense of self as a legitimate artist, a process of identity construction similar to Page’s gradual transformation. Though still alone in the West, she has daily letters to and from Harris, and regular correspondence with others in the Group that create a tangible connection to other artists. In addition, she uses the pages of her journals to develop her sense of an artistic self, working out her theories on painting in writing and constructing herself as a legitimate authority on her own kind of art. This function of the journal was more important than ever, since, after the high of the trip East, Carr keenly felt the lack of actual community as a woman artist in Victoria, B.C. At the close of the 1927 journal, Carr is back home, surrounded by the cares of her daily life. “Christmas, and sick dogs, and sick Teddy, and Christmas parcels, all the oddments of jobs and cleaning up of things indoors and out” have made her trip seem “like a dream” (19). Though buoyed by memories of the Group’s paintings, she has no one with whom to share her new visions.
"I don’t tell anyone about them because they would not understand," she confides, addressing an imagined reader that, in contrast, understands very well. Geographically and culturally isolated, she used her diary to construct the kind of sympathetic, like-minded community she would not find in lived life. The 1930-34 diary’s focus on art shows Carr’s determination to continue establishing herself as a legitimate artist, despite the lack of time, resources, or encouragement.

The Personal is Professional: Making Art(ist) in the 1930s

The journals from 1930-1934, which Carr’s editors have separated into four separate sections, show Carr in her home environment and therefore permit more mingling of the professional and the personal spheres and content. These years were significant for Carr artistically, in both writing and painting. She purchased her caravan, “The Elephant,” which allowed her to make several extended painting trips into the woods on Vancouver Island. Her art was exhibited in Seattle. She returned to the East in an ill-fated attempt to go to the Chicago art exhibit, but compensated for missing the show by visiting members of the Group of Seven in Toronto. This visit renewed these friendships and revealed a more self-assured Carr who inscribes herself as an equal in these relationships. At the end of this visit, she asserts without the self-doubt of her earlier journals, “I was one of them. They accepted me” (78), a feeling she continues to have even after she finally rejects the Theosophy espoused by Harris (95-97). During this period, Carr also began to work more seriously on her creative writing, attending writing classes, sending draft stories out to members of the Group of Seven for criticism, and submitting several to magazines and journals. The diaries from this time chronicle a significant stage in Carr’s
dual careers, and her increasingly confident sense of herself as a professional artist. Alongside these artistic leaps forward, Carr struggled to run her boarding house and maintain relations with her sisters, railed against the indifference of the Victoria art world, and continued to define her own spirituality.

These journals depict Carr-the-artist alongside Carr-the-landlady, sister, and private person; much like Page, who lived and wrote as a wife, poet, and traveller as well as painter, often simultaneously, Carr moves through multiple subject positions in her diary. Her journal serves all these identities, addressing a variety of audiences who reflect these performances. The opening of the first journal from 1930 included in the published version demonstrates the various communities Carr addressed in her diaries, and also captures her movements between the more public functions and those that served personal uses. On Sunday, November 23rd, 1930, Carr begins a new journal, writing:

Yesterday I went to town and bought this book to enter scraps in, not a diary of statistics and dates and decency of spelling and happenings but just to jot me down in, unvarnished me, [...]. It seems to me it helps to write things and thoughts down. [...] It sorts out jumbled thoughts and helps to clarify them, and I want my thoughts clear and straight for my work. [...] When I returned from the East in 1927, Lawren Harris and I exchanged a few letters about work. They were the first real exchanges of thought in regard to work I had ever experienced. [...] Later, when I went

24 Carr kept another journal in 1930 that narrates a trip to Alert Bay, but her editors have not included it here; it has been published, however, in Crean’s *Opposite Contraries.*
East this Spring, I found he had shown some of my letters to others. That upset me. After that I could not write so freely. Perhaps it was silly, but I could not write my innermost thoughts if anybody was to read them, and the innermost thoughts are the only things that count in painting. [...] I can't write [him] too often, hence this jotting book for odd thoughts and feelings. (20-21)

This entry begins a new section entitled “Simcoe Street 1930-1933,” a title taken from the top of the page of this entry in the manuscript diary. The title and the entry’s opening line, along with Carr’s use of time and place deictics, “yesterday” and “this” in “this book,” invite the reader into the moment of writing, giving that time of inscription a materiality by situating it so specifically. She foregrounds the diary itself as a physical object, a kind of memory box or waste-bin, and as a vehicle for insightful self-portraiture and construction. Carr addresses both intimates and new audiences in this entry, with casual references that assume shared background knowledge but do not block readers who do not have it. Thus one of her imagined readers would understand precisely what she means by “town” and “my work,” and, for that matter, by “me” and “I.” But even without knowing, for example, what town she visits, other readers will still comprehend the passage. The number of exophoric items in this passage is also significant, as these items suggest a world outside the diary that the diarist need not narrate. The personal

---

25 Significant changes have been made to language and syntax in this passage, changes consistent with the editorial approach throughout this edition. For example, “innermost thoughts” has been substituted for Carr’s neologism “innermosts,” and “feelings” replaces “feels.” The published version reads “Perhaps it was silly, but I could not write,” while the original stated, “I asked him not to—perhaps it was silly but I could not write [...]” Though such changes are small, they do illustrate the stylistic preferences of Carr’s editors, and their paternalistic attitude towards her writing. The original commits no grammatical errors, and in fact is more representative of stereotypical “diary writing,” unpolished and “private.” Such changes, then, may reflect not only expectations for the quality of a professional artist and writer’s diary but also cultural and aesthetic mandates for publishing in the 1960s.
pronouns "I" (ten uses), "me" (three) and "my" (four) resound in this entry, focusing the reader's attention on the diarist and her world. In contrast to Page, who rarely asserts her "I-identity," or Sarton, who begins with herself and proceeds to the universal, Carr concentrates on herself alone as she explains her purpose in writing her diary. In announcing that the diary is all about "me," Carr sets up expectations for a diary that will focus on the personal.

Carr explains her reasons and motivations for starting and keeping the diary, motivations that point to both personal and professional purposes. However, her editors have amended this entry, and their changes in part create or at least emphasize the entry's formality and focus on professionalism. The published edition's purposeful opening line, "Yesterday I went to town and bought this book," omits a long list of errands that Carr also ran while in town. In the original diary, Carr had written, "Yesterday I went to town & after I had been to the market & bought wallflowers & cauliflowers & bread, & horrible meat which I always wonder why I eat & go on eating. Then I went to the 15 ct store & bought this book to enter scraps in [...]" (Inglis Collection A1224 Box 2 Folio 12). In the published version, buying the diary seems to be the purpose for Carr's trip to town, suggesting a centrality of the diary in her life that does not figure in her manuscript. There, the purchase of the diary was one of several everyday tasks that she performed on that day. Read in the context of a shopping list, the journal's purchase seems less significant, less indicative of the new phase on which Carr is embarking. As in the 1927 journal, Carr's editors focus the reader's attention on Carr's artistic enterprises first, dismissing such chronicles of chores as the kind of "trivia" Tippett described and that the public would not need to read in every entry. Since the editors chose to begin the 1930
section with this diary, instead of the August travel diary from the same year (see note 15), they have made a number of changes that shape, once again, Carr's personal diaries into an "artist's notebook."

Even with these changes, however, these opening paragraphs encapsulate many key elements of the diaries, including their combination of formal and intimate writing. Carr's comments on "private" writing in her story about Harris substantiate the common perception of the genre as "private" and of Carr's diary itself as not meant for other readers, even Harris. Indeed, the lack of an actual addressee ("anybody") becomes an incentive for her to write, part of the rhetorical situation to which the diary responds, since it allows her to write "freely." Because Carr, this entry suggests, writes only for herself, readers could feel assured that they would get the diarist's "innermost thoughts," the "unvarnished" writer. Carr's "thought[s] about work" stand in contrast to the "jumbled up thoughts" she wishes to sort out in her diary, representing two different kinds of writing and audiences that Carr performs and addresses in her diary. Notably, lexical ties about writing and about "thoughts" and emotions, content typically associated with the personal diary, tie this entry together, reinforcing the sense that the diary functions for Carr as a form of personal therapy or emotional outlet that is integral to her professional work. In her diary, at least, the personal is professional, for without the diary to help her get at her "innermosts" she cannot find the material she needs in order to do significant painting.

In the ten sentences here, Carr writes "thought" or "thoughts" six times, in addition to the related terms "minds," "feelings," and "innermost," all of which are repeated once. The verb "write" appears three times, along with writing-related nouns
("exchanges," "letters," "jotting," and "book") and the collocation "read." As these writing terms accumulate in sentences five through ten, the text makes an argument for the diary, this "jotting book," as legitimate writing, an important extension of the professional correspondence she has undertaken with Harris. These lexical ties act as a form of meta-genre in process, in which Carr develops and explores ideas about her journal writing. In contrast to Sarton's polished lectures on her own diary practices, Carr's self-analysis moves in and out of an authoritative voice, with its references to the diary's contents as "scraps," "jumbled thoughts," and "odd thoughts and feelings," on one hand, and as part of a professional exchange and preparation for "work" on the other.

Significantly, this passage contains no gaps, unlike the opening entries of Sarton's and other diarists' works. Tightly wound together through repetition and lexical ties, the entry carefully guides a reader through its text, anticipating questions and supplying all necessary information, never presuming shared personal knowledge between addressee and diarist. Unlike Sarton, Carr is not inviting her imagined reader to feel like an intimate friend. Instead, she quite formally introduces herself as a subject and her diary as a text, intimating through this formality that both are to be taken seriously. Even in the opening paragraph, with its more conversational tone, Carr crafts a carefully contained, self-explanatory text that announces not only her intention to keep a diary, but also what kind of diary she will keep. Giving the full noun phrase, "this book," rather than the more casual, less specific deictic "this" without the noun, directs readers to pay attention to the diary itself, both as an object and as an act of self-inscription. Warning her imagined audience not to expect a formal diary, one with "statistics and dates and

104
decency of spellings and happenings,” Carr can justify her style and her purpose for writing, as Sarton does in her meta-discursive passages.

The subsequent paragraph, though, with its elaborate explanation and justification, suggests just the kind of formal diary Carr has said she would not write. While this formality may result in less intimacy with the audience addressed by the opening paragraph, it suggests more dignity, more self-importance; it implies that the addressee should recognize the diarist as an eminent person, and value her diary for its connections to her professional work. She continues in this passage to discuss her diary practices, but prefaces her remarks by explaining the significance of her connection to Harris for the diary in ways that indicate she imagines a reader other than herself. Though Carr does explain her relationship with Harris for her audience (they “exchanged letters about work”), she clearly imagines that her addressee understands who Harris is and, more significantly, what she means by “work.” This assumption indicates that Carr projects an artistic community as among her audiences, one that recognizes her as a professional artist, and that shares her positive evaluation of Harris.

Imagining such a community would be an important projection for this woman in 1930, painting only when she had free time, in a town notorious for its conservative aesthetics and its dismissal of and disinterest in Carr’s art. Her intimate relationship with Harris, whom readers of the published version recognize and acknowledge as a major figure in Canadian art, helps by association to reinforce Carr’s importance as an artist, though dependent on her male mentor. Since the diary collects the overflow of her correspondence with Harris, this personal text acquires a value and significance that might not otherwise be accorded a diary that merely reflects the “unvarnished” diarist. By
retelling the story of her trip "East" and her friendship with Harris, the entry sublimates
the diary’s non-artistic uses, the ones that Carr articulates in the first paragraph amongst
her list of chores, to the functions it serves as Carr’s substitute artistic community.
Standing at the beginning of a new diary section, this passage announces a new stage in
her development as both an artist and a diarist.

Carr’s disclosing attitude in the entry’s second paragraph marks a change from the
1927 journal, in which she rarely incorporates such explanations. In the earlier diary she
imagined her reader as someone who knew what she knew, and therefore required no
additional information; her 1927 addressee shares Carr’s knowledge of who Mrs. Mather
(5) and Carol (9) are, for example. More significantly, that addressee knows who Carr is,
where she is going on the train, and why, for Carr never explains any of these major
elements. Her reaching out to a wider audience in this 1930 entry marks part of the
significant shift in self-construction that these journals chart, as Carr asserts her own
importance as an artist, one whose diary, even if only a record of “odd thoughts and
feelings,” merits attention. This assertion, made “privately” in the journal but, as my
analysis demonstrates, publicly directed, shows Carr taking control of the personal text
and its audience that Harris had originally chosen for her, a significant step in Carr’s
personal and artistic growth.

The connections that Carr makes in this entry between writing and painting in her
work, as Susanna Egan, Tippett and others have charted, denote one function for the
diary. As Carr explains, “trying to find equivalents for things in words helps me find
equivalents in painting. That is the reason for this journal” (22). Like Page, Carr works
out ideas in both textual and visual forms, drawing on both talents to get at her
"innermosts"; both diarists subordinate writing to painting, using the everyday workhorse of language to generate the more cerebral or abstract painting. But Carr’s writing about painting in her diary serves other purposes as well. It also allows her to try out her ideas about art, to give herself the encouragement and criticism that she does not find in her lived life. She externalizes this advising role, setting up a dichotomy between “painting Emily” and “thinking Emily,” becoming her own mentor instead of counting on Harris to fill that role.

Unlike the 1927 journal, in which Carr couched her self-appraisal in diminutives, these journals paint a very different image of Carr the artist. She still struggles with self-doubts, but now has some successes to give weight to her artistic assertions. Carr fills pages of these diaries with instructions and commands, all the time addressing them to “you” or “artist.” On June 30th, 1930, she pens a short entry: “Find the forms you desire to express your purpose. When you have succeeded in getting them as near as you can to express your idea, never leave them but push on and on strengthening and emphasizing those forms to enclose that green idea or ideal” (29). In November of the same year, she writes a list of objectives for a painter, outlining her own philosophy of art and its purpose based on a communion with nature and God. Concluding this litany, she writes, “Listen, this perhaps is the way to find that thing I long for” (31). Whom does she entreat to listen? That question is partially answered at the end of the entry, when she adds, “So, artist, you too from the deeps of your soul, down among dark and silence, let your roots creep forth, gaining strength” (31). This artist, this imagined addressee, is in part herself, and such entries help her, as she notes here, to “find that thing I long for.” But by using herself as a model in this entry, universalizing these goals by dropping the personal
pronouns and identifying her addressee only as “artist,” Carr imagines a reader/listener that is separate from, though closely connected to, herself. In these passages, she simultaneously occupies the positions of student and teacher, and explores the “new discursive possibility[ies]” (S. Miller 85) these different graphic identities hold. Using her diary to take on the role of instructor as well as pupil, Carr gives value to her own artistic vision and weight to her sense of artistic authority, which she could not do with confidence in her 1927 diary.

This imagined artist-pupil reader lets Carr be the mentor, an important step for a woman who throughout her lived artistic career, in both painting and writing, generally took on the role of the innocent, the unschooled, the needy student at the knee of male teachers, including Harris, Dilworth, and Mark Tobey. The artist/s she advises in her journal have neither gender nor age, but she is superior to them in knowledge, vision, and skill. In this role, she provides an unfailingly supportive, if demanding, coach for herself, and in doing so becomes more reliant on and comfortable with her own counsel. On December 7, 1933, she scolds, “You need not expect Lawren Harris to do your thinking for you. He suggests […] then leaves you to think things out for yourself. That’s real teaching” (86). Significantly, by May 1934, following several pages of self-instructing entries, Carr indicates that she needs no other mentor than herself. “Make your own soul your judge,” she admonishes, and continues, “Once I used to think, ‘How would Lawren express this or that?’ Now I don’t think that any more. I say, ‘Emily, what do you make of this or that?’” (116-17). She has “graduated” from her dependency on Harris and found her own way. Her confident self-assertions in the journal mirror her increasing
public successes as a visual artist, and buoy her to continue developing her skills as a literary artist.

Composing these entries in the early 1930s, long before they would be published (if she had even decided at that point to publish them), Carr writes for personal use, for "private" reasons that served her professional, public career. She made—or at least announced—her decision to publish these journals posthumously only after she became an established artist. In their posthumous publication, then, these entries take on public functions in themselves. They demonstrate Carr's philosophy of painting and attest to her ability to teach and articulate her ideas about art. Since she left no other book on art, no tome in which she expounds her views, her journals, the only genre available to her for these purposes, stand as her textbook or treatise, marking her value as an esteemed and original artist, one who is anxious to share her experience. In testifying to the fact that Carr did indeed know what she was doing, they potentially silence the critics Carr both loved and hated, giving her the last word. In its private, not-yet-for-publication mode, the diary allowed Carr to record and refine her public performances, identifying the stories of her self on which she constructed her artistic identity.

As records of public life and art as well as repositories of the "tiny scraps" of life that happen between paintings and public appearances, Carr's diaries do not focus solely on her professional life. In spite of the editing, they are chronicles of day-to-day life, and therefore capture Carr's "private" moments, and in doing so imagine different communities. Painting trips and writing sessions are crammed by necessity amongst records of housecleaning, nursing sick animals, attending church, and dealing with visitors. After recording "No work today. How could anyone address oneself to upstairs
thoughts with sick monkeys and motorists scattered every old place?” she reminds herself, “Do not forget life, artist” (57). Art is but one element, albeit a central one, in the life the diary constructs. For an artist who had struggled to find her voice and career, for a woman whose loneliness was equaled by her annoyance at humanity, for an individual who felt always apart from the main, the personal diary’s functions as non-judgemental confidante and objective memory box were vitally important. Carr shares with Sarton this sense of solitude and personal isolation, even amongst friends. Both diarists construct themselves as women on the outside, perpetually swimming against the current, “natural-born solitaire[s]” (Hundreds and Thousands 76), always left without a seat in the life game of musical chairs (151). For Carr and Sarton, then, the diary substitutes for an ideal friend and also an ideal reader, one who appreciates both the public figure and the private individual.

Though Carr’s artist-pupil remains for the most part ungendered, and Carr’s relationships with other women artists in her life were, like Sarton’s, fraught, Carr’s diaries on occasion clearly imagine a woman reader, an extension, perhaps, of the deep loneliness Carr describes. Despite her sense that she has “not a single thing in common with” women of her generation (141), she fills her journals from this period with domestic metaphor, clearly addressing, in these cases, an imagined reader who is decidedly not Lawren Harris. She wonders in 1933, “Do you know the exquisite, self-respecting firm feel of a mended garter and taut stockings that have slopped down your calf from a broken one? Well, that’s the same feel you get from a good day’s painting after a period of impossibility” (90). The “you” here does, she imagines, know the feel of a stocking, but is not a painter, since Carr needs to explain the connection. Back in
lecturer-mode, she warns herself to stay original, concluding, “if you make your own cake and know the recipe and stir the thing with your own hand it’s your cake” (111). “Have you ever,” she asks in 1933, “rubbed your cheek against a man’s sleeve and, from its very stout, warm texture against your soft young cheek, felt the strength and manliness of all it contained?” (85). Such references address a different reader from the “artist” passages, in which Carr develops her professional acumen. They highlight instead the more personal, everyday, distinctly feminine Carr, one most at odds with her public persona as a loveless, crusty eccentric. In the “oddments” box of the journal, the professional and private worlds and references often overlap, with no need to separate them in this “private” space. In their mixing in Carr’s diary they create an image of a woman artist, one who baked cakes as well as made canvases.

Significantly, Carr’s editors felt comfortable leaving such passages intact in these later journals, though they had omitted similar material from the 1927 journal. With Carr established both in the diary and in public as a professional artist of some repute, the editors could “reveal” more of the private person, fulfilling the promise Clarke made in his Foreword to the diary, proclaiming it as “honest and true,” representing Carr’s “private thoughts” (ix). Carr gives her audience that reassurance as well, calling her diary the “little book, you holder of my secrets” (67), secrets that, in the interest of both the public and the personal, the diary holds no longer. Having fulfilled “private” purposes for Carr while she lived, the diary now serves her public, giving another, final version of her life for her admirers. If we might think of her other autobiographical writings as still-lives, reflecting back on a time now past and neatly enclosed in the retrospective narrative, we could consider her journals as moving pictures, capturing
frame-by-frame an artistic life in process, creating an image that must be seen in its entirety to be understood.

Conclusion

Sarton, Carr, and Page, all professional writers, saw their diaries as valuable for both personal and professional reasons. Though such “practiced writers,” as Judy Simons argues, were “understandably self-conscious about what they told their diaries, sensitive to the distinction between public and private modes of expression” (7), these three diarists also recognized the need to blur such distinctions in their public personal journals. Writing explicitly for audiences, whether immediately or in the future, these literary diarists negotiated contemporary generic expectations of the diary as intimate, confessional, and secret and their own appraisals of the genre’s literary, and therefore public, worth. Aware of readers’ distrust of “for-publication” diaries, all three provided suitably familiar approximations of the “private” diary in their published journals. Employing such rhetorical strategies as accommodation or gapping, enumeration of domestic detail, and metaphor alongside evocations of celebrity or professional communities, these diarists create believable self-portraits of themselves as public figures who, like these diary texts, can also be intimate and personal. In doing so, they take a form long-associated with, and consequently dismissed as, a “feminine” mode of writing without “public or commercial value” (Raoul “Echo” 17) and make it an essential element of their professional careers.

In publishing a series of journals throughout her lifetime, May Sarton makes the most effort to anticipate and deflect criticism (both popular and academic) and shape her
personal texts to meet public demand. Inviting readers to share her private life and space, she managed an enormously successful self-promotion campaign through her diaries, bringing her popular success, and, more importantly, drawing critical attention to her professional work in all genres. Not only acknowledging but welcoming the readers who “lurk at the writer’s elbow” (Bloom “I Write” 24), Sarton demonstrates that the public-private distinction for the diary genre is unstable and, moreover, irrelevant, since she is able to convince readers of her diaries’ “authenticity” even in an obviously public forum. Embedding her own literary analysis and theorizing into her personal narrative, she instructs fans and critics how to read her text and establishes her own diary series as part of a long and legitimate literary tradition.

P.K. Page also published her diary during her lifetime, but selected a single, reconstructed volume to represent her “private” writing. Focused on an extraordinary time and place, Brazilian Journal documents her transition back into being a public figure after losing her identity as a writer. Published thirty years after its original inscription, the journal hails multiple addressees, including the original diary’s imagined communities (writers, painters, Canadians at home) as well as the reading audiences addressed by the published version whose interest in her story is piqued primarily by her status as a canonical Canadian writer. Like Sarton, Page convinces this audience to accept as a “true” diary a text that she admits she revised for publication. (Re)creating a work that is at once consciously literary and intensely personal, Page produces a diary that challenges the idea that public and private modes of writing and living are and must remain distinct.
Finally, Emily Carr wrote her diary for herself and others. Indeed, with its extensive editing, _Hundreds and Thousands_ is in many ways written by herself and others. This text’s convoluted path to publication after the diarist’s death highlights the emptiness of beliefs in the diary (or any text) as unmediated, spontaneous, “purely” private. Carr’s decision to publish her diaries, even though she herself did not see them through the process, indicates her awareness of their public value as literature and autobiography, as a personal journal and an artist’s statement. In publishing her diaries posthumously, Carr needed to make no adjustments to her text in order to make it convincingly “real” as a diary, but throughout her fourteen-year narrative in progress she addresses audiences both actual and imaginary, personal and professional. As a writer whose professional works were celebrated for their homey, unsophisticated style, Carr recognized her diary, with its “scraps of life” that added up to greater significance, as her master work, worthy of publication alongside her “real” writings.

These three women, professional writers and professional diarists, show the genre functioning in many traditional ways at the same time as they challenge traditional assumptions about it. Creating personal narratives that unfold over time and inscribe the moment in which they are written, they ask the diary genre to perform a number of social actions, as do all the diarists in this study. As professional writers who turn their personal diaries into literary works, however, Carr, Sarton, and Page most consciously approach the diary as an art, as a textual act that engages literary skill. Their attention to the literariness of their diaries upsets popular notions of the genre as artless, without public value, and of diarists as private citizens writing for themselves alone. They are able to make their diaries public because of their status as literary celebrities; they and their
stories are worthy of public attention because these diarists are already public commodities. Their public status causes a reappraisal of the value of the “private.” For professional writers, the personal acquires significance and cultural currency because it represents the “real” person behind the celebrity. Other diarists, including Elizabeth Vaughan and Jane Pinckard, who do not have a pre-existing relationship with the public, must make different kinds of arguments to prove the value of their “private” diaries, which they see, like these literary diarists, as valuable as both personal and public documents.
Chapter Two: Personally Historical: The World War II Diaries of Civilian Internees

“This is a universal experience. [...] It is a forced situation, not the perfect setting for an experiment, but that is always so in life” (Crouter 36).

Trapped by circumstance and nationality behind the barbed wire of Japanese internment camps in the Second World War, many civilian prisoners echo Natalie Crouter’s sense of being part of a mass, ad-hoc, social experiment. Involuntary participants in these “test cases,” internees were faced with a situation for which they had no precedent but that they felt was of extreme significance both personally and historically. In experiencing this exigence, this sense that they should act in this situation, many internees, including Crouter, Peggy Abkhazi, and Elizabeth Vaughan, turned to the diary, a traditional form, to capture and make explicable their highly untraditional experiences. Unsure if either they or their diaries would survive the war, internment diarists wrote simultaneously for themselves and for family, friends, and the public at large. By keeping such records in the face of an uncertain future, these diarists interpreted daily events for the present and consciously set out to produce a written legacy for posterity, a legacy that became public when these diaries were published decades after the end of the war. American internee Natalie Crouter (1898-1984) released her journal under the title Forbidden Diary in 1980. The diary of her fellow countrywoman Elizabeth Vaughan (1905-1957) became available posthumously in 1984 as The Ordeal of Elizabeth Vaughan. Peggy Abkhazi (1902-1994),

---

a British orphan turned Canadian princess, published her diary, *A Curious Cage*, which chronicled her internment in Shanghai, in 1981; it was reissued in 2001.

Under the “klieg lights” (Crouter 38) of internment camp living, civilian internees existed in an interstitial border zone between “public” and “private,” and therefore wrote texts that reflect this conflation of spheres, social actions, and identities. Diaries created under these extraordinary circumstances, products of the “experiment” of concentration camps, are by necessity themselves experimental, expanding the traditional capacities of the genre to meet the particular needs of internment diarists. Because the diarist, her text, and indeed her story are stuck behind barbed wire, the public readers these diarists imagine for their record of war must be in the future, and in the interim the diary serves many traditionally private or personal functions. Such diaries therefore offer the opportunity to see this genre at work under pressure, fulfilling functions that in peacetime would be performed by other genres, by a number of different writers, for a variety of audiences. These texts provide different understandings of the functions that diaries can serve, as well as of the identities and audiences these particular diarists imagined during an extraordinary time. Reading genres as rhetorical responses to situations, I will consider too what kinds of responses the diary enables, and what actions these diarists took, through keeping a diary in this particular context.

This “experimental” and abnormal context has significance as well for analyzing and understanding the lexicogrammatical features of these texts. Writing under duress, internment diarists may not be creating gaps, using presupposition, and accommodating strategically in their public personal journals, as Sarton, Page, and Carr do. Instead, these features may reflect the practical considerations of keeping a clandestine diary in a
concentration camp behind enemy lines, not knowing how much time—if any—is left to write the rest of the story. Paying attention to such features and to the circumstances of textual production shows the diary acting as a provisional, unstable narrative in process, in which diarists use the genre to play many public and personal roles.

The diarists' awareness that they are "living history" (Crouter 423) in the camps, a history that they may not live to tell in person, lends a particular urgency to their diary narratives, and permits them to anticipate the value of their stories to a reading public after the war. These writers therefore all imagine varying kinds of publication. They address audiences as specific as their own children and extended families, post-internment, or as general as "you at home" (Crouter 49), a reading public that will have no personal connection to the diarists but presumably shares an interest in their stories as part of the larger narrative of the war. These women needed their personal diaries to be public, that is, they needed to imagine that the diaries would be read by people other than themselves, because these texts allowed them to interpret, legitimate, and survive the ordeal of the concentration camp. They imagined their texts serving as proof of their experience for readers that would not have been through these events. Thus they make no secret that their diaries address outside audiences and therefore are not "truly private"; they do not attempt to make their records seem "authentic," using the kinds of strategies to construct intimacy that I have described in literary diaries. While the literary diarists examined in Chapter One need to make their "public" diaries seem as "real" (personal, intimate, unmediated, written as if for one's self alone) as possible for various reasons, internment diarists are in a situation that they do not want to keep private, from which in fact they may benefit only if they make it public and explicitly write to an external
audience. This different context changes how audiences will read and interpret these diaries as meeting their generic expectations, how they will measure "authenticity" and react to the public orientation of these texts.

Similarly, though internment diarists share motivations for writing with the literary diarists, they extend these purposes to address their needs as private citizens suddenly thrust into the public realm by forces outside their control. As we have seen, literary diarists use public personal journals to control their public image and suggest interpretation of their professional work, in addition to performing traditional "private" diary functions. While internment diarists also project a public image in their diaries, that projection stems from their need to assert their own existence and experiences and bear witness to the facticity and the value of what they undergo. This act of witnessing and self-construction in an environment designed to break down identities and delegitimate the individual voice makes the internment diary a powerful tool for resistance and survival. The function of the diary to reconstruct subjectivity arises directly out of the situation to which the genre responds, and suggests one reason why the diary in particular became a way to address these circumstances.

In this chapter I will examine how these diarists adapted the genre to suit their particular situation, and how that situation affected the narratives these women could produce as well as the personal and public functions they envisioned for their texts. I will also consider how the diary genre gave these writers opportunities to take on identities other than that of "civilian internee," and thus played an important part in their survival. Further, as women prisoners in an environment and era with prescribed notions of "appropriate" gender roles and behavior, these diarists raise and confront issues of gender
throughout their texts. In the internment camp, where gender lines were simultaneously strictly enforced (by both the Japanese and the male internees) and challenged by the requirements of the situation, these issues become central to the identities and narratives these diarists inscribe, and, later, in the public reception of their chronicles of war experience.

Finally, since all three diaries were significantly edited and published with scholarly apparatus including introductions, endnotes, and epilogues, they invite as well consideration of the role of the publishing process in how “private” texts by private citizens are valued, understood, and received. Crouter typed out her own manuscript, then worked with editor Lynn Bloom to shape the published version. Before her death, Vaughan had begun revising her diary, but only completed the “first few pages” (Petillo xxi); after she died her sister transcribed the original diary, which was edited by Carol Petillo. The editing of Abkhazi’s text in particular requires attention, since the published version represents a significantly altered, reshaped, and expanded version of the original. Abkhazi, with the help of historian S.W. Jackman, made substantial changes to her manuscript diaries, rearranging, combining, and inserting new passages into the original entries, crafting a particular narrative and identity for the published version. Most significantly, Abkhazi invented or at least made explicit an epistolary framework for the diary, writing an introductory passage for the published diary in which she describes her journal as a letter to her friends Roderick and Muriel Mackenzie, an apparent fiction she supports through references to “these letters” (105) and “this wandering letter” (58) throughout her text.27 Because not all of the original diaries are extant, I cannot

27 Among Abkhazi’s papers is an undated note, with many items crossed out and overwritten, on “American Women’s Club of Shanghai” stationary, that may be the beginnings of an introduction to the
determine whether this letter-diary format had any basis in fact or was introduced only in the published version, though certainly her emendations demonstrate that she wished to emphasize, if not suggest, that she wrote only for the Mackenzies. In cases where I have been able to compare the original and edited diaries, I have used only the material found in both versions; if differences exist between them, I have included these changes in footnotes.  

The Internee Experience

Following the series of Japanese offensives on December 7, 1941 (December 8 in the South Pacific), “enemy nationals,” citizens of the Allied countries, were rounded up all across the Pacific front and interned in makeshift camps. The Association of British Civilian Internees of the Far East estimates that over 185,000 Allied nationals were interned by the Japanese (http://www.abcifer.com/). Civilian internment camps throughout the Pacific theater were not the death camps of the Nazis, nor the torture chambers they became for the POWs. Instead, internment camps were “holding pens” intended to keep colonial whites away from the native populations the Japanese wanted to enlist as full-fledged members of the “Greater Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere” (Bloom “Escaping” 104). Because the internees were civilian and not military prisoners, they...
were not subject to *bushido*, the Japanese "military code of honour," and therefore, unlike the Allied military POWs, "their imprisonment was not considered a disgrace" (Van Velden 248). "The commandants of the civilian internment camps," Frances Cogan explains, "as far as anyone can tell, apparently intended for the internees to live—though not well, of course, and primarily by their own means, with minimal help from the Japanese" (111). Food supplies were barely adequate to begin with, and at starvation rations by 1944, when the tide began to turn against the Japanese; starvation and disease were the two biggest threats civilian internees faced (Waterford 60).

Each camp handled its own internal organization, including cooking, sanitation, and medical services. A central committee of elected or appointed internees (almost exclusively men) worked and negotiated with the Japanese commandant, meaning that internees were, for the most part, "free to order their day-to-day life in camp and to decide how to carry out best Japanese orders [sic]" (Van Velden 262). This self-government allowed the internees to quickly become a new community, one which simultaneously duplicated and destroyed pre-war groupings and social stratifications. The prisoners were almost exclusively white, mid-to-upper-class, colonial citizens, bringing a level of uniformity to the initial camp communities.

Abkhazi, Vaughan, and Crouter, all white, financially privileged women, were typical members of this pre-war expatriate or colonial class. Natalie Crouter and Elizabeth Vaughan were both American civilians living with their husbands and children in the Philippines during the Second World War. Like many Americans in the South Pacific at that time, they took advantage of the high wages available compared to the relatively low cost of living, and enjoyed lifestyles much more luxurious than they could
afford in the United States, with servants, cars, and active social lives. But this life of
privilege ended with the Japanese invasion in December 1941 and the subsequent
internment of citizens from the Allied nations. Natalie Crouter, her husband and two
adolescent children were interned at Camp Holmes in the mountains of Baguio. In this
site, the 500 internees benefited from a healthier climate and environment, as well as
from a series of reasonable commandants who made camp life significantly more
endurable than in other camps. Camp Holmes was moved to the Bilibid prison in Manila
in 1945, where it was liberated by U.S. soldiers in February of that year. Elizabeth
Vaughan, whose husband enlisted in the U.S. army and died in the notorious Cabanatuan
military prison, spent the majority of the war with her children, both toddlers, at the Santo
Tomás site, along with 5000 other internees. This camp, on the grounds of the Santo
Tomás University, was the largest civilian internment camp in the Philippines, and
among the Island’s worst civilian camps. In 1945, as the U.S. military neared, several
camp committee members were executed, and increasing numbers of internees
succumbed to starvation and disease before the camp’s liberation on February 3, 1945.

Until 1944 internees in both Camp Holmes and Santo Tomás were able to receive
additional food packages from friends and former servants from outside the camps; with
the loss of this privilege, and with the increasing Allied attacks, the prisoners (and in
some cases, their captors) came to the brink of starvation. Living quarters were tiny, with
no more than seven feet per prisoner, and were segregated by sex. Radios and
newspapers were banned, and no mail was received in or left the camps for over three
years. Despite their constant hunger, discomfort, isolation, and fear of the unknown, the
internees did act to make the camps livable and to retain some vestiges of their pre-war
lives. They started schools for children and adults, and put on camp-wide activities such as plays, quiz nights, and lectures; in Baguio, the Japanese guards attended and even performed in some of these events. Both women and their families returned to the United States on repatriation ships in the spring of 1945.

Born in Shanghai to British expatriates, Peggy Abkhazi (née Pemberton-Carter) had lived most of her life in China by the time the Japanese occupied Shanghai in December 1941. A single woman of independent means, she moved in the upper circles of colonial society, fully enjoying the rights and privileges of an Extra-territorial citizen, a sphere that was seemingly unperturbed by the growing threat of the Japanese military. When Japan declared war on Britain and the U.S. and carried out its crippling series of offensives across the Pacific theatre, including the bombing of the British gunboats the *Petrel* and the *Wake* in the Shanghai harbor, Abkhazi remarked in her diary that she was “feeling stunned by the unexpectedness of it though I suppose no one can believe that statement who was not living here at the time” (24). Unlike in the Philippines, internment was a gradual process in China, where approximately 9,350 men, women, and children were imprisoned (Waterford 145). Citizens from the Allied nations living in China were required to register with the Japanese and wear numbered scarlet armbands, and became known as “Enemy Subjects.” Though, as Abkhazi’s editor and historian S.W. Jackman reports, “the principal civic and business leaders were arrested and confined in Haiphong Road Gaol” (16), the majority of Enemy Subjects continued to live a deprived but relatively unmolested existence. In February 1943, the Japanese began “full-scale internment” (Waterford 225), a reaction, Waterford suggests, to the internment of Japanese-Americans in North America.
Conditions in Chinese internment camps, though harsh, were better than in other parts of the “Co-Prosperity Sphere.” Abkhazi was interned along with approximately 1,800 other Enemy Subjects in the Lunghua camp, a partially-bombed former school, one of four such camps in Shanghai that the Japanese euphemistically termed Civilian Assembly Centres. The majority of prisoners were British, giving the camps a “British character” (Van Velden 250) that permitted internees to maintain, at least initially, some sense of their original communities and identities. Prisoners were allowed parcels from outside once a month, containing vital food and other necessities, and they were able to supplement the meager rations provided by the Japanese by purchasing extra food supplies when they were available (Van Velden 226). Though they had a relatively generous allotment for personal space within their communal barracks (Abkhazi had 3 x 1.2 metres), privacy was essentially impossible. Although internees could only sporadically send or receive mail, they could purchase newspapers (Japanese-controlled), set up schools, and put on musical revues and other forms of entertainment, though all of these privileges could be, and often were, revoked as a form of punishment. Hiyashi, the camp commandant for most of the war, was considered generally moderate (Jackman 20).

However, food supplies were poor and monotonous, and eventually almost non-existent. On August 24, 1944, Abkhazi notes, “Yesterday we reached the nearest we have yet come to starvation diet” (129), and by February 1945 the food shortage was so dire she could no longer feed the family of cats she kept to control rodents, and was forced to euthanize them. The water supply had to be trucked in and required a full-time crew to boil and dispense it (Abkhazi worked for a period as one of these “Lady Dippers”). The buildings were ramshackle, with no insulation against the weather; floors regularly
collapsed under the weight of the bunks. With dwindling coal and electricity supplies, this lack of proper shelter proved one of the most significant hardships, particularly since the winters of 1943 and 1944 were among the coldest on record. Though Abkhazi declared in her first month of incarceration that internment would be a "liberal education in the humanities" (65), and even at the end of the war felt it was a "unique experience in a lifetime—[...] something I am not sorry to have lived through" (153), it was still an extraordinary ordeal. Interned for "two years, five months, and five days," (Abkhazi 152), Abkhazi remained at Lunghua until the camp was liberated in August 1945, when she moved to Victoria, British Columbia, Canada to join former Shanghai friends Roderick and Muriel Mackenzie. There, she married an old friend, deposed Georgian Prince Nicholas Abkhazi, with whom she established "the Principality of Abkhazia" (Gordon 12), a property with an internationally acclaimed garden that is now a tourist attraction.

**Something from Nothing: Effects of Internment Camp Production on the Diary**

Contemporary notions of the diary characterize (and idealize) the form as a solitary writing practice designed for introspection, therapy, self-improvement, and meditation, an ideal activity for leisure time. In theorizing women's diaries in particular, critics including Bunkers, Lensink, and Wink have imagined the diary as the literary equivalent of a "room of one's own," a discursive space for imagining and creating identities. Further, the diary's stereotypical style, characterized by "rhetorical questions, exclamations, parentheses, very short or meandering sentences, abrupt cut-offs due to interruptions, and gaps" (Raoul "Women and Diaries" 62), has become a signal of the
diary's spontaneity, creativity, and authenticity as well as a sign of its private nature. While such stylistic tendencies have for most of the twentieth century given literary scholars an excuse to dismiss diaries as non-literary, they make the genre particularly attractive to diarists writing under circumstances totally removed from "normal" diary conditions, including privacy and leisure time, or even materials with which to write. I will briefly outline the particular impediments internment diarists faced before considering how they affected the diary narratives these women could produce.

Diarists in internment camp wrote their "private" diaries in full view of dozens of roommates and hundreds of fellow internees—though these journals may have been "forbidden," they were hardly "secret," at least amongst the internees—during the very few moments of "free" time they had. In an entry she pens a few weeks into internment, Abkhazi neatly captures the kind of writing environment in which internment diarists created their narratives. She records, "this is being written to the accompanying noises of said door [to the toilet, right next to Abkhazi's "bunk"], and the chatter of 25 adults and 2 children. My self seated in my canvas chair, feet on the tin trunk, and the washboard for a writing table" (56). Later she illustrates the difficulties of forming coherent thoughts on paper under such circumstances by listing the events that have "punctuated" the writing of an entry:

1. A wild rush outside to nail a strip of wood across my window which threatened to blow out in the near typhoon which is raging. (2) Another outing to replenish the coal bucket. [...] (3) Drinking water queue. (4) Toilet patrol. (5) Arranging and watching the buckets out collecting rain
water. (6) Supplementary meal with next door neighbours. (7) Dormitory patrol. (58)

Abkhazi adds ruefully, “The most comic feature is the complete lack of time. I’d had visions of long hours of reading, studying, or knitting, whereas there is no time for anything” (58). Yet she found the time to continue recording on a fairly regular basis for the rest of her internment. Vaughan, who had to look after her own needs as well as those of her two children, aged two and four by the end of the war, spent as much as two hours a day queuing, and the rest of the time cooking, cleaning, and performing her camp duties. But except for one four-month hiatus, she continued the diary until her repatriation in 1945. Crouter took careful notes during the short hours when electricity was available, between waitressing and “charwoman” (x) duties, while helping look after her family; even during a three-month hospital stay she records almost daily, and when she is too sick to write herself she has her daughter June take dictation.

The lack of paper was an even more significant impediment to journal-writing than the lack of privacy or time, and shaped the kinds of narratives these diarists crafted by literally changing the way they wrote. In contrast to Carr, Page, or Sarton, for example, who wrote their diaries in bound notebooks or typed entries and compiled the pages, internment diarists had to be more ad-hoc in their approach. Crouter kept her “forbidden” diary on scraps of paper salvaged from “flaps of envelopes, margins of book pages, cut-up fragments of discarded records and ledgers” (Bloom “Introduction” xviii) that she then sewed into bundles and hid under sacks of food in a straw bag that she carried with her at all times. Similarly, Vaughan’s “diary” was an assortment of “typed and pencil-edited pages, thirteen previously used blue examination books, several pieces
of torn brown wrapping paper, and many scraps garnered from various notebooks” (Petillo xxi). By February 1943, Vaughan worries that she may not be able to continue her diary due to lack of materials. “I wonder if I can find enough paper and other materials to go ahead with my diary,” she notes. “I’m now writing with a stub of pencil less than two inches long” (187). With time, paper, and privacy at a premium in all camps, these diarists thus faced a number of practical difficulties in choosing to begin and continue these records. Their commitment to keeping these texts despite substantial impediments suggests that their diaries served many essential functions for them.

Writing a diary on the fly, scribbling on whatever paper lay at hand, literally fragmented the diary narratives, and meant that these diarists could not easily look back over what they had written in previous entries. Each entry therefore had to stand alone, a discrete narrative that the diarists planned to integrate into a larger story after the war when they could assemble the diary’s scraps. (Crouter had numbered hers for ease of reassembling; Vaughan’s still looked, to one family member, like a “pile of rubbish” (Petillo xxi).) Though these pieces of paper confound traditional diary writing techniques, the methods they represent were in fact entirely appropriate to the internment diary form and function. Since the diarists could go on compiling scraps ad infinitum, they resisted an artificial, external closure, order, or continuity enforced by the length of a bound journal or the restrictions of a typewriter; they themselves determined when they would stop writing, which gave them a significant, if largely symbolic, degree of control of one element of their lives.

Because of the unusual situation in which they wrote, all three diarists comment more than usual on the act of writing and on the nature of their diaries as material
documents, that is, as documents that required material and resources, particularly time and energy, that were in scant supply. More significantly, personal writings of any kinds were banned in many camps (Van Velden 239), and rumors, though unsubstantiated, persisted that being caught with such material would result in penalties ranging from torture to execution. Believing that they put themselves and others at risk by writing, diarists comment on the ethics as well as the practicalities of keeping a diary in an internment camp. Vaughan notes that she dare not take her diary with her when she watches her children play on the porch, since “it [the diary] may be taken away by passing guard. It is all right to read but dangerous to be seen writing” (113). Crouter records on several occasions that she has changed the location of her note-packets. The willingness of these diarists to persist despite these obstacles indicates that the diary became a critical part of their survival strategies within the camp, producing a narrative so valuable that they risked their lives to write them.

The risks and physical limitations do mean that these internment diarists were circumscribed in their narratives, designing their entries very carefully to be understood only by very particular readers. Since one unintended public audience could be the Japanese guards, or worse yet, the Kampetei, the notoriously brutal military police,

---

29 Historians have not come to any agreement on whether such penalties were ever enacted, or indeed if personal writings were in fact forbidden, and the fact that the Japanese destroyed most official papers about the camps makes confirmation that much more difficult. In Java, for example, commandants did prohibit “[t]he dispersion or display of images or writing” and explicitly forbade diaries: “It is prohibited to keep diaries” (Captain 6). Regulations for China and the Philippines may not have been so direct, given the differences between camps in these countries and in Java, Malaya, and Sumatra, where the internees faced inhumane commandants and living conditions. Jim Halsema, who was interned with Crouter in Camp Holmes, states that diaries were never forbidden, and in fact the Japanese soldiers who guarded them kept journals themselves (personal e-mail). (I have not found references to any of these texts being published, though given the outcome of the war that is not perhaps surprising. However, Rokuro Tomibe, Camp Holmes’ well-regarded commandant, wrote a retrospective essay, “The Secret Story of the War’s End,” which was published in The Bulletin of the American Historical Collection.) Regardless of the truth or fiction of this rumour, as Cogan notes, “there was certainly widespread belief to that effect” (327), and diarists felt that they were taking a risk.
Abkhazi, Crouter, and Vaughan were careful in their comments about their captors.\textsuperscript{30} Though Abkhazi believed that once she was inside the camp, “any purely private diary [...] would not be regarded as dangerous” (Jackman 17), she is throughout quite circumspect in her comments about her Japanese captors, who remain for the most part offstage, the disembodied agents of “slaps and hits galore” (Abkhazi 128). Such an agentless phrase imagines an addressee who can retrieve the identity of the doer of this action from the situational context of the utterance, a retrieval that should not be too difficult for any audience given that the narrative takes place in an internment camp under enemy control. The very act of not naming shows the diarist addressing a specific reader or group but acknowledging the possibility of overhearers. As we have seen, speakers or writers do not intend overhearers (either bystanders or eavesdroppers) to participate in a conversation but are aware of their presence. They consequently adopt one of four attitudes towards these listeners: indifference, disclosure, concealment, or disguise (Clark and Schaefer 256). Given the rumored indictment against diaries, and the content of Abkhazi’s entries, it is likely she considers the potential Japanese overhearer as an eavesdropper, a listener whose needs she does not have to accommodate and from whom she can choose to conceal her meaning. Adopting an attitude of indifference, in which she would “design [her] utterance as if the overhearer were not there” (Clark and Schaefer 263), could be dangerous, even deadly. As a non-disclosing writer, one who does not seek or provide common ground with the overhearer, she manages to communicate with her intended addressees while not speaking too openly.

\textsuperscript{30} For example, in Camp Holmes, three men were imprisoned and tortured because they were named in the diary of a man who had escaped. After watching the third man being taken away, presumably because “Gene’s [the escapee] diary was found,” Crouter concludes, “I am now going to ‘bury’ [sew into packets and hide in the bag] these notes and start a new series” (322-23).
Abkhazi’s agentless expression therefore not only affirms audience through its implication of shared knowledge (the reader who knows that the Japanese will hit and slap) but also protects the diarist by allowing her to report incidents without directly indicting her captors. Similarly, in the first days of internment Crouter cautiously records that “The berries from an unknown giver were consumed” (19), a sentence that hides both the identity of the giver, who may be at risk from the Japanese for supporting the enemy nationals, and the identities of those who ate the berries, who may be at risk from the Japanese for accepting this gift. (The consumers conceivably might also face the wrath of their fellow internees for this act, particularly in the early stages of camp life when the divisions between the “haves” and the “have-nots” were most marked.)

In such entries, it is safest for the writer to imagine a reader who is an insider, who shares the same knowledge as the diarist, a knowledge that is defined through such linguistic features as presupposing expressions (for instance, “the berries” in Crouter’s entry) and these agentless expressions. The diarist may find the idea of accommodating a new imagined audience too risky, because such disclosure would require the diarist to explain, to name names, to provide context for her remarks. Since doing so could bring harm to herself or those she names or implicates, the internment diarist tailors potentially explosive entries for addressees who know as much as she does, or to whom she can explain her meaning after the war if she and her diary survive. The possibility that their diaries may become prematurely public, reaching audiences other than those intended, therefore shapes how and what the diarists write.

These conditions meant that not all of their entries could be complete, cohesive, or coherent. Individual entries, limited not only by the amount of time and the kind of
content the diarist needs to inscribe but also by the paper supply she had available, may move without transition from topic to topic, leaving multiple narrative loose ends, and creating, ironically, the kind of stereotypical diary style that Raoul describes. Since, as she notes, this style is “determined by genre rather than gender” ("Women and Diaries" 62), the presence of such entries in internment diaries demonstrates features and functions of the diary as a form. Rebecca Hogan argues that the seemingly random order of items in a diary entry actually constitutes what she calls “diary parataxis” (102), a structuring relationship that applies to content as well as syntax, and to the entire diary as well as individual entries (101). This “organizing principle” is most apparent, she argues, in the “horizontal, non-hierarchical flow of events and details” (101-102); since diarists write in or near the moment they describe, they cannot “privilege ‘amazing’ or ‘ordinary’ events,” and thus “significance emerges later” (103). Certainly internment diarists, writing daily, in camps behind enemy lines, with little or no access to outside information, by necessity cannot always determine what events are extraordinary or mundane, and, as I discuss below, they consequently mix these two kinds of information without distinction. But these diarists also create such paratactic entries because of their situation and because of the variety of functions they need their diaries to perform, sometimes simultaneously. Their physical conditions, characterized at various times by hunger, fatigue, and illness, combine with the continuing problem of the lack of paper and time, to make them diarists under duress. They are in a situation they feel is historic, that needs recording, or they are full of emotion, and need to release such feelings “in private.” They may feel that nothing extraordinary has happened but they still want to
record their existence, but they may not have a great deal of time, energy, or material with which to perform these tasks.

Such paratactic entries stand out in these diaries because they contrast with the rest of the texts, which feature generally coherent, quite literary, often lengthy, writings; all three women were highly educated, skillful writers who took great care in crafting their narratives when they had the time. (As well, the writing will have been "cleaned up" in the publishing process). In these entries, diary parataxis creates layers of narrative compressed by the diarist's state in the moment of writing; each line is an entry in miniature indicating what is possible for the diarist to say in the time and place she writes. Rather than not write at all, thereby losing the experience she considers noteworthy, the diarist saves what she considers absolutely essential about it by adding it to her diary in its most succinct form. A "horizontal" arrangement of items in an entry can also indicate the diarist's unwillingness to confront or examine events or emotions that she recognizes are significant, and therefore worth writing down, but that are too painful to linger over. Vaughan reports on the early progress of the war: "Santo Domingo Church in Intramuros (Walled City) destroyed by direct hit. (Santo Domingo, virgin saint brought to Islands in 1600, elaborately jeweled later by Chinese convert, one of best dressed saints in P.I.'s, people came long distances to see her jewels)" (13). Her short-hand style clearly indicates the haste with which she writes, but her seemingly irrelevant introduction of Santo Domingo's history is jarringly out of place, a leap between topics that defies semantic logic, if read as part of the "war report" that surrounds it. However, reading this entry in the larger context of the diary and the various purposes it serves for Vaughan, this reference suggests a wider travel narrative that
records her time in a foreign country. In performing these two different roles, the diary addresses two different, but potentially overlapping, audiences. Parenthetically adding a history of Santo Domingo projects an addressee unfamiliar with the Philippines, while the specificity of the references in the first sentence speaks to a reader with more intimate knowledge of the place and its significance.

The juxtaposition of these items in Vaughan’s diary, and the abrupt shift between functions, indicate her state of mind in this confusing period in the weeks following the Japanese invasion. Her thoughts and therefore her diary fluctuate between the past and the present. Unable to commit fully to the horrors of the present, when the clear disrespect of the Japanese for the people they attack is demonstrated by their deliberate bombing of a religious building, Vaughan looks briefly to the past in this minute biography of the icon. Stacking this information beside another, quite unrelated reference to the church, Vaughan implies that she considers this knowledge as important and relevant to the entry as the contemporary carnage. In the next utterance, she returns to her report: “Also two girls’ schools hit [...]” (13). Her parenthetical aside is a brief respite from this bad news.

Similarly, Crouter abruptly ends an entry in which she expresses and had begun to explore her fears for her husband’s health with the non-sequitur, “The horse was homesick, whinnied off and on all night, in its palatial quarters” (421). This seemingly random line shows how she has consciously directed her thoughts away from a distressing subject that she cannot write about any more. Crouter’s unprecedented introduction of the horse into the entry as a definite reference, which creates a “gap” in the text, highlights the writer’s distracted and upset state of mind and the unhealthy
conditions in which she writes. The whinnying horse becomes a decoy for what Crouter does not want to acknowledge—her husband’s health is failing—and shifts her attention (and ours) to an innocuous topic that is external to her own situation (though, of course, she too is homesick). Crouter, unlike Vaughan, offers no parenthetical explanation for this presupposing expression. In such passages, these diarists address a reader who can make otherwise inexplicable connections between topics, or understand why the leap from one concept to another is indeed logical, given the context. Internment diarists do not always have the energy, time, or the inclination to accommodate a reader who may not be able to do so, and their discourse features and audience design reflect this situation. Counting on readers to infer reference from an utterance, even when the speaker has not introduced this information, the speaker can move more quickly to what is seen in the moment as the exciting or important information: a crucial consideration for internment diarists who are writing under pressure and under the constraints of their physical and mental condition.

Ironically for diaries that are explicitly designed for outside readers, these textual features—spans, gaps, agentless expressions, addressees both intimate and remote, horizontally-organized content—make the diaries most closely resemble the stereotypical style of an authentically “private” diary, one supposedly written without public design or rhetorical polish. However, coming upon these elements in an internment journal, as

31 Technically, “the horse” is not a gap, if we follow Hogan’s mandate to consider diary parataxis across entries. Instead, it is a weak tie that reaches back 49 sentences to the previous mention, two entries prior. But within the entry itself, which, as I have argued, may have had to act as a text independent from entries that preceded and succeeded it, “the horse” fits Halliday’s definition of a gap because it has no antecedent or tie to the preceding utterances. However, “the horse” here can also be classified as “given” information, in the sense defined by Ellen Prince of “shared knowledge.” A speaker may use given information when she “assumes that the hearer ‘knows,’ assumes, or can infer a particular thing” (Prince 230), either because the hearer has been told or can infer it. Operating under this assumption allows the speaker both to be
opposed to a literary diary or Weblog, readers may understand them as markers of a
different kind of authenticity, one that addresses the historical situation in which the
diarists live and write. Whereas gaps in Sarton’s texts, for example, are meant to signal
textual intimacy and generic authenticity, here these features reflect a style distinct to the
internment diary, and thus authenticate the experiences Abkhazi, Crouter, and Vaughan
narrate. Because, as I discuss later on, these women keep diaries of war, a mode that
would be familiar to many readers by the time these texts were published, they are
supposed to produce “non-literary,” artless entries. Indeed, the absence of such writing—
terse, elliptical, rushed—may raise suspicions about the “truth” of their narratives (as has
been the case with The Diary of Anne Frank).

The diary as a “socially recognizable” response (C. Miller “Genre” 158) to the
situation of war thus gives meanings to the genre’s discourse features that must be
understood within in the particular context in which the text is produced. For example,
the immediacy typical of diary narratives, in which diarists write in or near the instant,
allows the text to capture or embody the daily combination of the familiar and the strange
that is so characteristic of the concentration camp that internment diaries depict. The
authors try initially to record all that happens to them; they perceive everything as
important because the events and the experiences are so entirely new or “amazing.” In
peacetime, for example, Crouter would be unlikely to find the consumption of berries an
item worth including in her diary, but in the first month of internment, with the food
supply and meal preparation still being organized, such an event is indeed remarkable,
worthy of recording and remembering. Even after camp life becomes more routine,
however, the diarists are in the habit of recording the details of daily life and continue to list "ordinary" events, in part because they are in an internment camp behind enemy lines and thus the potential exists for something significant or exciting to happen without warning. Such routine items are the typical content of a personal journal, Raoul notes, and their presence creates "cumulative patterning" against which extraordinary events stand superimposed (French Fictional Journal 49). The long entries of mundane detail punctuated only occasionally by a major event signify the reality of daily life in the internment camp, where internees lived and waited between such "big" moments. Both the genre’s traditional style and content therefore fit these diarists’ unusual situation. Given its flexibility and open-endedness, its capacity to juxtapose the commonplace and the amazing, the diary is particularly well-suited to uncertain circumstances.

The dramatic representation of in-the-moment writing that the diary enables is even more significant when circumstances are changing or have the potential to change quickly, especially at the beginning and end of wars and, by extension, the beginning and ending of war diaries. Diary parataxis at such times becomes a textual representation of the precariousness of internees’ positions, and the uncertainty of their future, which they can rarely anticipate. Thus Vaughan cannot know as she writes, “Those special hand-dipped and hand-painted Christmas candles will doubtless serve a more utilitarian purpose than that for which they were designed,” that her next sentence, separated by only a few minutes from the previous, will record the end of her pre-war life. “BATAAN HAS FALLEN!” she exclaims, “Just announced, no details” (41). Another entry describing the “horrible monotony of living” (109) suddenly takes a dramatic turn when Vaughan notes, “Flash! Was stopped by two soldiers while writing the last word” (111).
With this sentence her entry turns momentarily into a suspenseful narrative of living with the enemy. The diary's capacity for recording "on-the-pulse" makes it particularly functional to the exigences of precariousness and uncertainty, exacerbated by the diarist's lack of information and her sense of responsibility to record these historic events for the future.

The news of the camp's liberation, which marked the beginning of the end of these diarists' ordeal and thus was one of the most significant and longed-for events in the camps, comes at an unexpected date and in unexpected ways to all three diarists, and their entries from this moment reflect this reality. On August 11, 1945, Abkhazi pens an entry discussing the state of the currency, the excitement in camp over the rumour that Russia has declared war on Japan, and ends by analyzing her present state of health. However, she subsequently needs to record a much more monumental item on that date. After setting apart what she is about to write under the heading "Later," she announces the end of the war: "Just as I had written the last sentence above, some of the young girls of the hut rushed in shouting and laughing—'The war is over! The war is over!'" (143-44). The mundane nature of the preceding utterances serves to emphasize by contrast the magnitude of the subsequent sentences, rupturing the "cumulative pattern" the daily internment record had set.

Vaughn's record of the camp's liberation, days after American troops free it, is so embedded in the dailiness of her entry that one would not even realize what has happened without her editor's footnote. For the exhausted Vaughan and the thousands of starving and sick Santo Tomás internees, who have survived by far the worst of the three camps these diarists describe, liberation seems almost just another event, made
significant only by the small changes it brings. Vaughan’s one-line notation for February 8, 1945, five days after the regime change, captures her weary inability to elaborate. She manages, “Many deaths saddening. Had our first wheat bread” (300). These two comments, equally significant and not obviously linked in any way, poignantly delineate the very narrow line drawn between those who died and those who survived Santo Tomás Internment Camp. This two-sentence entry looks both back, towards camp and what might have been for Vaughan and her family, and forward, to the promise of the return to life and health, signified by the wheat bread after years of mouldy rice. Diary parataxis in internment diaries suggests that not only were diarists unable to anticipate significant events but also that when these events happened they were quickly incorporated into the fabric of daily life, a sign of internees’ increasing adaptability to camp life. Momentous occasions were part of a narrative that placed as much value on the quotidian as on the earth-shattering, since it was the everyday acts of living—eating, chores, queuing—that allowed internees to survive between major events.

The relative incoherence of these paragraphs and entries reminds readers once again of the conditions under which these women kept their diaries. Unlike literary or Internet diarists, they did not always have the luxury of time to shape and neatly connect all their thoughts. Indeed as war dragged on and food shortages become dire, diarists note their decreasing ability to think, let alone write, coherently. As Abkhazi observes in May 1944, thinking has become “an increasingly difficult process the longer one stays here. I can’t describe the blurred state of one’s mind” (120). Like the scraps of salvaged paper

---

32 The diarist’s silence in such a text—and such a situation—could also indicate trauma, experiences that literally cannot be narrated because they exceed the limits of language to describe them. However, based on all three diarists’ own representations of interment, as well as on historical records and other personal narratives from these particular camps, such a reason seems unlikely for these diarists.
on which they wrote, these scraps of thought vary in quality, style, and quantity. Rather than dismiss their more short-hand entries as a-literary, as literary critics have done with similar diaries, it is important to consider such entries, as Hogan reminds us, within the context of the entire diary as well as of the internment camp, and pay attention to their functionality, how they enabled internment diarists to act. The accumulation of these scraps of paper, and the diary entries inscribed upon them, allowed internment diarists to tell the story of their internment in the moment, creating minute missives to the future and to the outside world that confirmed and reflected their experiences, existence, and significance. As I discuss in the following section, the ability to continue to write an outside world into existence, if only discursively, helped Abkhazi, Crouter, and Vaughan adjust to internment, and directed the uses to which they put their diaries.

Writing “Home”: Imagined Audiences and Diary Functions

From their opening entries that chronicle the outbreak of war in their area, these diaries evolved to take on a number of roles and address a variety of audiences, depending on the diarist’s changing circumstances. All three had their genesis in written communication meant for other eyes: all began as letters that could not be sent. On December 5, 1941, Crouter started writing to her mother, and continued to do so even after the Japanese invasion made it unlikely she would be able to send her letter. Vaughan’s letter to her husband Jim began when the Japanese landing made all other communication impossible. As discussed previously, Abkhazi imagined her pre-internment diary as an “endless never-to-be-posted letter” (23), a way to keep her mental faculties sharp through this

33 In the manuscript diaries, Abkhazi does explicitly address a “you,” though other comments indicate that this “you” is not limited to the Mackenzies, who are presented as the specific addressees of only the second
self-expression when her regular correspondence could not be maintained. As expatriate women, these writers were used to translating lived experience into writing for an audience in their lengthy letters to friends and family at “home” in North America and Europe. The diaries that evolved from these frustrated letters took over this epistolary conversation, and consequently stood in for an activity and a network of correspondents that the war had interrupted.

Margo Culley notes how, in the period of settling the western United States, women began diaries to replace the communities of family and friends they had left behind and would likely never see again. The process of writing a diary replaced the daily activity of visiting and sharing experiences for these women who were in many cases totally isolated from other pioneers. Such diaries of travel or immigration, Andrew Hassam observes, frequently combine the letter and the diary out of necessity; without regular or reliable mail service, many diarists began letters that became diaries, which may or may not be sent to the original addressee (“As I Write” 26). Drawing on the travel diary, a mode that allows diarists to transform foreign experience through the act of writing to a familiar audience, letter-diaryists seek to capture new sights and adventures for both themselves and a future audience whom they imagine enjoying these records of an exotic time. Since the Japanese invasion and internment of Allied civilians cut off Abkhazi, Crouter, and Vaughan from family members and from a “home” to which they might never return, they too started one-sided correspondences that became multi-year diaries. Because the change in situation made the letter genre an inappropriate means of
response, these writers shifted to the diary, perhaps the only genre that could substitute for letters and many other writing activities.

By writing letter-diaries, these women could create some sense of connection to their pre-war lives. “Keeping a life record,” Culley suggests, “can be an attempt to preserve continuity seemingly broken or lost” (8). Writing “home” becomes a way to imagine a familiar world outside the present context. “Home” for these diarists was not necessarily a geographic entity, but a concept that represented an intimate and familiar reader, one who shared the diarist’s personal, cultural, and often national values and knowledge. For Crouter and Vaughan, this imagined reader was initially an actual person, but over time that particular reader (Vaughan’s husband and Crouter’s mother) became one of many addressees. Imagining these familiar audiences as the recipients of their unsent letters gave each diarist a tangible link to her pre-internment life and community, creating a discursive lifeline to an existence she had once enjoyed.

Abkhazi underlines the importance of such an imagined addressee when she records, in a bleak moment, “it is good to know that other lives are still flowing along in the outside world. One is too ready to fall, under the hypnotic effects of the drab routine of internment, into the belief that nothing can be happening outside, and that nobody can still be alive and not in a Civilian Assembly Centre” (86). A rare outburst from Crouter against her Japanese captors comes out of her frustration at not having exchanged any news with home for three years: “Damn the enemy. Even Germany permits [...] letters from home. I don’t want these officers killed, I want them isolated and incommunicado

34 Abkhazi’s original entry differs only very slightly from the published text. The manuscript concludes, “one is only too ready to fall under the hypnotic effects of the drab routine of one’s own internment, into the belief that nothing & no one still continues to happen & to live outside the fence.” A note in pencil beside these lines, in a hand that appears to be Abkhazi’s, reads: “Express this better.”
in a camp for months on end” (288). Similarly, she laments: “If only one could hear from home” (226). For Vaughan, after March 7, 1942, when the last American stronghold capitulated and she knew that her husband Jim was “either dead or a Jap prisoner” (57), the letter-diary, begun as a way to record her experiences for him to read about when they were reunited, allows her to hope, even insist, that that reunion would indeed take place. Writing to him becomes a way to write him into existence as her addressee, even after she expands that addressee to include other audiences. These initial entries, in which writings intended as letters become personal war chronicles, describe the process of identity loss and transformation that the diarists undergo. As they are stripped of their prewar status, homes, livelihoods, and sense of individuality and agency, their letter-diaries give them a space in which to continue to occupy those lost identities discursively.

The intimacy of the original addressees—mothers, husbands, dear friends—played a key role in the self-(re)construction these women perform in their diaries: imagining their intimate other as the initial reader affects the stance they take on a confusing, destabilizing state. Crouter’s letter to “Mums” quickly expands its purpose, since she knows by December 22, 1941 that no communications can be sent off the Island (9), but writing initially allows her to reassure herself by reassuring her mother. Packing up for camp, she insists, “We’ll be alright” (9). Abkhazi rushes to convince her imagined reader that internment will be not only tolerable but in fact something of a lark. In the days leading up to her internment, she writes, “honestly, I don’t mind” (53). Adopting a light-hearted tone, she speaks of her preparations for her “forthcoming retirement” (53) and promises, “though barrack-room life is my idea of hell, I’ll not permit it to submerge me. On the contrary, if I can’t pit myself against this adversary and beat it, I deserve to be
wiped out" (52). Though the internees had less and less to laugh about as their situation grew more grim, Abkhazi concentrates on finding the humour in the everyday for her imagined readers. Even the grimmest entries include some “episodes to make you laugh” (62); this “you” may well include herself as well, the “I/you” that represents her self as character, addressed by herself as writer. Since the diarist knows her letter will not be read anytime soon, and may in fact never be seen by its intended recipient, imagining this reader’s responses to her missives—both now and in the future—gives her something against which to shape her own response to this new situation.

Picturing her husband as reader, Vaughan, like Abkhazi, writes herself as capable and unafraid, competently in charge until Jim can return. She blithely records the bridge games and parties, by necessity and decorum scaled-down affairs, that she attends out of a sense of duty (“I always feel a deep responsibility to put in an appearance after accepting a bridge date” (4)). She describes the prevailing sense of panic and uncertainty that surrounds her, but initially admits to no such feelings herself. Her concerns begin to suggest themselves obliquely, in affronted entries about runaway servants and misbehaving children. With no word from Jim, and the rare newscasts full of terrifying information, her entries grow terse, showing her tension displaced onto trivial matters. While worried that Jim may have been on a ship that sunk, she jots hastily, “Puppy lost. Loss seemed of maximum importance due to strain. Puppy found under Jim’s desk at office. Dog lonesome” (8). Surely Vaughan, too, is “lonesome,” but as the principal caregiver to her children, and the temporary head of the household, she must convincingly project—to Jim, later, and to herself, now—her authority and competency. She cannot fall apart without her husband, and by writing letter-diaries, she writes herself
as she wishes to live. Her descriptions of social commitments and disciplining of children and staff provide discursive links to life as it was; her self-construction as a devoted wife, concerned with the domestic sphere and consciously feminine, imagines life as it will be, once Jim and order have been restored.35

Before the fall of Bataan, which made Jim Vaughan’s survival less likely, Vaughan’s diary focuses on Jim as recipient, but some of these early entries also clearly accommodate readers other than her husband. These audiences occupy the “overhearer” position but are treated as bystanders, not eavesdroppers; consequently, their information needs are met. For example, in narrating her recent attempts to cook, Vaughan explains why such activity is significant: “My boast always: I shall never have to cook.” Studied as many vocational subjects as possible in college—journalism, typing, shorthand, graduate work in English literature (to teach), graduate work and Ph.D. in sociology (to do social work, research, or teach), but never to have to cook” (17). Presumably her husband would know such details of her life, as would anyone in her family. Though she might picture how Jim would enjoy the contrast between her pre-marital vow never to cook and her present need to do so, she would not need to provide such background information in order to convey to her husband her ruefulness or the irony of the situation. Her disclosing attitude in this passage, even before she knows that Jim will never read it, indicates her awareness of a wider range of readers she wishes to accommodate. More importantly, her asides indicate that she wants these bystanders to come to the proper conclusion about her meaning, since without her explanations they could arrive at

35 Vaughan takes this concern with femininity to unexpected lengths. Days before going into hiding from the Japanese, she has the doctor remove a mole from her chin. “He asked why bother with such a little thing as this and I told him that I wanted my husband to think me beautiful as well as efficient when he came home,” she notes. Given that she still imagines her husband as her reader at this point, this vignette
different hypotheses on her domestic acumen or devotion to her husband, for instance, and misinterpret the inside joke between Vaughan and her husband. Significantly, this pocket biography details her life before marriage, an existence and identity that in Jim’s absence (and possible death) she comes closer to re-inhabiting. Trotting out her credentials and education, Vaughan attempts to impress upon a non-intimate addressee that she is no typical housewife but a thwarted academic who had carefully planned her escape from such domestic servitude. (Notably, the advancing Japanese military, not her marriage and the birth of her children, can be blamed for her having to bend to this yoke.)

Though in the diaries that develop from these unsent letters these original self-performances do evolve, they provide the foundations for the identities these writers project and the audiences they address. All three, and Crouter in particular, shift identifications and imagine different addressees throughout their diaries, but they are consistent in their construction of a reader who is like them: white, middle-class, anglophone, and of their nationality (though not necessarily female). On several occasions Vaughan refers to her “training in racial differences and work with blacks of the American South and with other racially different groups” (62-63), but she remains conscious at all times of race as well as class distinctions. A family in camp that behaves improperly are “not American in any sense of the word” (105); the one Native American camp member is described as “our American Indian internee” (185, emphasis added), reducing the individual to a property of what Vaughan feels is the dominant group. Before internment, she rails against the insolence of her servants, who are leaving for their homes instead of staying with her when war breaks out. “These people,” she rages,

highlights her devotion to him and at the same time underlines, perhaps for his sake, how “efficient” she has also been.
“do not comprehend our ideas of loyalty, integrity, and dependability” (39, emphasis added). Discussing the bars on the windows at Santo Tomás, she notes that they were in place pre-war due to Manila’s high crime rate. She adds, “There are too many persons on the Islands who do not have the American concept of the property rights of others” (203). Though she has lived in the Philippines for several years by this point, she does not identify with either the country or its people as being at all like her. She remains apart, and when she writes, she writes to a reader who shares her sense of place within her chosen community. With her class status and racial superiority challenged by her internment at the hands of the “little yellow soldiers” (36), she uses her diary to reaffirm her notion of a superior self and community. Such entries, resolutely asserting her American identity to a projected reader that is also American, maintain her sense of self-esteem, a diary function which, as I discuss in the next section, is one of the genre’s most traditional uses.

More telling is a passage in which Vaughan clearly distinguishes between “real” Americans and others, suggesting that her reader is not only American but also white. She recounts a topic of conversation that “we” often have in camp:

We sometimes joke about the possibility of being freed by a regiment of Chinese instead of the Yanks whose coming we await. Or the surprise we’d have if [liberated by] Dutchmen [. . .] or British troops, or American Negroes. [. . .] I think most Americans here had rather spend an extra month or two in prison and be ultimately freed by our own soldiers under the American flag [. . .]. (150)
Given the distinctions she makes between nationalities and races, the “we” she invokes excludes many members of the camp, which comprises Dutch, Chinese, Filipino, Indian, and British prisoners as well as Black internees of several nationalities. Her “we,” which extends to include the reader, maintains a community of white, privileged, Americans. The identity she adopts in her first entry as “the only American-born woman in a foreign community” (3-4) remains consistent, the dominant subjectivity that is foundational to any other persona she adopts in her diary. Writing to this specific audience, Vaughan keeps her participation in that community active despite her isolation: it is a key element of her survival.

Abkhazi delineates her British addressee by drawing on a body of knowledge and reference she assumes are shared. This body of reference comprises a “discourse-model,” a collection of “discourse entities, attributes, and links between entities” (Prince 235) upon which the speaker draws and from which she assumes her listener can receive (or infer) the information needed to understand the speaker’s meaning. This shared knowledge or “assumed familiarity” (Prince 233), similar to Clark’s concept of audience design, is based upon the “speaker’s hypotheses about the hearer’s belief-set” (Prince 245) and can therefore identify the assumed addressee. Preparing for internment, Abkhazi lists the books she will be taking, reminding her addressee (who is, at least in the published version, Muriel Mackenzie specifically) of a conversation they had once had

36 The taxonomy of discourse entities that comprises “assumed familiarity” in Prince’s model accounts for the materials or entities by which audience is designed, in Clark’s analyses. Both theories explain how speakers (or writers) attempt to draw on what they assume or establish as shared knowledge in addressing particular listeners (or readers). So in the utterance, “A woman I know likes Chopin,” Prince’s taxonomy would analyze “a woman I know” as “Brand-New (Anchored)” information and “Chopin” as “New-Unused,” information “assumed to be in the hearer’s [discourse] model” (Prince 236). Clark would see the particular use of “a woman I know” as designing an audience that has no previous experience or knowledge of the woman, and “Chopin” as designing an audience that has experience of Chopin. Whereas Prince
about "what books we would take with us if we were to go into any kind of exile." Based on "their" decision, she is bringing "the Bible and Shakespeare," as well as "three Penguin anthologies of poetry, [...] a Plain Man's Prayerbook, Wells' Outline of History, a Russian grammar, a shorthand primer and some crossword puzzles" (53).

Though the specificity of her address in this entry partly explains the specificity of these references, Abkhazi also writes to a more general audience, side-participants in her reminiscence, that would likely share her generation, class, or colonial status and therefore would need neither these references nor their significance explained. Such readers would also hold Abkhazi and Muriel Mackenzie's world view that assumes the relevance and importance to a cultured mind of the Bible, Shakespeare, and history, the British version of the classical triumvirate of knowledge and thus the perfect antidote to the uncultured, uncivilized "exile" of internment. (Notably, Abkhazi had imagined "exile" as some place where these literary texts would not be available.) References to the internment camp as straight out of The Grapes of Wrath (95) and to herself as a "Lady Grape of Wrath" (109) and "sister to the White Knight" (52) similarly imagine an audience that is literary and literate, well-read in the Western "canon" of literature.

Abkhazi also calls upon local experiences and knowledge to communicate with her intended audience. Describing an injury to her leg, she introduces her ailment by referring to a contemporary advertisement that she assumes her audience would know. She writes, "To the question so often asked in cheap ads: 'Have you got Bad Legs?' I have to answer yes" (130). Though she provides some context for this remark, reminding...
her audience that the allusion is to “cheap ads,” she believes they will be familiar with this particular publicity campaign. Her imagined addressee shares as well her characterization of the Japanese as a polite people fond of euphemisms. She writes that she is about to go to “internment, or rather to the Civil Assembly Centre, to give the correct and official designation. You’ll remember that the Japanese adore giving fancy names to things, and they have the naïve belief that if you call a thing by some other name, the nature of the thing itself is thereby changed” (51). Such a characterization relies on stereotypes of the Japanese as willfully naïve and obsessed with the appearance of civility at the expense of the practice of it, stereotypes she could well assume her fellow colonials would recognize and espouse. These cultural and personal references, which she believes need no explanation or elaboration because they are common knowledge, part of a shared “belief-set,” gear the diary towards a British, colonial, upper-class audience.

Abkhazi further identifies her preferred audience by literally writing or revising any other participants out of the published version of her text. She refrains from naming her outside helpers, T.S. (Ye Duan-Sheng), and servants Li and Ah Ching, hiding their identities behind the passive voice until the final entries after the war is over. While this anonymity may be motivated by Abkhazi’s desire to protect these people should the Japanese, or worse yet, the Kampeitai read her diary, her silence about these individuals and the life-saving roles they played for her also reflects her colonial attitudes, the privileged perspective that critics of her diary have denounced (Gordon 209). She continues not to represent the Chinese, or to represent them only as “untiring” (147) and

“you and I” in the published version, suggests that Abkhazi did indeed have in mind a very particular external addressee in this entry.
"faithful" (152) servants and inferiors. Such colonial "blinkers" may be a reason for her total failure to record in her 1941-42 journal any instances of the brutality of the Japanese to Chinese citizens that took place daily in the streets of Shanghai, or after she is interned to acknowledge except by passing reference the suffering of the Chinese outside the gates of the camp, to which the internees were witnesses. Though she remarks on a rare occasion that the camp could hear "the yells and screams of the Chinese in the neighbouring village, no doubt being given the works" (127) following the escape of three internees, for example, she mentions this suffering only in relation to the internees' own series of punishments, none of which included "the works." She makes no comment here, either, on the fact that the internees' actions have resulted in torture for the villagers. In neither the original nor the published version does she demonstrate any shame or discomfort about the position enjoyed by colonial whites in China, even during internment, indicating that she imagines a very particular audience for her diary who also hold this world view.

Abkhazi reserves her concern and approbation for the former "Taipans" who now perform "coolie" work with good cheer (80). (She terms herself a "glorified coolie" (121) when she takes on the position of Quartermaster at the camp hospital, a job hardly associated with the manual and often dirty labour "coolies" traditionally performed, but a come-down nonetheless for a woman who before camp had never worked.) The fate, or even the presence, of actual "coolies," whom the camp occasionally hires, merit only passing mention. This silence or literal marginalization of non-whites reiterates the pre-camp, colonial hierarchies and values that Abkhazi imagines her addressees know about

References to her helpers in the manuscript diaries typically come up when they have sent her packages, so while they appear more frequently in the original diary, they have the same role or position in her
and with which they are assumed to agree. The camp world she inscribes and the audience she addresses are firmly British.\(^{39}\) Her letter-diary affirms her connection to this community and upholds its values and shared beliefs, making these elements an integral part of her diary identity.

Crouter shifts identifications throughout her narrative, depending on the particular purposes she intends for her entries. She frequently takes on the temporary identity of "Philippines resident," a subjectivity performance similar to Page’s "becom[ing] Brazilian," that demonstrates her identification with the country and its people as representing her personal values. However, even as she takes on this identity, she still addresses an audience that is not Filipino, but American; she herself remains an American in the Philippines, rather than a Filipina. She plays on the contrast between herself and her addressee in these passages, creating an "us" against "them" dynamic that suits the "prisoner of war" role from which she consistently speaks. In June 1942, she describes meeting a U.S. soldier, now a POW, who drives a truck for the Japanese. "There he is," she writes, "the result of our underestimation of the enemy, our overconfidence, our ignorance of the driving power behind Japan, our weakness and neglect of vital points, drinking, dancing, gambling, not only here but back to Senators, Representatives, all of you isolated in peace and security while the rest of the world boiled." She continues, "You, too, are in it with us, worrying about relatives or friends unheard of for months [....] We worry over these boys, even as you do at home" (56, emphases added). A few days later, she sounds a similar note: "All of you were too

\(^{39}\) One of Abkhazi's strongest criticisms of J.G. Ballard's autobiographical novel, *Empire of the Sun*, which came out three years after Abkhazi's journals were published and which is also set in Lunghua, was its negative portrayal of English internees. Her biographer Katherine Gordon concludes that Abkhazi
secure on your continent until the Pearl Harbor attack [...] We must thank the Japanese for our own unity" (60). “Our” in the first passage, each of the four repetitions a rebuke, embraces both “here” and “at home.” Crouter’s condemnation of a specifically American system of government makes clear that “here” does not mean “the Philippines,” but U.S. interests and citizens in the Philippines and the South Pacific in general. This “our” is individual and collective, pointing to private and governmental behaviors, since Americans’ drinking, dancing, and gambling are apparently as much to blame for her present state as are the military’s willful ignorance about the threat of the Japanese.

In the next phrases, and in the subsequent entry, however, Crouter distinguishes herself and her expatriate-turned-civilian internee community, “us” and “we,” from the larger national community of the United States, “you” on “your continent” who are “at home” and “in peace.” The “we” that Crouter now identifies with is still American but separated by geography as well as experience from the rest of the country. Ironically for a woman cut off from the world as well as “home” in a concentration camp, she identifies her addressees in the United States as the ones who are “isolated.” The “our” she imagines in the second entry does not include the prewar “at home” Americans but only the internees, united in the camp under the common hope for freedom and the group identity of “civilian internee.” So even though Crouter takes on the identity of “civilian internee in the Philippines,” she still relates to and addresses an American readership, both “here” and “at home.” Such an audience would understand or share her values, inherent in her condemnation of the U.S.’s prewar irresponsibility, and would consequently be the ones she wanted to reach with her political messages.

“definitely retained a firm belief throughout her life that the English had been models of good behaviour in the internment camp at Lunghua and should not be described as anything less” (210).
Addressing her fellow Americans from behind barbed wire, Crouter senses the unique opportunity to use the values she holds in common with her audience to inform them about her experiences and how they could be avoided in the future. She takes on this task with a consistency, depth, and regularity that neither Abkhazi nor, surprisingly, Vaughan demonstrates. Crouter’s insistent appellation of an American reader, one who shares basic values with her but who needs educating because he or she has not lived in a Japanese prison camp arises out of this exigence and allows her to make this ordeal her contribution to the public good. Turning her own experiences and observations while in camp into universalisms, Crouter hopes to encourage change, a new world order, following the war. In these aspects, the diary becomes a treatise on poverty, war, racial hatred, and the role of women, addressed to an American audience with the power, and indeed the prerogative, to ensure that this ordeal never happens again. Crouter wants her American audience, with whom she imagines sharing a common ground of nationality and national values, to understand their mutual responsibility for the experience she describes for them through her diary. Her invocation of her audience as “we” reminds her readers that she is one of them, or, more importantly, that they are involved and implicated in the situation she describes (both internment and the war that causes it).

Speaking as and for the Americans, Crouter reminds her readers of their duty as Americans to lead the way after the war. Her idealism about Americans, and what the U.S. can accomplish, stems from the same patriotic set of values that makes Vaughan think that the U.S. has cornered the market on morality and good behavior. But while Vaughan thinks that the world (as represented by the Philippines) owes the United States for their contributions, Crouter thinks that the Americans owe the world; their superiority,
privileges, resources, and much-touted “American efficiency” (Bloom “Till Death” 76) mean that they “naturally” have a global leadership role to play. Her insider narrative, then, serves as a cautionary tale, reminding U.S. readers of the pressing need to address the poverty, hate, and inequality that have led to the crisis of World War II. Imagining this context of reception for her personal journal, Crouter chooses to create and continue, despite the obstacles outlined above, a daily record of life for an American in a Japanese concentration camp.

The diary’s capacity to encompass the personal and the public, to focus on the minutiae as well as create a larger narrative of life at war, makes it an ideal genre for Crouter’s message. The personal portrait she can make in her diary, recording moment by moment the internees’ degradation—of health, spirit, and privilege—has a potentially powerful application if she can make her private papers public. Assuming, or at least hoping, that her experiences in the camp give her some degree of authority, Crouter embeds political commentary in her personal narrative. The conjunction of such discourse, perhaps unexpected given the popular concept of a woman’s diary being limited to the domestic and the trivial, the private and confessional, demonstrates the genre’s potential for discursive subversion and resistance when actual resistance would be impossible or deadly. The diary’s record of these passionate statements demonstrates the genre’s ability to render the larger historical, cultural, and ideological moment of inscription, highlighting the identifications and divisions apparent within a particular community. The contrasting stances adopted by Vaughan and Crouter in their individual records give some sense of how the wider community of “wealthy American ex-pats in
the Philippines" shared many values and beliefs, but also adopted many different discursive positions and attitudes in describing their experiences.

As a testimony of her survival and a voucher for her authority to speak on such matters as poverty, war, and new solutions to these problems, Crouter’s diary overwrites the public-private binary separating spheres of and appropriate uses for genres of personal writing and the lives and experiences they record. To Crouter, as an individual caught in an internment camp in an occupied country, the personal is inherently public, a part of a collective experience and history. However, as for Abkhazi and Vaughan, the diaries’ public orientation, a product of both the historical circumstances they record and their genesis as letters meant for external readers, does not mean that the texts did not also perform personal functions for their writers. The absence of immediate responses meant that diarists needed to take on the identities of listeners or readers, as well as writers, in their diaries, writing to themselves in order to regulate their self-esteem. As I discuss in the following section, the diarists reimagine and reinstate themselves as subjects in order to gauge and correct their responses to internment.

Self-Reflections: Private Performances of Public Mores

The diarists’ imagination and expectation of a future audience caused them to take on the role of the addressed, to occupy the position of observer, in their personal reports. In part this projection of the self as other stems from the unique “triple self-projection” that, as Raoul theorizes, the diarist performs: she is at once “author, character and reader of the text,” as well as subject, object, and recipient of the narrative (“Women and Diaries” 61). Consequently, the diarist is “simultaneously [...] watching and watched, inside and
outside, judging and judged" (61). Compounding this collapse of self/other, subject/object were the dangerous, uncertain, and destabilizing circumstances of internment, a process designed to strip individuals of their identities. Since the camps were grounded in the Japanese desire to debase Westerners in front of the indigenous populations, internees were particularly alert to any cracks, real or imaginary, in the façade of "civilization" that they struggled to maintain. Aware as well of the camps' potential application as ad-hoc social and cultural experiments, these diarists used their diaries for self-surveillance and as research notes, adopting the role of outside observer, and sharing their findings with externalized audiences that represented both themselves and others. Their sense that their diaries would be read, whether as letters or books, coupled with the instability of camp life, generated the need for them to write themselves in this way, inscribing themselves through the eyes of future readers. This diary function shows these women engaging with contemporary ideals of class, race, and gender, delineating the values and beliefs of their part of society by describing their own perceived lapses in conduct. Such entries therefore particularly illuminate how genres and cultures are mutually constructive, each shaping and being shaped by the other.

Knowing they themselves will be "read" as they are reading—and writing—their peers makes all three women attempt to be exemplary under the circumstances. Their private texts become tools for self-monitoring and for surveillance of both the diarist and others, who reflect the diarist back to herself either by contrast or similitude. Dismissing fellow prisoners' concerns about her diary, Crouter asserts, "If people would live and act as though all of it were to be printed and bound into a chronicle for the future to read we might not have quite so much to write about. [...] It is better to live as you would want
your children to read it, I think” (161). In Crouter’s mind, the permanency of the written word, and its testimony to individuals’ actions in a situation that might encourage anti-social or uncivilized behavior, is a powerful check. Writing to the diary and its imagined addressees, confessing to them, puts the diarist in the position of being able to observe herself from the perspective of an outsider. Setting herself up as “subject,” she examines and describes the changes internment has wrought. Being able to recognize through writing her transformation into internee, she can put this information to both public and personal use. She can make social and historical commentary on what happens to a white, middle-class woman, and, by extension, her fellow internees, when put into a concentration camp. This imagined position of detached observer, beyond the barbed wire, gives her the distance and perspective to show that though internment will have changed her behavior she still upholds the standards she brought into camp. Having “caught” herself in these behaviors, she can remedy her social “failings” once internment is over.

Such a function is one of the most traditional uses of the diary. In recording her own actions and feelings, many of which are “abnormal” or “uncivilized” in comparison with her pre-internment way of life, the diarist “catches” her self. This self-monitoring function, a carry-over to concepts of the contemporary diary from the genre’s function as a spiritual record, imagines that the “true” self and its actions may be hidden from the diarist until he or she writes them down in the private pages of a journal. With the diary entries as documentary evidence of one’s “true” nature, the diarist can acknowledge her failings and take steps to improve, accommodating public mores, values, and prescriptions even in her “private” pages. Measuring her self and her behavior against
internalized dominant ideologies—of gender or class, for example—the diarist reproduces such ideologies, bringing the public into the personal sphere, as we have seen Carr demonstrate, for instance, in her dismissive remarks about women artists. The diary, in its function as a "journal of conscience" or vehicle for self-improvement, becomes a textual rehearsal hall for the diarist's public self-performances.

The diary's association with the mirror, as a reflective surface that shows the diarist as she is or as she wishes to be, also grows out of this belief in the genre's innate powers of revelation. The diary-as-mirror function is a consequence, Raoul argues, of the diarist's simultaneous roles as actor, narrator, and reader, and of the "specular" nature of writing a diary ("Women and Diaries" 60). Raoul also connects the mirror and the journal intime, considered the most private diary text. She notes that "most intimistes" imagine their diaries "as a mirror, a means to see herself as an object, from outside" (Distinctly Narcissistic 50). The addressees she designs through keeping a diary provide opportunities for self-analysis, for reading her self as other, and regulating her self-esteem in response. Adopting an outside viewpoint removes her from the dailiness of both her text and her situation, and allows her to examine that reflection with a critical gaze that will be informed by imagined external reactions to it.

Vaughan uses her diary as a link to her pre-marriage professional life and as a distancing mechanism by adopting the identity of a "participant-observer" in the camp and keeping "notes" as a trained sociologist, tracking both herself and her fellow internees. With the increasing likelihood of Jim's death, she has to reinvent herself as a single woman, and in doing so draws upon her very happy and fruitful years in
university. Before her marriage, Vaughan, who had a Master's degree in sociology, had begun a Ph.D. in the same discipline at the University of North Carolina. When she and Jim were first married and living in Manila, she had inquired about taking up this work again at Santo Tomás, the very university that became her internment home for several years. Her husband's transfer to Iloilo, a small "sugar town," prevented her from pursuing the idea further (Petillo viii-ix). In the subject position of "participant-observer" that she adopts in her diary, she reiterates her prewar academic identity that was dropped with her marriage and motherhood, and reinvents herself as the trained sociologist whose diary would be both personal and 'scientific.'

The role of "participant-observer" places Vaughan in an interstitial position within the camp narrative. She is both an insider and an outsider, a subject within the story and, simultaneously, one of the objects of her own research. Considering internment camp as a "culture" that warrants study is one way that Vaughan can distance herself from this devastating experience, allowing her to maintain some kind of "objectivity" about this ordeal. She adopts the position of sociological observer from early on in her internment, noting in the first few weeks that her "training in racial differences and work with blacks of the American South and with other racially different groups may make for tolerance" (62). (Notably, Vaughan does not indicate who will become more tolerant as a result of her training.) This position becomes another interpretive strategy for dealing with the extraordinary situation of internment: by taking on the subject position of "sociologist," Vaughan makes internment more familiar, something she is trained to deal with from an objective perspective.

40 In her study of nineteenth-century Quebec diarist Henriette Dessaulles, Raoul notes that, at the convent school Dessaulles attended, both mirrors and diaries were forbidden. These injunctions underscore the
Taking on this "participant-observer" identity becomes an effective strategy for surviving camp, even in the most harrowing final months. Noting in May 1944 that several camp dentists wish to publish a paper on the state of children's teeth in the camp, Vaughan thinks of the myriad scholarly opportunities internment has provided. "Never in the history of the U.S. have conditions been so perfectly controlled for a study of the bodies, the teeth, the mentality and the behavior of a group of American children," she suggests, and adds, "How some American psychologists would like to be dropped, with their questionnaires and notebooks, and chart papers, in our midst!" (270). Seeing camp as an experiment, as both Crouter and Abkhazi do as well, bestows some validity on the experience, some sense, perhaps, that the ordeal has been worthwhile, even for the "guinea pigs." This position, which aligns her with an academic community, allows her both to imagine a world outside of camp and assign a scholarly value to her experience. By casting her internment camp years as pithy material for study, she gives them a public as well as personal value.

After the war, she takes up this research assignment herself, using her diaries and memories as the basis for her Ph.D. dissertation Community Under Stress: An Internment Camp Culture, which was published in 1949 and remains a "standard reference work in the field" of sociology (Cogan 316). Since that text is an academic work, she drops all personal reference as she tells her story, recounting all incidents in the third-person, and speaking of herself only as part of "the Americans" (22). In her diaries, however, she can be both personal and academic, a "participant-observer" and, at other times, a wife, daughter, mother, and prisoner. Such overlapping identities are apparent in the remarks that follow her observation about psychologists parachuting into camp. She muses, "But 

connections between these two forms of self-reflection (Distinctly Narcissistic 50).
they had better remember to bring a few cans of corned beef and a few chocolate bars to sustain them during the course of their study, for they might find themselves too hungry to conclude what they might begin. And if they found their subjects a bit lean and lethargic they would understand why” (270). These comments emphasize Vaughan’s awareness that the diary cannot be purely an academic treatise. Imagining a scholarly audience for this entry, and herself as scholar, Vaughan is acutely aware of the deficiencies of both herself as researcher and her diary as research paper. Her projection onto the parachuting scholars, who may find themselves too weak and hungry to perform their experiments, is at once an apology to that community for her own insufficient intellectual rigor and an acknowledgment of her own lethargy and collapsing health. Her failure as an academic, in these entries, is excusable, whereas her failure in other roles, particularly as mother and provider for her children, would not be.

In her dissertation, Vaughan discusses the pervasive compulsion to comment on oneself as if one were another. She notes that “in the Bacolod camp [where Vaughan was held until the group was integrated into Santo Tomás] there was knowledge of personal deterioration not only in the individual’s own eyes but in the eyes of others as well” (107). She calls this phenomenon the “looking-glass self, the reflected personality” (107) and links it to the loss of prewar “socially correct habits” and consequent culture shock that internment entails (106). In the degrading and destabilizing circumstance of internment, which needed to be resisted, the diary genre, associated with self-analysis and introspection, becomes the ideal way to respond to this personal and communal identity crisis, and to have that response recognized by the imagined future reader.
As a daily record, the diary also creates an interpretive context against which the observing self/other can judge itself and others, situating and excusing the self’s transformation as part of a general camp culture or malaise. Abkhazi records watching a new family move into the camp; seeing herself and the other internees through their eyes, she remarks, less than three weeks into her internment, “how far we have fallen” (66). In this same vein, she notes her new-found skill at camp-induced “Low Cunning,” confessing, “I am horrified at my proficiency in the art” (73). Expanding her observations to the camp in general, she describes a conversation amongst internees: “We were talking about the decadence of our table manners and general deportment, and in how short a time the veneer of a lifetime peels off. So for fun I examined my own behavior objectively” (76). Among the “horrifying” behaviors she lists are “an extraordinarily efficient ‘boarding house reach’” and her use of her “bare knees” in place of a napkin (76-77). She concludes her self-examination by wondering “whether these ghastly habits will trip one up, during a fit of absentmindedness, after one returns to civilization” (77).

Writing as she does to an imagined audience embodied in the published edition by the Mackenzies—British, white, and wealthy—Abkhazi measures her internment activity against their standards, which are, or used to be, hers as well. Though she recounts these moments with humour, her bemused “horror” reflects that she still thinks proper etiquette important—and proper—even if it does not apply in camp. Her dismay, then, reflects an imagined world outside of the camp, where manners and social class still matter, and against which she still measures her own propriety and worth. Recording these improprieties in her journal, she can confess and reshape them, making them funny and therefore inconsequential, not serious lapses or breaches in her identity. In the absence of
her normal community, Abkhazi uses her diary to reflect back and correct her own behavior in accordance with that community’s norms.⁴¹

Vaughan has moments in which she too sees the humour in her new state, imagining in one entry the disjunction of her internment behaviors and pre-war lifestyle: “(Can picture myself in evening dress, sitting on floor, drinking a crème de menthe from crystal liqueur glass.)” (136, emphasis in original). Elsewhere, however, she is less philosophical and more earnest about the ravages of internment camp on appearance and moral character. In an entry in which she adopts her “sociologist” mode, she also shows herself as a woman of her time, concerned with conventional standards for feminine behavior and appearance. She reports, “a woman who feels herself poorly dressed and looking her worst is no pleasant companion. The same woman with a new coiffure, a bright nail polish, matched shoes, dress, bag, and hat is a different person. We are friendly not according to appearances of the other person but according to the way we feel ourselves seen by others. [...] We act as we think we look” (170). Thus, she concludes, their roughened complexions and grubby attire, reflected back at each other, result in increasingly anti-social behavior: “As a roughneck feels himself to be, so does he act accordingly” (171). As in her dissertation, in which she removes herself from her experiences by adopting the third-person, “objective” viewpoint, her use of the masculine pronoun here, which contrasts with the specifically female model of behavior she has just

⁴¹ Abkhazi’s engagement with this particular audience is reinforced by her additions to the published version of her diary. For example, she inserts the following comment into a May 1943 entry: “I will confess to you that I am ashamed to be seen by the Chinese who bring in the supplies when I am grovelling on the ash piles, scratching with a bit of stick for half-burned relics of coke and coal. But no doubt I shall outgrow this relic of snobbery” (71). Inserting a confession into the diary narrative when she revises for a larger reading public, Abkhazi works to reassure readers of the published diary that, even under dire circumstances that reduced her station, she recognized what was happening to her and was ashamed by it. Pairing her original diary narrative with retrospective commentary, Abkhazi suggests that she still holds these particular community values and imagines a readership who will as well.
outlined, attempts to universalize the phenomenon she describes rather than acknowledge that she herself is experiencing it. Though her husband Jim is now unlikely ever to read her personal documentary, he is still one of her imagined audiences. The kind of audience he embodies (American, upper-middle-class) acts as a “mirror” to remind her of life as it was for the American colonial elite before the concentration camp, where appearance and appropriately social behavior were measures of a woman’s “worth.”

While Crouter also comments that a batch of new “campers” functions as “a yardstick to us,” she reaches the opposite conclusion from Abkhazi or Vaughan about how the internees are seen: “We can see how far we have come in six months” (59). Viewing internment, or their adjustment to it, as an achievement, Crouter is much less concerned than Abkhazi or Vaughan with her or her family’s loss of manners and polite behaviors, though she notes such lapses from time to time. The eyes that she imagines judging the internees are not evaluating their fall from social graces but how well or poorly they adapt to this new state of affairs that threatens to topple the prewar class system and sense of privilege. Crouter, unlike Vaughan, embraces her part in the social experiment of camp, seeing it in many ways as the fulfillment of her leftist politics. In her diary, the self/other split directly addresses the external readership she hopes for in addition to mirroring her own transformation from pre-war Baguio socialite to camp “coolie” and survivor.

Though Crouter is far too earnest to play the transformation into internee for laughs as Abkhazi does, the self-construction she undertakes for her imagined audiences shares with Abkhazi a determinedly plucky attitude. Crouter delights in the changes that internment has wrought upon her, and takes a good deal of pleasure as well in noting how
others, women in particular, make the transformation less successfully. She insists in her
diary that she was never particularly fashion-conscious, reporting that Jerry had always
picked out her clothes (79), so that her transition to internment camp is less turbulent than
for others. The camp provides her the opportunity, and her diary provides her the
subjectivity, to resist norms for gender behavior in a manner that becomes excusable in
the context; internment and its narrative require, or at least invite, her to drop the
“feminine” concerns that Vaughan, and to a lesser extent, Abkhazi, continue to uphold.
Unlike many women in the camp, who “spend hours on their makeup,” which strikes her
as “very out-of-place, poor taste if not vapid” (33), Crouter takes internment and the
privations it entails seriously. She notes, days into the ordeal, “My state of mind has no
time for waves, rouge, or lipstick” (18). Like Vaughan, Crouter connects internees’
appearance to their behavior, but she imagines different results from her analysis.
Distinguishing herself from the majority of the camp, she finds that “carrying cans [as
part of her mop duty] has made [her] shoulders more square than before. [Her] chin feels
higher too,” unlike many other internees who, she observes, “shuffle along […] neck
stuck forward” and suffer from “a loss of pride which has not been replaced by a new
one in a new kind of life” (137). Camp has destabilized gender, racial, and class norms,
but this former “taipan’s” wife turned “coolie” highlights such dislocations instead of
downplaying them, declaring with some sense of liberation, “I’m no lady anymore”
(134). The “true” self she believes her diary reflects back to her in these entries is a self
freed from social rules and hierarchies. She consciously casts herself as a survivor, a role
that her diary enables and supports by allowing her to live and write herself as the person
she would like her children to read about; she tries on the survivor subjectivity in her
diary, and then performs it in real life. The identities she crafts for herself in private in the diary uphold her public ideals, providing an apparent congruency between the living and the written selves that would be of particular import in a diary meant for publication. She addresses an audience that would appreciate her rapid adaptation to internment, recognizing the contrast between her camp experiences and pre-war life but, unlike Vaughan’s imagined addressee, not reacting in horror to these changes in behavior.

After the internees are liberated, Crouter records a visit from Mrs. Jean MacArthur, wife of the general, who arrives at the former internment camp dressed much like the ideal woman Vaughan imagines, with “her hair enclosed in a red net, red shoes and a bag to match.” According to Crouter, Mrs. MacArthur herself and not just her outfit is out of place in this wartime context, since “she looks as though she had had her feet up in front of a fireplace for three years” (496). While Vaughan’s “looking-glass self” may have seen the “plump” and fashionable Mrs. MacArthur as a reflection of what women should look like and be, and consequently feel once again how degraded she herself has become, Crouter’s reflection rejects the domestic, “feminine” world and values that the general’s wife and her attire embody. Mrs. MacArthur is not a worthwhile mirror for Crouter, since, unlike the internees, she has not experienced the war and its deprivations; at this stage, only the internalized looking-glass of “internee” identity can “accurately” reflect Crouter’s sense of the experience and her own role in it. Speaking for the internees as a whole, Crouter dismisses Mrs. MacArthur, noting that “Many resented her coming,” and concludes, “We […] are interested in talking to the men [i.e., the soldiers, not male internees] who are really doing things. In fact we like to be near them for we understand each other” (496, italics in original). The observer identity in such passages
comes not from the civilian but the military, or militarized, world. Refusing any categorization of the internees as passive, and therefore feminized, victims of the war, Crouter's observations of the contrasting worlds, experiences, and appearances of Mrs. MacArthur and the internees validate her sense of having had a legitimate place in the war, a position that authorizes her to speak publicly. Unlike Mrs. MacArthur, whose public position has been earned only by marriage, Crouter has three years of internment experience, observations, and analyses to substantiate her claim.

In the concluding pages of her diary, Crouter voices her ultimate fantasy for life after internment, giving a final glimpse of the image she wanted her text to reflect. Crouter's plans, which uphold her self-construction as an American firmly committed to social justice and change and a believer that such change starts with the individual, are in sharp contrast to those of her fellow internee-diarists. Abkhazi dreams of having solitary "hour-long wallowings" with bath-salts (71) after the war, and celebrates the camp's liberation by promptly getting a permanent wave (149). Vaughan longs for cold-cream and new stockings. Both women fantasize about having total privacy once again. Crouter, on the other hand, announces, "The government housing projects interest me more than anything else in the United States. I would like to live in one" (518), a plan that, in many ways, continues her politicized view of internment, with its communal, spartan, and democratic living, and of her capacity to live happily in that realm. The self she constructs in her internment diary therefore remains consistent to the end of the experience and the narrative, reflecting Crouter's desire to be seen or read as an exemplar. The selves that these writers "catch" in the mirror of their journals reflect the
identities their personal texts allow them to construct as well as the communities and audiences they imagine reading and judging them in these narratives.

Their internment diaries are "proof" of how they lived during an experience for which they had no precedents to call upon to interpret or guide their behavior. Their diaries show each woman in the act of shaping her present sense of self in the context of the internment camp against both her past lived experiences and communities and her imagined future readers and selves. In the next section I will examine how the act of creating diary identities in the foreign and unsettling circumstances of internment worked as a survival mechanism, fulfilling one very personal function of these public personal diaries.

**Daily Affirmations: Self-Inscription as Salvation**

The mirroring of a self or selves that the diary performed for Abkhazi, Crouter, and Vaughan, whether as a corrective measure or a yardstick of growth, provided a vital affirmation of the individual subject and her experience. In her diary, each could bring her personal daily experience of internment into relief, distinguishing the individual and her story from the hundreds, even thousands, of those of the other civilian internees in the diarist's camp. The diary's focus on the world and experiences of the diarist reaffirms her individuality and existence in a hostile environment that has reduced her identity to a number. This attention to the diarist through her own textual inscription was a crucial element in each diarist's ability to "survive, mentally, physically, morally" (Bloom "Escaping" 101). In "Escaping Voices: Women's South Pacific Internment Diaries and Memoirs," Lynn Bloom outlines the importance of writing to these women who are
captives not only of the Japanese but also of an environment that allowed no privacy and
that by necessity diminished the importance of the individual in favour of the greater
good. “Through the act of writing,” she suggests, the diarist “moves [her] character to
center stage” and thus “becomes the principal actor in the drama of her own story,
irrespective of her actual role in real life—most likely a bit player in a cast of hundreds or
thousands” (101). Though, in lived life, Abkhazi, Crouter, and Vaughan lacked individual
importance, and were subsumed into the group identity, in their textual self-
representations each could reassert her value and difference from the mainstream and
make herself the “star” of her own story.

Each woman’s diary provided vital “private” time and space in which to isolate
herself, to concentrate on her experiences and desires instead of those of the camp at
large. While Abkhazi, Crouter, and Vaughan could not, of course, separate their stories
entirely, nor would they have wished to, from the meta-narrative and group identity of
“civilian internees of the Japanese,” they can regain a sense of themselves as “I” instead
of always “we.” As Bloom has indicated, a communal mentality that put the needs of the
many before the needs of the individual was essential for the civilian internees’ survival
(“Till Death” 79). Abkhazi confirms this opinion, noting wryly, “the Herd must be
protected” (80). For the internee diarist, keeping a personal record becomes a way to
“regain control of the self otherwise submerged in group identity” (Bloom “Women’s”
69) and inscribe a self distinguished from the homogenizing “internee” story that is
emerging from the camp experience. The personal story of “I” inscribed in the diary
becomes a way to fan those “flickers,” as Abkhazi puts it, “of the Individual fighting
against being submerged by the mass” (75).
Focusing on her own story in her diary allowed the diarist to insist on the existence of her self and her own narrative in an environment designed to erase identity. In their analysis of an anonymous diary from the Lodz ghetto, Rachel Langford and Russell West argue that such a diary, written from inside a space designed to keep the world from seeing the people inside, "is clearly a mode of creating meaning in a meaningless world and thus of maintaining subjectivity in the face of its annihilation, a way of restoring 'selfhood' in the face of the 'dehumanisation'" (9). Langford and West's characterization of diary narratives as vehicles for meaning-making and subject-making apply even in the very different circumstances facing Abkhazi, Crouter, and Vaughan. While certainly the situation of the civilian internees in China and the Philippines cannot be compared to that of Jews in Nazi-occupied Europe, the internees also suffered the loss of subjectivity with their incarceration. Consequently, they too turned to diaries as a way to write themselves out of their present "meaningless" conditions and into existence. Though no policy of extermination was extended to civilians, they were put in camps, humiliated, looted from, and starved, in order to devastate their pre-war identities and the attendant prestige given them by Chinese and Filipino natives. Lumped together as "enemy nationals," they were denied individual subjectivity in favour of an imposed collective identity. As Langford and West suggest, the diary becomes a way to subvert that identity theft, since it is an act that "implies a reiterated, daily affirmation of resistance to the assertion of one's non-existence" (9). Similarly, Harriet Blodgett theorizes that "A diary is an act of language that, by speaking of one's self, sustains one's sense of being a self, with an autonomous and significant identity" (5). For diarists in concentration camps, the ability to speak of as well as
inscribe one’s self, and to distinguish oneself, becomes a way to stay alive, textually if not physically.

The diary’s typical content and style—minutiae, emotions, repetition—become functional ways to respond to the situation of internment. Chronicling the day-to-day life, inscribing the tedium of chores and meals, the diary allows these women a regular and accessible means to record their own voice and experience and determine, to some extent, the story they want to tell. Cut off from other genres, including the letter home, in which they would have previously been able to write their own and collective stories, these writers folded the functions of these other forms into the internment diary in order to respond to the internment situation. By returning to them the power of writing their own lives, their diaries challenge the narratives of other kinds of texts in which they could not control their own inscription, such as official Japanese reports, camp memos, or military intelligence.

As women prisoners in a concentration camp, these diarists faced erasure based on race and gender. Stripped of their pre-war lives because of their non-Asian ethnicity, the diarists were denied rights, freedoms, and identities by their Japanese captors. Denied franchise by the male internees as well and discouraged from serving on camp committees—whether that participation was explicitly banned or simply impractical given the “women’s work” (e.g., parenting, family cooking) female internees often did in addition to their camp duties—women internees did not have political voice and first-hand influence in camp life. Their diaries provided them with a place to voice their opinions and actively participate in the group narrative of internment. Ironically, the diary, the genre dismissed as feminine and therefore worthless, rescues these women
from total silencing during internment. Using their diaries to create "forums" in which they could address social, political, or religious issues, as Bunkers has described in the diaries of isolated pioneer midwestern women (17), these diarists rewrite the camp story from their individual, female perspectives, ensuring their voices will be heard, if only by themselves. Writing down their reactions and opinions gives them something tangible that can become their lasting legacy in the face of so much personal and material loss. Speaking out, even if only on paper, affirmed that they were indeed alive, that they did exist, and that their opinions mattered. By creating camp narratives with themselves at the center of the tale, Abkhazi, Crouter, and Vaughan demand that readers acknowledge them and their part in this story. The audiences they address value their opinions and interpretations, and thus this audience design reconstructs intellectual communities for these diarists in which they can actively participate, an act that resisted their silencing.

The choice of a genre that emphasizes autonomous individuals who are the principal agents of their own stories gives war diarists a degree of control over their written lives. Though Abkhazi, Crouter and Vaughan are sick, starving, frightened, crowded, and cut off from the outside world, through their diaries each has interpretive control over her experiences (Bloom "Escaping 101), and consequently can decide the narrative trajectory of her life story and how she will construct herself as subject. Because that control is limited—each woman is, in the end, at the mercy of her Japanese captors—the diary becomes an ideal space in the internment camp in which to regain some measure or sense of direction over one's life narrative. Though she cannot know what will happen beyond the moment in which she writes, as we have seen she can and does control how she records her self in each entry, each of which may be her last chance
to represent her self. Furthermore, the promise of future entries inherent in the open-ended nature of the diary is a hedge against death or oblivion. “By writing today,” Lejeune theorizes, “you prepare yourself to be able to live tomorrow, and to piece together, in a predetermined framework of writing, the story of what you will have lived. All journal writing assumes the intention to write at least one more time” (“How” 100).

By continuing to write, then, Abkhazi, Crouter, and Vaughan project a future, though its story remains unwritten; having committed to tell their stories in a genre that unfolds in “real time,” they must continue to live in order to write. Their participation in this genre therefore becomes a way to resist the conclusion to their stories—continued incarceration, defeat, even death—that the Japanese military suggests will happen. Writing their life narratives in process allows for multiple possible endings to the internment tale, but since they are in charge of the story as its creator, narrator, and protagonist, they imagine and insist that they will survive to tell the final moments.

At the same time that these women used the diary to foreground their own roles in this experience, they also wrote, as Bloom notes, with an eye on public history. Their diaries, personal records of a historic time, create what Captain argues is a “new type of war-literature” (2), testimonies of an experience of war that is untraditional, in many aspects, but that the writers see as intrinsically valuable and in need of publicizing. In the following section, I explore these diaries’ place in the broader sub-genre of “war diary,” and how these diarists’ awareness of that tradition and of the historic nature of their internment shaped the personal narratives they produced from camp. Taking on the identity of “war diarists” became one more way to ensure that they and their stories would survive internment.
Putting the “I” in “History”: Documenting Life Behind the Lines

When the Japanese first occupied Shanghai in 1941, Abkhazi immediately destroyed all her personal papers, noting afterwards her mixed feelings of regret and, unexpectedly, a sense of “liberation from something else” (24). Vaughan describes a similar phenomenon as her community awaited the arrival of the Japanese, observing that “[t]here was a general burning of old love letters on Central” (19). Such responses indicate the danger personal writings could represent if they fell into hands other than those intended. Though it is unlikely that love letters or other personal papers would provide the invading Japanese army with useful information, these unforeseen readers nevertheless pose a threat because they will likely not show proper respect towards or appreciation of these valuable documents. Vaughan and her neighbours destroy letters rather than have Japanese “scatter” them (19), while Abkhazi tears up her personal archive thinking that she would have to leave her home. This panic in the first days of the war over unintended and undesired readers motivates these women to be particularly careful about audience design when they began their diaries, as we have seen.

Abkhazi’s feeling of “liberation” at this destruction indicates her awareness that she is about to embark on an entirely new phase of her life. The arrival of the Japanese heralds a time of momentous personal as well as historical change that will bring about a permanent rupture with her old life. Recognizing this moment as historic, and that such historic events should be recorded even at great personal risk, she began a detailed record of her place within this momentous time, turning to a conventional method for producing such daily accounts. The irony that these precautionary measures are recorded in illegal
personal notebooks underlines Abkhazi's and Vaughan's need to inscribe this new life that replaces their old, pre-war existence, torn up like the diaries and correspondence they had destroyed.

Abkhazi's sense of personal connection to public history is key to the narratives that internment diarists produce. Significantly, both Abkhazi and Crouter record that they are reading broadcaster and foreign correspondent's William L. Shirer's 1940 *Berlin Diary* when they begin their own journals, and therefore mark their familiarity with the war diary genre and its characteristics. Their mention of his text in the opening entries of their own "war diaries" acknowledges precedent and thus inscribes their texts into the tradition that Shirer's diary embodies; this association lends their own narratives the authority accorded to Shirer. Further, the allusion helps the internment diarists address the same communities as *Berlin Diary* by inviting these communities to see Crouter's and Abkhazi's diaries as cut from the same cloth as Shirer's.

In Shirer's foreword, he establishes the norms of the "war diary" genre by laying out his purpose in creating such a diary, a purpose that Abkhazi, Crouter, and Vaughan all echo:

This journal [...] was recorded for my own pleasure and peace of mind, to be sure, but also—to be perfectly frank—with the idea one day most of it might be published, if any publisher cared to commit it to print. Obviously this was not because I deemed for one second that I and the life I led were of any particular interest to the public. The only justification in my own mind was that chance, and the kind of job that I had, appeared to
be giving me a somewhat unusual opportunity to set down from day to day
a first-hand account of a Europe that was already in agony [...]. (5)

Shirer makes no secret of his original intention to have his journals published, but he
defuses potential resistance to his “public” journal by appealing to the historical moment
he chose to inscribe; he is not important, but the events he describes are. He clarifies this
seemingly oxymoronic juxtaposition of this intimate form and the public focus he has
announced, explaining that he distinguishes his own style of war journal from “private”
diaries that are “personal, intimate, confidential.” In his text, “[t]he subject of this diary
therefore is not, except incidentally, its keeper, but this Europe” (5), a disclaimer that
reduces Shirer’s personal (and therefore “subjective”) role in his own narrative. By
removing himself from this daily dispatch, Shirer argues for his diary as a suitably
“objective,” though mediated, history of a time and place.

Because of the exceptional circumstances that these particular public personal
journals narrate, then, they do not invite the kinds of charges—of narcissism, of
manipulation, of inauthenticity—that the diaries-for-publication by celebrities and
literary figures have received. “Authorized” by their wartime experiences, internment
diarists may think they can use this intimate genre for a public readership in ways that
would be familiar and acceptable to readers who have seen other examples of “war
diaries.” However, as women civilians held in non-military concentration camps, these
diarists also lack a legitimate position from which to tell their stories. War diarists are
typically active participants, combatants or authorized observers such as journalists, not
civilian women with children in “holding pens” awaiting rescue.42 Their experiences

42 As I indicated in the Introduction, male internees at all the camps also kept diaries, but the majority that
have been published have been revised into retrospective accounts (e.g., Hind) or incorporated into other
during internment further defy traditional concepts of life during war for prisoners; though starving, often sick, unsure of what fates awaited them, these diarists were not facing death, torture, or rape, despite being prisoners. Instead, life in civilian internment camp, as Abkhazi notes, was characterized for them by “monotony, discomfort, dirt and overcrowding” (105-106). As civilians, they cannot tell a military story of the war; as women who were held captive by the enemy but who remained for the most part unmolested, they cannot provide the narrative of sexual violence that is the stereotypical and recognizable (and acceptable?) position for women in war. Though they experience the same exigence as Shirer, in anticipating the value of a daily record of unfolding events, their use of the war diary to respond to this situation may not be equally recognized as valid.

These women’s texts consequently trouble the mold of the war diary as characterized by Shirer, whose text provided one model for not only Abkhazi and Crouter but also many other readers since. Inverting Shirer’s focus on the public at the expense of the personal, these internment diarists use the personal as their lens on the public. Isolated from the outside world in the camps, and isolated within the camps from much insider information, whether from illegal radios or executive committees, because they are women, these diarists can only record what they themselves know, feel, experience, or hear first-hand of the war. Internees’ “war diaries” thus only rarely describe action or drama, since the internees witnessed very little military action; their internment coincided with extended periods of military inaction since the camps were far from the war’s front lines until the end of the war. These “war diarists” therefore had the time not only to

kinds of public records such as interviews or historical overviews (e.g., Halsema “Bilibid,” “Diary”; Hartendorp).
write of the historic events of the moment but also to reflect on the past and the personal. The focus remains on the diarist with the historic events serving, for the most part, as a backdrop to their personal, individual story of daily life, describing the iterative, smaller battles to stay alive instead of large-scale military operations.

The daily struggle to survive, on rapidly decreasing and inferior food, with fewer mental, physical, and material resources, that makes up the majority of these narratives describes a different kind of fight on a different sort of battlefield, one that internment diaries can portray in vivid, intimate detail. The record of conflict they create is specifically a woman's, and a civilian's, record of war; they are "war diaries" that take into account the fact that participants in the war are not always combatants. Read in this capacity, all three texts are legitimate war diaries, though they may not be recognized as such given their inherently unconventional narrators (non-military, non-combatant, women and mothers). Thus Vaughan's description of the relief she gets from sewing doll's clothes for her children's toys is not at all out of place in this record. "In every crisis during this war," she records in 1943, "I have gone to the sewing basket [.....] The sewing basket has carried me through the crisis" (218). Recognizing that women's part in wars has not been sufficiently documented, she notes,

I must not forget to tell [her daughter] Beth what she will need for the next war. And as soon as she is old enough to remember she must know of Grandmother McMahan's recipe for war hunger, learned from Civil War days [.....] Surely Grandmother's own experience and mine should be of some value to my daughter, even though she is not yet four. Beth must be
told about string, although it is possible that by the next war something new for women's war needs will have been discovered. (215)

Through the planned publication of her diary, Vaughan ensures that Beth and all women she addresses will learn from her experience in time for the inevitable "next war." She positions Beth in a long lineage of women who have been participants in war and survived—though public history may not consider them participants.

With its inherent focus on the diarist's perspective, the internment diary tells a particular kind of history, in which the private and personal becomes the conduit for the public and historical. If we understand genre as "an attempt to do something (by saying something)" as Coe and Freedman argue (138), we can read these diarists' adoption and adaptation of the "war diary" to respond to their particular experience as an attempt to posit a new definition of "war," one that includes the different possible kinds of war stories. Though this objective may have been only tacit—Coe and Freedman acknowledge that "individual practitioners using the genre may have no conscious understanding of the form as strategy" (38)—the genre enables this intention to become public.43

Conscious of their roles as historians, each diarist, including Abkhazi who did not have children, created diaries that were at once personal scrapbooks and public archives, depositories of what each felt was significant about camp and their lives in it, as women held in a civilian internment camp. Crouter recorded in her diary the minutes of "every one of the innumerable committee meetings" held in the camp (Bloom, "Women’s Confinement" 7), excerpts from the camp newspaper, the texts of notes posted on the
camp bulletin board, and daily menus. Abkhazi copied articles from the Japanese-controlled local newspaper, official bulletins from the commandant, the calorie counts per internee for several meals, and the rotating duty roster. Vaughan inserted memos from the camp executive and notices from the Japanese command. All three faithfully recorded the thousands of rumors that circulated from the first to the final moments of internment. Their consistent compilation of these public documents or discourse alongside their personal notes demonstrates that these internee diarists valued such items as the material of “official” history, the traditional empirical evidence for a historical record. However, their diaries also feature the type of material or experience that “grand narratives” of history frequently overlook. Each records several “specimen days” of life in camp, with detailed daily timetables, listing the typical activities of queuing, camp work, eating, cleaning, personal cooking, and more queuing. Camp menus are a regular feature in all three diaries, as are descriptions of camp-inspired cooking, sewing, and cleaning innovations. (For example, Vaughan and Crouter experiment with cold cream as a substitute for butter for frying; Abkhazi documents the manifold new uses she devises for her chamber pot. All address ways to reinvent clothing out of rags and scraps.)

These details, like Vaughan’s advice to Beth, weave narratives of war that have public and personal value. Their daily accounting of their time spent while in internment gives shape to this singular experience, acting as tangible evidence of an almost intangible, unreal episode in their lives, adding texture and authenticity for their imagined readers. Such minutiae act as evidence to substantiate their claims about civilian

---

43 As Carolyn Miller points out, genres teach us “what ends we may have” (“Genre” 165). In other words, by examining the genres individuals use to communicate and react to situations, we can learn what they may have intended to do, what actions they saw themselves taking.
concentration camp, and “proof” that internees were, in fact, industrious, capable, and busy, even while they were suffering, evocative of Vaughan’s concern that her husband think her efficient in a time of upheaval. This implicit self-justification is interwoven with the act of witnessing each diary performs to create chronicles of history based on the personal, the domestic, and the daily. Abkhazi, Crouter, and Vaughan’s texts use the diary genre to validate such material and contribute it to the larger narrative of World War II history.

Vaughan’s conscious effort to record advice on war to pass on to her young daughter indicates that though the text served a public function as a record of war, it also served a personal function as a family history. This public, “archived” material is relevant to the personal history of each diarist, particularly for Vaughan and Crouter who wanted to capture this experience for their young children and their future descendants. Though Crouter realizes she won’t be able to send her letter to her mother, she continues to write, anxiously “putting it down while it is still fresh in the mind” (5); even at this early stage she recognizes the value of an eyewitness report on what are historic events. Knowing that others, including but not limited to her mother and family in the United States, will want to read about this time, she makes sure to record as much as she can. Since she recognizes that internment camp represented a “real experience, not a drop of which should be wasted or missed” (19), she devotes herself to recording it in intimate detail. (Bloom notes that Crouter spent as much as four or more hours a day writing [“Women’s Confinement” 7].) “I only hope,” she writes in March 1942, “to get out with these notes as the days fade from memory very quickly and would be impossible to

---

Bloom notes in her introduction to Forbidden Diary that Crouter “itemized every scrap of food she consumed during her entire incarceration,” a total of 3,785 meals (xxv-xxvi). Many of these references
recall” (28). In compiling the “Camps Hay and Holmes chronicle” (263), she creates a legacy for the whole family of this extraordinary time that they shared. In her capacity as family archivist, she carefully notes each one of their experiences in addition to her own. Descriptions of June and Bedie’s school lessons, friendships, illnesses, and maturation are recorded next to mentions of garbage detail, food shortages, and fights between internees. “Normal” life, then, is juxtaposed with the atypical world of internment camp, which has become commonplace, a type of semantic diary parataxis that marries the familiar with the strange.

Vaughan takes on the task as family historian not only to record the family’s time in internment but also to set down her family’s history from before the war. With Jim’s absence and death, Vaughan is the only one left to pass on such information to her children. Consequently, she describes meeting Jim, their courtship and wedding, even their wedding night, intensely personal narratives that she can no longer share with Jim but that are foundational to the larger story of their family. Suspecting and then realizing that the children will never know their father, she wants to pass on and make concrete her remembrances of the man. She rehearses as well the story of each child’s birth and early development, and continues to record Beth’s and Clay’s milestones, achievements, illnesses, and conversations. Vaughan’s diary, then, takes on the function normally performed by a baby album; indeed, it replaces such albums, because Vaughan lost all her personal papers and memorabilia. Since Vaughan herself may not survive camp, she needs to give the children, who are too young to understand, a sense of their extended family story, including Grandmother McMahon and the tips she had given about surviving war. In the days following the fall of Bataan, when Vaughan is holed up in a

were cut in creating the published version.
mountain camp awaiting internment with her children and other families, she pens several lengthy entries introducing her grandparents and great-grandparents, describing her own parents, and detailing her university education and research jobs. Significantly, Vaughan only includes her family, not Jim's, reflecting the new reality of their family life, reduced from four to three members.

However, the diary's functions of "family history" and "war diary" overlap in unsettling ways for Vaughan. Even though she hopes that her children will one day read or inherit her diary, in the meantime it must record her own experiences as well as theirs, chronicling the difficulties of being a single parent of two toddlers in an internment camp during war. Thus she notes from the mountain camp after learning that the "Japanese are ten minutes away" (47) her fear in case she dies for "[t]hese tiny bits of blond humanity who crave and expect constant sympathy and affection, whose every scratch and 'tumble down' calls for immediate attention" (48); the bitterness of her language arises as much out of her anxiety as it does her recent return, following the flight of the children's amah, to full-time mothering. Her attitude reflects as well the difficulties, practical as well as emotional, of mothering during the uncertain circumstances of a military invasion. In the subsequent entry, she explores her ambivalence about the "strange phenomenon" of motherhood. She writes, "I love the children, but feel that to neglect myself too much for them is an unrecoverable waste of time. So ideas of motherhood are in confusion" (48-49). In such entries, her imagined reader cannot include Beth and Clay, nor can these lines contribute to the kind of family history other parts of her diary create. In the last days of internment, Vaughan, having celebrated three birthdays with each child in the camp, nursed each through terrible illnesses, found clothes, food, toys, and time for them.
while having done the same for herself, confesses, "Sometimes I feel that the children are a millstone about my neck which will drown both myself and them" (269). These admissions create a personal space within the more public war diary, which the diary genre, in its flexibility, can encompass. Her position as war diarist, family historian, and sociologist, run together with the other identities she must perform as a wife/widow, mother, and woman, and so too do the narratives and functions of her diary. Written from the perspective of a mother of two children as well as of a witness to history, the war diary Vaughan creates, unlike Shirer's, does not allow her to divorce herself from the history in process around her or focus on the events instead of herself as narrator. For all three diarists, the historical is also highly personal.

The conflation of the personal and the historical raises red flags for both the subjects and the readers of these narratives. When other internees find out that Crouter is keeping a diary, she has to defend this practice against their "qualms." Several internees find her note-keeping "dastardly—shades of Somerset Maugham and hundreds of really good writers who collect material" (Crouter 161). Incensed at their reactions, she fumes, "How many times have reporters been attacked for their wretched habit of relating both sides, events as they happened." Linking herself, perhaps unconsciously, to "really good writers" who simply "collect material" and tell "events as they happened," language that reproduces Shirer's claims for his objectivity, Crouter elevates her diary beyond the private and domestic to a literary and journalistic realm. She imagines her diary as documentary, a function that diminishes the subjective, personal quality of her text and emphasizes its documentary qualities.
The response to *Forbidden Diary* by Crouter’s fellow internees after its publication, however, highlights the very personal nature of her observations, despite Crouter’s confidence that she was simply “collecting material.” Lynn Bloom, who edited Crouter’s text, surveyed Camp Holmes survivors to measure their sense of the diary’s accuracy. The majority (43%) concluded that the book’s depiction was only “somewhat accurate,” and several took issue with many of Crouter’s claims. One respondent describes her quite personal response to the diary: “When first reading [it], I reacted violently: ‘That simply isn’t true!’ Natalie makes [readers] believe her experience...was normative.” In particular, she adds, “Their servants sent in food most of us never tasted (bacon!) while in camp....After talking with many others about the book, I now know how little I knew of how well some of the others...were living” (qtd. in Bloom “Till Death” 79). Though, as Bloom points out, this internee may not have been aware that the Crouters donated much of their private food stock to the camp’s resources (“Till Death” 79), the internee’s response demonstrates that the identity and experience Crouter constructs in her diary, for a particular audience of her design, may not be recognized as valid by other readers. Once her diary becomes public, her identity performances become part of the public record, and are therefore open to critique, verification, and response. In fact, several Camp Holmes internees reacted to *Forbidden Diary*, the “first major commercially published interpretation of the Baguio camp experiences,” by starting their own narratives, countering Crouter’s individual representation with their own (Bloom, “Till Death” 79-80).45

---

45 Other Baguio narratives include Bessie Crim’s unpublished manuscript *I Met General MacArthur*; missionary Susie Thomas’ *More Than Conquerors Through Him Who Loved Us* (1970); Ethel Herold’s “War Memories of Ethel Herold”(1982); Judy Hyland’s *In the Shadow of the Rising Sun* (1984); and Fern Harrington Miles’ *Captive Community* (1987). Though William Moule’s memoir *God’s Arms Around Us*
These remarks on Crouter’s diary highlight the difficulty of making the personal historical. Though Crouter intends her diary to become a “universal chronicle of war” (61), no such text can be possible, and certainly the reading public would not be ready to accept a diary—by a woman civilian in particular—as conveying the “truth” as Crouter had hoped. Resistance to diaries as legitimate historical records on their own, instead of as “documents that may provide additional information to supplement other, more traditional and official sources” is consistent across disciplines, as Esther Captain indicates (2). While historians, including Frances Cogan, recognize the value of diaries to historical study as personal records that are “vibrantly alive, immediate and detailed” (Cogan 325), Cogan also notes that diaries “intrinsically have other limitations” since “the author very well may have an agenda and [...] even ‘facts’ can be skewed or contradictory” (325). Captain reports historian Von der Dunk’s reluctance to accept any autobiographical narrative as history, since such texts privilege “the specific truth of the author” over “the historical truth” (trans. and qtd. 3). However, he singles out the diary as “the most valuable” of autobiographical forms because the genre is private (not meant for publication) and written in the moment, and therefore is “spontaneous” (3). He reinscribes these stereotypes of the “authentic” diary at the same time he, like Cogan, reinvests the notion of “History” as recording the “Truth” objectively, furthering no (one’s) agenda.

As Vaughan’s dissertation, which relied on her diaries but created a new text to serve different purposes, demonstrates, the diarists recognized the very personal character

---

was published in 1960 (and reprinted in 1991) and thus significantly predated *Forbidden Diary*, it was released by a small press. Furthermore, Moule and his family were in Camp Holmes for less than two years (until 1943 they were in hiding in the jungle before being captured), making his record of the camp less comprehensive than Crouter’s.
of the histories they documented in their diaries. Nonetheless, they consciously used their diaries as historical records in the absence of other methods to document what was happening to them both individually and collectively, with a consequent relevance that was both personal and public. Their daily records of life as civilians behind the lines contribute a version of World War II history comprised of minutiae and the quotidian. Their texts salute the individual’s role, and the individual experience, instead of sublimating the personal voice in the “grand narrative” of “the war”; internment and other war diaries argue against this monolithic tendency. These diarists sensed that the intersection of the personal story with public history gave their narratives a public value. For a woman caught up in the forces of history, the need to have such value, to be significant, to matter to somebody, would drive the need to write her own story for herself and for others.

Notably, the published versions of all three diaries offer little insight into the internees’ lives following repatriation. The diarists’ need to record and their anticipation of an audience who would want to read about their everyday lives ceased with the end of the historic experience. Readers cannot know how the diarists integrated back into “normal” society, if they wiped their hands on their bare knees, or sat on the floor in a cocktail dress, or moved into tenement housing, as they’d imagined. Though the published editions of all three diaries provide epilogues and biographies of their subjects, the focus of the texts remains on what the diarist wrote and did during the war years, reinforcing these women’s sense that the personal is only historical, political, or valuable when the individual life intersects with public moments.
Conclusion

During their imprisonment, internees put everyday objects to new uses: tin cans become mugs, chamber pots served as salad bowls, and Red Cross bandages were made over into sunsuits. In this extraordinary situation, the diary, too, is made to perform myriad functions, to take on diverse roles, and to address multiple readers in recording the diarists' experiences. Compelled to write by the astonishing circumstances in which they found themselves, their families, and their neighbours, Abkhazi, Crouter, and Vaughan crafted narratives that served as eyewitness accounts, news reports, military analyses, and histories in progress. Continuing to write in order to reaffirm their sense of self, thereby resisting Japanese subjugation and fortifying themselves to survive, the diarists turned to their diaries to perform a variety of personal functions that in peacetime they would fulfill through other, non-textual avenues, if they needed to at all. Forced to adapt to an environment for which they had no way to prepare, Abkhazi, Crouter, and Vaughan pushed the diary genre to compensate for lost communities, material possessions, correspondence, and family members. For writers stuck in the continuous present of internment camp, where the future remained uncertain and the past irretrievable, the diary genre provided an ideal outlet, since its form highlights the immediate time, the moment of inscription, while still allowing retrospection and still projecting (into) the future.

Natalie Crouter penned thousands of entries in her determination to conserve every moment of this experience that she immediately recognized as invaluable and extraordinary. Seeing the potential "universal" applications of her individual experience, she compiled her notes with an eye to social change and justice, pairing the personal and the political in her "private" writings. This activity preserved not only Crouter's
experience but also her sense of self, allowing her to take on the identity of a heroine or survivor, an exemplary character in her educational narrative. Imagining a readership that included her immediate family but targeted as well a wider audience of her fellow Americans, Crouter wrote into the future, creating a legacy and insisting that this future would indeed take place, and that she would be an influential part of it.

Peggy Abkhazi used her diary for multiple purposes, both when she wrote the original text during incarceration and when she revised and published the text almost four decades after internment. Unlike Crouter, Abkhazi wrote against change, preserving in her diary her sense of identity and the communities she inhabited before the war. Crafting a narrative that upholds particular ideals of class and racial privilege even when the social structures that supported these colonial rights had been supplanted, Abkhazi maintains public standards even in what was at first a “private” text. Her editorial decisions to excise or add material and shape her diary as a long letter to specific friends allow her to embody her community identity even more consistently, playing the part of a British, upper-class gentlewoman at all times. This public textual performance in 1981 supported her public lived performance as Princess Abkhazi, a role she relished and took on with ease. Her diary informs her later identity in the public eye, and thus has been shaped to reinforce that public image.

Elizabeth Vaughan, burdened by two toddlers and her new roles as widow and civilian internee, struggles in her diary to reconcile who she was before the war, and before marriage, with who she can be during internment. Her public personal journal records her conflicting identities as sociologist, mother, “participant-observer,” and staunch American. She shares with Abkhazi a firm belief in colonial hierarchies, and
uses her diary to maintain this particular perspective by continuing to uphold American, white, upper-middle-class Southern values, thus resisting the changes wrought by the Japanese invasion and her consequent internment. Reading and writing her experience as an “ordeal,” Vaughan envisions a reading public who will be interested in her narrative as part of a tradition of war literature, one that in her case specifically inscribes a women’s experience of war. Using her diary to support her academic work, she addresses another reading community who would be engaged by her sociological observations and interpretations of internment and its effects. The personal becomes public in differing ways for Vaughan, but her diary is foundational for all these public performances.

Peggy Abkhazi, Natalie Crouter, and Elizabeth Vaughan became accidental authors through their experiences of internment. Such circumstances, and such an extraordinary moment, mean that the internment diary conflates traditional public and private distinctions as well as traditional divisions between “masculine” and “feminine” spheres, genres, and experiences. Both personal and historical, intimate and for other readers, these texts uphold the diary genre’s characteristics while challenging its conventional privacy. The public historical value of their personal experiences authorizes these writers’ adaptation of the “private” diary genre to respond to this extraordinary situation, and influences the reception of their texts as documents that are both public and private.
Chapter Three: Virtually Personal: Diaries on the Internet

In the years since Sarton, Page, Carr, and the internment diarists published their texts, the diary has taken on a new life and, in the process, some new features and uses. In this final chapter, I will explore the diary's latest reinvention as the favoured form for Internet life-writing, examining the possibilities for identity formation and community construction that these public personal diaries demonstrate. Internet diaries are personal texts that draw on the same concept of the diary as a genre as do the diaries of professional writers; these contemporary diarists employ many of the same literary strategies in their public personal texts in order to negotiate audience expectation and build communities. Unlike literary diarists who imbue their stories of daily life with their celebrity or internment diarists who narrate their part in a historic event, however, the vast majority of online diarists are private citizens, writing as and for other private individuals. The average online diarist has no claim to the public's interest beyond his or her sense of the extraordinary ordinariness of "regular" life. Internet diarists spin stories out of the experiences of their everyday lives and imagine a readership that would be interested in such detail. These diaries, "by the people and for the people," invite reconsideration of whose lives and what kinds of stories the diary supports and enables on the Internet.

I am particularly intrigued by the fact that the diary, this centuries-old practice associated with the spiritual, the therapeutic, and the strictly private, has become one of the genres of choice for Internet life-writers. By March 2002, more than 800 000 blogs were registered on the 'Net; in July 2002 an average of 1.5 "Blogger blogs" were created.

per minute (blogger.com 6 Aug. 2002). As Internet diarist Carolyn Burke noted wryly in 2000, “Shared intimacy has become status quo. 1998 was declared the year of personal online revelation” (“Personal Recollections”). These numbers suggest that online diaries are filling important functions for diarists and for readers in this contemporary moment; this old form has become the preferred method of response to the new situations of the Internet age. But why has this genre in particular made the transition from print to online culture so successfully? What does the Internet bring to the diary genre, and the diary genre to the Internet, that has made this pairing of form and media so felicitous? To the computer-literate (and those with access to a computer), creating an online diary has become as easy as putting pen to paper. The phenomenal proliferation in life-writing spaces on the Internet demonstrates an unprecedented interest in the life of the ordinary individual who, before the Internet, had few opportunities to publish his or her life story on such a wide scale. By-passing the commercial, aesthetic, or political interests that dictate access to traditional print media and decide whose life story deserves to be told, online diaries can be read as assertions of identity and arguments for the importance of a private individual’s existence and everyday experience. By circumventing the traditional avenues of publication, Internet diaries open up this everyday genre—and everyday diarists—to the public eye, allowing the genre to perform a variety of social actions it could not do offline.

If online diarists presume that their lives and their narratives merit our interest, attention, and time, their presumptions are not unfounded in terms of readers’ responses and in terms of the theoretical issues their texts raise. Some diaries have received thousands of visits to date, and many diarists have become famous in the cyber-
community, even parlaying their diaries into commercial success in “real life.” Steve Schalchlin’s online diary was instrumental in the success of his first musical *The Last Session*, for example, while Tracy Lee’s penchant for posting nude photographs of herself led to a book deal and a professional career as a photographer. Banking—literally—on the communities their diaries have fostered, these diarists highlight the personal and public uses that Internet diaries provide.

Given common belief in the diary as a form not meant for other readers, let alone an immediate and potentially international audience, such a text as a public online journal at first seems to many people an abomination, or at least a contradictory practice. In his self-reflexive analysis of online diaries, Philippe Lejeune notes his initial prejudices about these texts and their writers. In considering “la révolution de l’Internet” in the development of the personal diary, he sees two possible reactions. At the same time that one could revel (*s’extasier*) in the possibilities for the genre that online production presents, one could also perceive the environment of the Internet as “totalement opposé[ ] aux conditions de développement du journal intime, fondé sur une autre conception du temps (le délai, la maturation, l’accumulation) et de la communication (différée ou exclue: le secret)” (*Cher Écran* 193). Lejeune’s latter reaction, one natural response to the idea of the online personal journal, reflects the popular assumption that the diary is a private, for “oneself alone,” genre. The collision of public and private that occurs in these texts and in this medium raises questions about the ramifications of online production for the diary genre, since these texts, in both their public nature and their non-print medium, most explicitly challenge popular concepts of the form.
Web-diaries’ public nature but private—that is, personal, often intimate—content means that these texts confound traditional distinctions between public and private writings and functions, just as internment and literary diaries do. Unlike these other public personal journals, however, of which only relatively few instances exist, Internet diaries number in the thousands, are published as soon as they are written, and are typically free to post and read. In their immediacy and accessibility, in their seemingly unmediated state, Web-diaries blur the distinction between online and offline lives, virtual reality and real life, public and private, and, most intriguingly for auto/biography studies, between the life and the text. This confusion of boundaries makes Internet diaries an exciting site for inquiries into what the diary genre does and is doing not only for contemporary diarists but also for readers, who play a central role in these texts and, consequently, this discussion. While we have had some glimpses of diary readers before in Sarton’s fan letters and, to a lesser degree, in the responses of fellow civilian internees to Crouter’s *Forbidden Diary*, readers of Internet diaries have many more avenues to make themselves heard directly and insert themselves into the narratives they read.

Actual and imagined readers come together in the Internet diary, and the commingling of the designed audience and real reader is not always happy. Throughout this chapter I will explore the ways in which diarists accommodate and respond to both kinds of readers, and how this reader participation, unparalleled in any other diary form, builds on traditional ideas of the genre at the same time that it forges new directions for the diary. Further, because the online version of the diary is, in several key aspects, an emerging genre, its practitioners make particular efforts to tell readers how to read and other writers how to write, echoing Sarton’s efforts to articulate her own practices and set
standards for the genre in which she works. Web-diarists comment on all aspects of their texts, holding forth on topics including style, ethics, connections to other genres, and audience. These discussions, in which writers explain, justify, teach, or philosophize, illuminate cultural values, reading practices, and discourse features, and consequently meta-genre will again be a critical concern for my analysis.

Finally, while the previous two chapters have focused on women’s diaries, this chapter will draw on a range of diaries from both men and women, with an extended focus on two diarists, Justin Hall and Steve Schalchlin; their Internet journals, both in their longevity and volume, represent a benchmark for and have provided guidance to this developing tradition. Though, as I discuss below, the diary carries many generic assumptions from print culture to cyberspace, the transition from print to digital may have allowed it to shake off the prevalent concept of the diary as a feminine genre. Carter (Small) and Raoul (“Women and Diaries”) have already suggested that these traditional associations have very little to do with actual diary practices. Certainly, the Internet is by no means a utopic realm free of gender biases; as I have mentioned in the Introduction, the Web and technology are often still considered “masculine” domains. But the possibilities for generic innovation and reinvention that this new discursive space permits could allow these traditional associations and categorizations to be overwritten. As the sheer volume of online diaries attests, writers of both genders have seen the diary as the most appropriate way to respond to the situations that Internet use creates.
Coming to Terms: (E)merging Forms

Unlike a novel, the writer of a diary doesn’t always know what’s happening […] It’s like a real life serial being played out before your eyes with the author making it up as he goes along. Was this ever even possible before the internet? Are we talking about this being a new artform altogether?

—Steve Schalchlin, 11 Dec. 1996

Internet users have adopted and adapted the traditional diary genre to the public realm of cyberspace. Despite Steve Schalchlin’s belief in the Internet diary as a “new artform,” its practitioners in many ways reproduce the traditional diary, upholding instead of resisting the genre both in style and content. As Lejeune observes about this latest evolution of the already elastic diary genre, “Seule la manière change” (Cher Écran 12). Often almost absurd parodies of the stereotypical diary, many online diaries are fragmented narratives that jump disconnectedly from topic to topic, recording in mundane detail the diarist’s daily life. They focus on the quotidian and the personal, foregrounding the diarist’s experiences and emotions. Their narratives follow the generic convention of starting in medias res, with the most recent entry appearing as the diary site is visited (though, as I discuss below, Web technology allows diarists to uphold this generic feature at the same time that they subvert it). Entries are organized chronologically, though their regularity may range from several times a day to one every few months.

Though diary studies has come to accept the interchangeable use of the terms “diary” and “journal,” the new terms “online journal” and “Weblog” need some explanation. While such quibbling over these definitions may be seen as splitting hairs, it
does point out the confusion that surrounds these texts, what they are supposed to be, what they should be doing, and for whom. Virginia Woolf’s famous description of the diary as a “capacious hold-all” (I:266)—a catch phrase both the online and print journaling communities have taken up with zest—gestures towards the genre’s elasticity and multiple forms, incorporating, as we have noted, such genres as the letter, scrapbook, family history, and travelogue into “diary” narratives. That elasticity is well-used in cyberspace, where diarists play with the diary genre and its stereotypical form and content, using this old genre to do some new “tricks” in addition to its traditional functions. Some so-called “new” formulations of the diary, however, may simply be traditional diary uses masquerading under a new name.

In attempting to classify the phenomenon of Weblogs, which post-date the appearance of online diaries, the popular media have further muddied the waters, defining the blog as a “kind of spontaneous online public journal” (Taylor 68), a “sort of hybrid diary/ bio/community/ bulletin board” (Webb 22), or as a “chronological diary” that is a “descendant of the personal homepage” (McKinnon 67). Diaries began to appear online in 1995, typically developing out of the personal home pages of individuals already involved with Internet technologies (Astruc, Leitch-Thompson and Wade n.p.). Weblogs, a term coined by blogger Jorn Barger in 1997 (Blood “Weblogs” 7), similarly attracted “power users” of the Web (Blood “Introduction” x). These pages, which featured daily lists of annotated links to other sites, acted as filters for the burgeoning content of the World Wide Web, directing readers to material the blogger found particularly worthwhile. The early diarists and bloggers were, therefore, users who typically had technological know-how and, perhaps more importantly, Web savvy, some sense of the
World Wide Web as a place for community as well as communication. This background would have significant influence on the uses the early Web-diarists imagined for their texts.

With the introduction in 1999 of Pitas and Blogger, two free site-building and publishing tools that did not require knowledge of HTML, the numbers of both diaries and blogs mushroomed (Blood “Weblogs” 8). Critic and blogger Rebecca Blood notes that “[o]nce literally anyone could make a weblog, literally anyone did” (“Introduction” x). With the despecialization of these sites and forms, blogs and diaries also became less distinct, with more bloggers incorporating journal components into their traditional “[l]ink-plus-commentary” formula (Powazek 3); these journal-blogs shifted focus from “the Web-at-large” to the personal lives of the writers (Blood “Weblogs” 10). With the huge influx of new writers into the blogging and online diary communities, both forms evolved to suit these users’ needs. Collapsing these related forms into one, the latest generation of writers married personal narratives with critical commentary about the Web and its content, drawing on the Internet culture to speak to and for other “Netizens.”

The merging of these formerly distinct text-types, coupled with the explosion in popularity of the resulting hybrid form, has elicited meta-generic responses from diarists, who seek to understand the genre by examining their own practices. Since they, like Sarton, are writing on the frontiers of the genre, their self-analyses can both establish norms for a wider community and justify their own approaches. Recognizing that “a lot of people are quite insistent” that journals and blogs are different forms, for example, blogger Jane Pinckard discusses her decision to create separate pages for her journal and
her blog. She anticipates readers’ confusion in “what’s the difference between a journal and a web log,” and explains:

...for me the weblog and the journal have very different functions. The weblog is sort of my “instant fix” for when I feel like I just have to write about something, even if I don’t necessarily have a lot of time. Since it’s the front page of my site, it’s also meant to be a quick peek for the casual browser at various things I find interesting.

The journal is where I sit down and think, “now I will write in the journal.” That doesn’t mean the quality of writing will be any better, mind you, but it’s different. It takes me longer to write, I think about it more, and it tends to be much more rambling, introspective what have you....I tucked it away in a place where people don’t have to read it if they don't want to. (http://www.umamitsunami.com/journal.asp)

Pinckard’s quasi-reverent approach to the act of creating a diary, suggested by her phrase “now I will write in the journal,” captures long-standing responses to the diary genre. Pinckard describes journal-writing as an activity requiring time, thought, and meditation, a characterization that reflects traditional uses of the diary as a spiritual exercise, personal therapy tool, and literary production. Despite the public nature of the online journal, it still focuses on the personal and introspective, and consequently may not be to her “casual” readers’ tastes. Her characterization of the blog as off-the-cuff, capturing her thoughts in the instant of writing, though, is a style also popularly associated with the diary genre as an artless, spontaneous text.
While the term "online diaries" clearly connects these texts to the print world, to the traditions of the diary and the generic rules and expectations that come with them, the expression "blogs" invites a reading of these writings as a "new artform," one without the cultural baggage of an existing (print) genre. In reality, though, even the scantiest of blog narratives incorporates trademark diary features, with regular, dated entries that focus on the diarist/narrator's experiences or at least his or her interests. Compiling a list of noteworthy sites and commenting on them is also an autobiographical act, a way of asserting an identity and world-view for a reading public. Few practitioners separate their writings as Pinckard does, making instead texts that do a little bit of everything, and eliding the artificial distinction between the blog and the diary.

Despite their difference in name and occasionally in format, then, Weblogs draw upon the diary form and tradition, and perhaps we can read the blog as simply another kind or function of the diary genre, one particularly well-suited to perform the social actions desired by contemporary diarists. Online participation in this genre allows

47 As I will argue, most users see online diaries and blogs as interrelated if not synonymous. But the use of a new term, one that did not exist prior to the Internet, to describe a traditional discursive activity may help explain why these diary texts have not been saddled with the gender associations attached to the terms "journal" and "diary" in print culture. Neither the blog nor the Web-diary have become categorized as "masculine" or "feminine," and both forms attract users of both genders, though no data have been collected to determine numbers of men and women using either text-type.

48 In the latest version of Pinckard's site, the Weblog and the journal have been essentially collapsed. Although she still has separate pages for her "Weblog" and "journal," the entries are identical; only the formatting is different. Another page, "Dreams," repeats dream-related entries. Since the journal page on the original site was rarely updated, perhaps Pinckard has found this artificial distinction too time-consuming to be tenable.

49 This conclusion remains contentious, and both blogging and journaling camps can be very vocal and insistent that these forms are different and that the difference is significant. In the rant (yet another form incorporated into many online diaries and blogs) "Put the Keyboard Down and Back Away from the Weblog," blogger Neale Talbot argues that blogs "share similar elements to the journal world, but that don't mean one will eat the other. Distinct places. Distinct genres. You say it's the same old shit in the same old package. Well I say it's a lot less shit in a much smaller package" (157). Echoing Pinckard, he explains, "They're different styles for different audiences about different things" (157-158). Talbot's meta-genre attempts to draw—and police—community boundaries through generic practices. However, since, in Talbot's terms, "shit" is inherent to both forms, I think I can proceed with my claim, though I do take his note about audience, style, and purpose under advisement.
writers to carry on public diary conversations that will no longer be monologic, where the response will not be just imagined but actual; these conversations may be in-depth discussions, as in Pinckard’s journal, or simply chats, as in her blog, with varying degrees of personal disclosure and intimacy. The diary genre, whether in its avatars as an online journal or as a Weblog, showcases the daily and the (seemingly) trivial, and seems to require no particular literary skill to create, and therefore its online writers have generic permission, so to speak, to produce texts that meet these standards. Since anyone with access to and some familiarity with a computer can create a Web-diary, readers will not be expecting texts or lives that are literary, exceptional, gifted, or even particularly thoughtful. As Pinckard’s comments point out, Web-diaries serve functions for and the interests of both the writer and the reader, making the online diary “totally interactive” (Schalchlin 5 Dec. 1998).

**Something Old, Something New: Features of the Internet Diary**

Unlike the diaries of professional writers or interned civilians, which challenge concepts of privacy and audience but retain the diary’s traditional form, online journals have features that distinguish them from their print counterparts. The presentation or publication on the Internet allows diarists to incorporate such tools as hypertext that let writers expand the functions and possibilities of the genre. Like Abkhazi, Page, Sarton, or Crouter, Internet diarists recognize the particular context in which they write and make public their diaries, and work to create texts that will fit into that context, using the tools at hand to do so. However, online writers are responsible for the formatting, layout, and accessibility of their text, giving the diarist control over all elements of publication.
Consequently, Internet diarists face expectations not only of their diaries but also of their diaries as Websites, and they must meet those reader demands at the same time.

Diarists can incorporate the instruments of the Internet to enrich their diary narratives, turning textual self-portraits into three-dimensional virtual experiences in which the reader can take a guided tour of the diarist’s “life.” Diarists may now add audio or video files to their texts alongside still photographs, building on the diary-as-scrapbook tradition in ways that would not be possible in a traditional published diary. Using hypertext, diarists can create links between relevant entries, allowing readers to put events in context and get the whole story without the diarist having to explain again, giving readers who would otherwise be overhearers a means to become informed. For example, pioneer Internet diarist Justin Hall fills his diary entries with links, connecting offsite to the personal Web pages of friends he has spent time with or to conferences he has attended, and internally to previous entries. These links create a complex web of cross-references that lets the reader follow the diarist’s experiences as “authentically” as possible without feeling as if they are missing background or crucial connections. Similarly, Anne Pinckard of The Cheese Diaries writes, in a long, meditative entry, “I don’t feel I have ownership of anything, let alone my own life” (18 Oct. 2003). Clicking on “ownership” takes the reader to a personal essay on the concept of property on another diarist’s site (ryantate.com), allowing readers to see exactly what concept of ownership Pinckard draws upon in her entry.

This feature potentially eliminates or reconfigures the experiences of presupposition and long spans that we found in Sarton’s and Page’s diaries, with critical
implications for understanding audience design and defining “authenticity” in this new context. Through these links to other sites and within the diary, both new and old readers will grasp the significance of what the diarists describe as it unfolds, establishing multiple, simultaneous levels of audience design. Readers of Web-diaries do not need to keep track of references that may have been made days ago and that have significant associations with the current entry. Indeed, these long spans between referent and antecedent, which Page, for example, used so effectively to buttress her “artist” identity, may have been made obsolete by hypertext. The spans will, of course, still exist, but the presence of the linked text announces that a connection is being made and shows the reader the original reference. Similarly, presupposition continues to work as a form of efficiency, as we have seen in literary and internment diaries, but on the Web writers can be accommodating as well as efficient. Though presupposing expressions may still alert visitors that they may not know the information being asserted rather than explained, the links give them a means of catching up without having to ask for clarification. Whereas Sarton or Vaughan, for instance, needed to provide parenthetical explanations to discretely bring new readers up to speed, Hall and Pinckard can carry on their intimate utterances, designed for audiences in the inner circle, on the main page of the diary and supply necessary background information obliquely through links. Even in a public venue, diarists should not advertise that they are adopting a disclosing attitude towards overhearers—doing so would compromise the “authenticity” of the reading experience by reminding readers of the diary’s public setting. Links allow diarists to preserve that authenticity.

50 That site is written by her partner, Ryan Tate, illustrating that Web-diary communities are incestuous as well as self-legitimating. Linking to one’s partner’s Web-site in the context of a discussion about
This strategy of disclosure through links has significant implications for audience design. In Clark’s model, speakers assign roles to their listeners, in part through the establishment of common ground. Having continuous access to a primer for community knowledge through links, however, means that readers can choose from the roles offered to them. If they elect to follow the links and become informed, they could take on the position of side-participants; more active participation through comments pages, as I discuss below, may turn them into addressees. Readers who ignore the linked material can remain by-standers. Bloggers have seen to their needs by making information available, so these readers (known, as we will see, as “lurkers”) are not treated as eavesdroppers, and they can “upgrade” their position any time by following the links. The self-selecting reader is indeed a new creation, the product of an intimate genre and a flexible medium. “Authentic” diary features—the assumption of shared knowledge, the non-disclosing attitude—remain intact, on the surface, but can be overwritten or redeployed through Web technologies.

This network of links creates a collage of voices and stories that supplement but do not supplant the diarist’s own text. Diarists and readers become part of a wider conversation that the diarist focusses momentarily on him- or herself, inviting readers to see the world of the Web through this personal lens. These links act as community builders by constructing a virtual world for the diarist, peopling her autobiographical landscape with the friends and family, restaurants, shops, and schools that the diarist invokes, or the movies, music groups, or causes about which she is passionate. By following the links, readers can in a sense share the diarist’s experiences, see as he or she does, rather than relying on the diarist’s textual descriptions. These links thus foster a ownership, property, and independent identity is also highly ironic, to say the least.
greater sense of intimacy between writer and audience and create a polyphony impossible to produce or represent in a print diary. Links also, arguably, add to the reader’s sense of the diary’s “authenticity” because the narrative is anchored in “actual” places and people that members of the audience may also recognize, making them feel part of the narrative, insiders who are part of the community the diarist addresses.

Blogger and critic Joe Clark muses that for many bloggers, these links do not just represent the life experiences, they are the life. Clark explains, “You can write about what you did with your real-life friend yesterday, but you can’t link to that experience. You can link to what your online friend blogged yesterday.[...] links are diaries because life is the Web” (59). His formulation merges the textual and the lived. By extension, the written subject and the living subject would also be synonymous, a major challenge to the life-text distinction foundational to autobiography and literary studies, and a source of confusion for readers and writers of Internet diaries, as subsequent discussion will show. For such “wired” autobiographers, the connections that links make between sites—and the people behind them—have significance beyond the hypertextual. For example, readers may have been able to know or at least suspect that the blogging couple of Jane Pinckard and Justin Hall had ended their relationship days before either diarist made any mention of the change in the text of their diaries simply because Jane took down the link to his site that had formerly been found under “Family.” The dropping of links in this case signified the rupture that could not otherwise be inscribed. Always in process, online diaries reflect this open-endedness and fluidity in their construction as well as their narrative content.
The immediacy of access that the Web enables marks a critical change from the situation of print diaries. In contrast to the lag between writing and publishing that exists for offline public diaries, new entries in online journals can be uploaded as soon as they are finished. This immediacy may heighten the reader's sense of identification with the writer, since the reader can experience vicariously the events in the diarist's life almost in "real time." Because readers may view entries on the same day as the events they describe, author and audience may share the same temporal moment, and consequently both the reader and the diarist will be in suspense about what will happen next. While we expect diarists to have no foreknowledge—this position is, as Raoul notes, a typical and authenticating feature of the diary genre (Distinctly Narcissistic 49)—having readers occupy that position would be difficult to produce in a published print diary. This sense of shared knowledge contributes to the intimate feel of these texts, making readers feel as if they "know" the diarist personally. The immediacy of both publishing and living foregrounds the daily moment in the diarist's life, and invites readers to become a part of that intimate everyday existence.

Madeleine Sorapure argues that the "insistent presentness of the Web" (2) focusses readers' attention on the immediate moment of writing (or uploading), closely mimicking the manuscript diary-in-process. Online readers do not have to flip to the final page but find the most recent entry as soon as they load the site (older entries are typically arranged in reverse chronological order and catalogued under "Archives," so new readers can in fact go back to the beginning). The focus on the present emphasizes the serial nature of Internet diaries, the fact that the life and the writing are unfolding as we read. Though a gap will still exist between writing and reading, that gap is no longer
so obvious, in part because the blog has not been “packaged”; it is not a finished product but is still ongoing. Further, unlike a traditional print diary, blogs have no obvious endpoint. Even when purpose-built diaries like Sara Achenbach’s *Going Bridal*, which chronicled her wedding preparations, reach what should be a natural conclusion, their diarists can simply link to their new page, carrying over old readers and inviting new ones to join the continuing narrative. (For example, *Going Bridal* morphed into *Going Jesus* after Achenbach’s wedding was called off.) Internet diaries represent a more continuous project and product than do their offline counterparts, since they are free of such concerns as running out of pages or meeting a publisher’s deadline or requirements.

While the Weblog’s serial installments may evoke the manuscript diary, many of the accessories found in an online diary reflect its nature as a public document, meant for readers other than the diarist, in a context specific to the Internet. Instead of finding out about the diarist gradually, gaining a cumulative sense of the writer as they read her narrative, audiences can jump to the capsule biography, found on an “About me” page. Here the diarist lays out her favourite movies, books, music, and activities; her marital and family status; her age, hometown, and astrological sign, and so on. Diary servers including Blogger aid in this set-up by providing diary templates, which offer ready-made page layouts and also suggest categories that direct content, taking a page from print culture’s “fill-in-the-blank” diaries. On Cosmicrayola’s “Profile,” for example, readers discover that the diarist is a 48-year-old Gemini with two adult children and a love of fishing. By clicking on her “Bio,” they get a much more substantial background, including her real first name, though on this page she gives her age only as “older than dirt.” Diarists may also supplement their biographical material in response to real or
imagined queries from readers with a separate page for “FAQ” (frequently asked questions). The online diarist, then, creates multiple and simultaneous autobiographical narratives that her readers will encounter at her site.

Such prefatory pages take on the functions that forewords or “Editor’s Notes” would typically perform in a published print diary, providing context to the diarist and her diary. Online diarists can choose how to (re)present themselves, instead of being packaged by publishers; their supplementary pages fill roles similar to book jackets on print publications, with their author biographies (with photo), short descriptions of the diary content, even “blurbs.” Bloggers, borrowing from print culture practices and expectations, reproduce these publishing apparatuses in their self-produced texts, lending the authority of the familiar formatting and discourse to their personal diaries. Despite readers’ expectations that diaries will begin in medias res, the introductory and “FAQ” pages suggest that readers need or desire more than just the immediate moment as articulated in the most recent entry, a shift in reading practices from the print diary. Though entries can stand alone, and do constitute discrete autobiographical performances, they are best understood when situated within a larger “story.” These complementary narratives allow diarists to account for themselves in different ways, potentially reaching different audiences with each iteration, before they expose their “true selves” in their personal diaries. 51

51 Though the majority of personal online journals are accessible to anyone surfing the 'Net, some diary servers do allow writers to password-protect their diaries, meaning that only a select group can read them. This control over circulation, this ability to limit access to only the readers the diarist desires, distinguishes the online diary from print forms; traditional print diarists who publish their texts relinquish power over who can read their diaries. Further, such public-yet-private web-diaries allow the diarist to be a public presence on the Internet without going “all the way.” The presence of these “secret diaries,” none of which I can access, upholds readers’ sense of a “private” self who exists behind the public figure; the diarist only exposes this “true self” to a chosen few.
Sorapure sees these multiple pages as "the influence of computer technology on the act of diary writing" and on the kinds of identity/ies that online diaries can create. She proposes that we read the variations on one's autobiography that these supplementary pages construct as a "database model of identity, a non-narrative model in which discrete pieces of information are collected and stored" (7). The database, which gathers information into units for storage and easy access, mirrors both the on- and offline diarist's practice of categorizing, compiling, and segmenting her self-representations, and Sorapure argues, thus characterizes a postmodern sense of self. The act of "creating and coding information about oneself, populating a database that readers subsequently query—develops and reflects a sense of identity as constituted by fragments and segments, each of which is separately meaningful and equally significant" (Sorapure 7-8), meaning that written identity does not need to be conceived of or performed as cohesive or singular. The online diarist, unlike her print counterpart, can bring these fragments together in constantly new configurations, creating links between pages, or taking down other parts of the site, so that both the diarist and her readers will experience her identity as fluid. The database model emphasizes as well how identity is constructed by both the individual—who creates the structure and content of the database—and her community or readers, who interact with the material on the database and, through these interactions, shape the ongoing process of the database's construction and maintenance. Because the autobiographical self-portrait that the diary paints is always in process, perpetually "under construction," part of the excitement for readers, the novelty that keeps them coming back, may lie in seeing "who" the diarist is on that day, how she brings together the various "pieces" of her self-representation.
Prefatory or supplementary pages enable a potential audience to make quick decisions about whether to read this diary or move on to a diarist with whom they share more interests. In this capacity, such capsule biographies act as waivers or disclaimers, devices not generally needed in diaries published by traditional methods, which, by packaging texts and subjects, identify them for the appropriate audiences. Because readers and writers come together without the mediation of book publishing and marketing, Internet diarists establish relationships with or relevance to readers and communities in new ways. Having told readers what to expect, confessing their foibles, beliefs, and attitudes in these introductory biographies, diarists do not have to apologize in their narratives for attitudes that may be unpopular or offensive. In his “Welcome” page, Johnny Reb, a Civil War aficionado, anticipates negative reactions and defends his position: “The things you you [sic] see and read in here are my thoughts, if you have a problem with that, to be honest, I really don’t care. I’m not a racist, I am a Christian, [...]. I do tend to vent a little bit about some racial things that upset me, but once again, this is my diary, not yours.” This meta-genre echoes Sarton’s, and to a certain degree Carr’s, passages in which they explain how they have approached their diaries, letting readers know what to expect from the text that follows, and consequently deflect potential criticism. Putting this explanation right up front, Johnny Reb delineates the very particular community of readers he would like to have at this site, but acknowledges the presence of other readers, those who do not share his views, and therefore need forewarning. Though he states that he “[doesn’t] care” about this “you” who would be offended by his diary, his disclaimer demonstrates his awareness that, as a responsible writer, he should indicate quite clearly his journal’s purpose and designed audience.
Johnny Reb’s apologia suggests that whatever he says in his online journal somehow does not count; he expresses only his (private) “thoughts” in his diary, which he imagines is still a private medium even online. His sense that this excuse is adequate highlights the tension between simultaneous and competing definitions and functions of the diary, between offline and online perceptions of the genre and its roles. Because Johnny Reb brings contemporary print culture readings of the diary as a private space to the public forum of the Internet, he can argue that the diary form itself provides him with carte blanche for free expression. Though not every visitor to his site will agree with his politics or his right to discuss “racial things,” they have been forewarned. This stance serves as a reminder both of the online diarist’s freedom from the external censorship inherent in the traditional publishing process and the implications of that freedom for online readers and writers, and the communities that these texts construct.

**Getting Connected: Readers and Communities**

On March 12, 2003, Sara Achenbach, known to the blogging world as “Going Bridal,” shocked the online diary community by calling off her wedding two months before the day. Reader response was swift. Though Achenbach had disabled the comments pages at her own site, over at Indiebride, a discussion forum, a new thread began under the post “Going Bridal—the wedding’s called off!” Going Bridal fans there expressed sadness, shock, even nausea, and, significantly, a sense of personal loss. “Anon” notes, “I really enjoyed that web page and grew to really like Sara — in a never.met-virtual.web kind of way. I actually said ‘Oh, no...!’ out loud. (at work.)” (“Does anyone know more”). “Bridetobe” adds, “I feel like the biggest jerk in the world, because after my initial
sadness for them, I felt so bad for ME [...] I hope they resolve what they need to resolve, and live happily ever after, even if they don't share it with the rest of us” (“Jeez I feel”). These responses on another site to the content of a Web-diary indicate readers' active engagement with the “real life serials” that are unfolding before them. No longer able to respond directly to the diarist, these readers sought another venue where Going Bridal fans were likely to accumulate, and used this forum for their need to discuss what had happened.

Unlike readers of traditional print diaries, online readers become directly involved—in a “virtual-web kind of way”—with the lives and stories of the diarists whose texts they have been reading. Taking in events as they happen, instead of years or months after their narration, Internet readers share a sense of ownership or investment in these texts. While Sarton's fans certainly felt connected to the diarist, and were moved by what she narrated, they were reading about these events or emotions long after they had occurred. The dailiness and stylistic immediacy, fostered by deictics, of both the digital and print diary, create the sense of being in the moment with the diarist. But when the diary is printed and published by traditional means, audiences know they are distanced from the time of writing. Readers' personal engagement with the subjects of Internet diaries may be further motivated by the kinds of writing subjects the Web makes accessible. Web-diarists are typically private citizens, “regular” people, and the stories and experiences they describe are more likely than those of literary or internment diarists to reflect the lives of their readers. Carr's diary, for example, is filled with domestic detail and everyday tasks. But her primary subjectivity in the published version of the diaries as “artist,” coupled with her posthumous public identity as “famous artist,” make her a
celebrity and thus harder for readers to identify with as representing them or their own lives. The democratic "home" publishing of Internet diaries, which enables the daily broadcasting of the lives of "ordinary" people, has made readers feel that they "know" diarists personally. Consequently, Web-diaries foster this sense of ongoing personal responsibility of diarists and readers to each other that cannot take place in traditional print culture.

These readers' very personal reactions to the life story of someone they have never met, as well as their need to respond to that story, are characteristic of the online journal and the communities it creates. On the Internet, readers play major roles in how and why diaries are produced. Instead of hiding their diaries away under lock and key, most Web-diarists work hard to attract and retain an active readership—that is, a readership that supports the site by signing guestbooks, commenting, or sending e-mails to the diarist. Such readers thereby leave tangible traces of their presence and clear articulations of their reactions and desires in ways that would not be possible in the print reading world. Online diaries let them do that with texts that are in process, ongoing, meaning that readers can directly influence the shape of the text as it unfolds. They wield this influence in a variety of ways that include e-mailing the diarist to ask for clarification, adding a supportive or critical comment on the response pages, or even quoting from and discussing the diary in their own blog and linking to the original diary. In these ways, readers are writing themselves into the diaries to which they respond, participating in the construction of the text the diarist writes and affecting the identities he or she takes on in the narrative; in a sense, readers can custom-fit both diaries and diarists. Readers' responses to diaries—responses that may be public and often are
immediate—can provide insights into what the diary genre is, why people write it, and for whom, when they choose to post these personal narratives on the Internet.

These reader comments function in many ways like traditional fan letters. Like May Sarton, Internet diarists can select particular comments to respond to or include “fan” e-mails within the texts of their diaries. Unlike Sarton’s fan correspondence, though, this reader-writer interaction and reader commentary take place without the lag caused by publishing or even the postal system, so that the text of the diary may be immediately affected. More significantly, comments pages, unlike private correspondence to an author, are typically available for all to read. Though diarists can remove offending, off-topic, or critical feedback, their reader response is a public action, with commentary directed not only at the diarist but also to the diary’s community, which will also read these comments. Because of this public feedback, online diarists, as Jane Pinckard’s, Johnny Reb’s, and Steve Schalchlin’s comments have demonstrated, are acutely aware of their readers. The accessibility of both the diarist and the diary, their invitations for input, their sense of responsibility to respond to and address readers’ concerns immediately, are practices not possible before the technologies and media of the online diary. For the online diarist, having readers means that the diarist has both joined and created community/ies, acts that inform the texts he or she will produce.

The Internet diarist, in the complex position of writing to the self and to others, for readers both imagined and actual, employs multiple strategies to construct those communities. Johnny Reb writes diary entries during shifts at Wal-Mart, chronicling the tedium of life during and after work: “last night when i got home, i hopped on line for a while, messed around there. i ate a nice juicy 9 oz steak that i brought home the other
night, it was still pretty good, had a bud light, and watched behind enemy lines again. It
has to go back to hollywood video in a few days, and i wanted to watch it again” (16
Aug. 2002). In Dreams of Glass, diarist Nora notes, “tonight i found a new asian
convenience/grocery store in the east village (at 11th and third ave). it’s called Morning
to Midnight....[I] bought a green iced tea, a regular pocky, and these chocolaty [sic] wafer
cookie type things that they had samples of” (15 Aug. 2002).

Both entries are rife with presupposing expressions that delineate very carefully
the particular communities these diarists inhabit and address. Johnny Reb’s and Nora’s
diaries, as these entries illustrate, abound with particular social, cultural, even
geographical references that a reader may or may not understand, and thus indicate the
common ground, the shared knowledge, that both imagine existing between themselves
and their ideal reader. Since neither diarist provides explanations through links or more
traditional means, they seem indifferent to readers in the position of overhearers.
Johnny’s invocation of “bud light,” “behind enemy lines,” and “hollywood video” speak
to readers who can retrieve these references from their own experience of North
American culture. These references operate in Johnny’s imagined community as

---

52 As of September 1, 2002, this entry (and all previous ones) can no longer be accessed. Nora “took [them]
away” after some incidents of “journal stalking,” apparently by readers from NYU. She does not elaborate
on what has occurred, or define “journal stalking,” other than to say, in a September 1st entry entitled
“Fuck you stalkers,” that “if you know me and you give a shit about my life, perhaps you should CALL
ME or EMAIL ME instead of STALKING my journal.” This incident highlights the dangers inherent in
“living online,” in making one’s life seem totally accessible; the sense of anonymity the Internet seems to
promise has failed in Nora’s case. The loss of her earlier journal entries also reminds us of the unique
problems in working on documents in cyberspace, which may disappear without warning, leaving no trace
or hardcopy behind.

Nora has started a new website, Photographs by Nora, at the same address, that features her digital
photos. Though she does introduce herself as “21 year old college student” who lives “in brooklyn, ny in
an apartment with a roommate and a cat,” she reveals little of the intimate life she previously shared with
her diary readers. The site has not been updated since February 8, 2003.

53 This indifference may have been part of Nora’s problem with the “journal stalkers.” Since, as we have
seen, overhearers will form hypotheses about what they hear even though they are not being addressed
(Clark and Schaefer 260), adopting an attitude of indifference towards them while in a public setting could
examples of the mutual generic and particular knowledge, “things that everyone in a community knows and assumes that everyone else in that community knows, too,” on which community membership is based (Clark and Marshall 36). As Clark and Marshall explain, Johnny’s use of these proper nouns, the meanings of which do not change from situation to situation, designate community membership by referring to entities that are assumed to be mutually known (45). Similarly, Nora does not bother to explain “the East Village,” “11th and third ave,” or “Pocky,” since to do so would insult the readers she addresses, who, she imagines, know very well what these definite references mean. While these references do not necessarily block an outside reader from understanding the entry—North American readers of these diarists’ generation will likely recognize these names as products or businesses and fill in the blank themselves—they do demonstrate the very local audience each diarist designs.

Johnny Reb’s and Nora’s attention to the particular details of their daily routines and landscapes invites readers who share their interests, values, backgrounds, even neighborhoods, creating insider/outsider roles for readers. Outsiders, who lack the background knowledge necessary to understand these entries or who do not share their values, presumably do not belong and therefore will not be accommodated. The addressee of Johnny Reb’s text, for example, may also find a “nice juicy 9 oz steak” appealing, and would recognize the merit in watching the film Behind Enemy Lines more than once. A reader from or visitor to New York may identify with Nora because he or she also frequents the “Morning to Midnight” store, or is familiar with “11th and third ave.” Nora’s imagined audience understands, for instance, that different kinds of Pocky

be costly. Unlike the internment diarists, who recognized the potential danger of this attitude, Nora may not have anticipated the threat that overhearers can pose.
exist, and that these differences are significant and noteworthy. These diarists' casual spelling, grammar, punctuation, and diction announce that these texts are not meant to be polished, professional, or literary, as Pinckard's journal, for example, tries to be. Since such matters are clearly unimportant to them, they should not matter to their ideal readers either; to use Pinckard's classification scheme, Dreams of Glass and Johnny Reb are "blogs," with their spontaneous, in-the-moment record, and their readers should not expect anything else. Both writers assume a readership who cares enough about such things and about these diarists to invest time in reading these detailed daily records.

These minutiae add up to the diarist's life/narrative, in which each of these events is equally important, illustrating the diary parataxis to which Hogan urges readers to attend. In these entries, typical of both diaries' content, Nora and Johnny create portraits of their ordinary evenings, chronicles of regular life worth recording because of their ordinariness. Indeed, these diarists' incorporation of time deictics (last night, the other night, tonight, a few days) creates the sense that writing the diary is simply part of the daily rhythm, and may indicate the exigence these diarists are experiencing. They feel they should write everyday, even if they record only such trivia. Because their designed readers do not expect these diarists to write about extraordinary things, they understand this exigence and accept this content as valid public diary material. Such entries fulfill the diary's traditionally personal functions of logbook and memoranda, but when written on the Internet, diarists give these functions a public purpose, presuming that others will want to read these records, even comment on them.

Readers who do not share the diarists' values or the knowledge so foundational to membership in their communities will be alienated by such entries. They are not the
diary’s imagined audience so will not feel welcomed or able to participate. As Nora’s home page admonishes site visitors, “if you don’t belong here, you probably know that, and you should leave, k [sic].” But how are readers to recognize who does “belong here”? Joanna Gill argues that “[w]here the gaze is invited there is neither privacy nor invasion” (83). Does the position of Web-diaries on the “public” space of the Internet constitute an invitation to read? If not, whose gaze do Web-diarists invite and how do they extend that invitation? As Johnny Reb has illustrated, some diarists will make fairly clear whom they address, but others, including Nora, rely on readers to know whether or not they “belong,” constructing the ideal reader as knowing, self-aware, and conversant in the community’s etiquette. This implicit insider/outsider designation raises the question of what it means to “belong”—what kind of membership or community the online diary creates, and how it sets up and regulates, or polices, those boundaries. It also serves as another reminder that the boundary between the real and imagined reader is less tangible in cyberspace than in print culture because imagined readers materialize as actual readers who may or may not recognize whether they belong.

From the first utopic visions of cyberspace and its possibilities, “community” has been a key concept, explored and defined in Howard Rheingold’s The Virtual Community: Homesteading on the Electronic Frontier (1993). Early theories of the Internet imagined the possibilities for diverse communities to join in conversation, prompting a return to democratic public discourse and debate; the agora had been reinvented in the fluid “halls” of cyberspace. “Critical to the rhetoric surrounding the Internet use,” Steven Jones noted in 1998, “is the promise of a renewed sense of community and, in many instances, new types and formations of community” (3). He
suggests that this hype about community stems from "nostalgia for civility and sociability," but more importantly it also demonstrates "a particularly American way" of imagining "community." "We may forge our own places from among the many that exist," he explains, "not by creating new places but simply by choosing from the menu of those available, by joining in (and opting out) wherever and whenever we wish" (3). Instead of bringing a diversity of voices together in meaningful exchange, then, the Internet fosters individualism, perhaps even frontierism; users "forge [their] own places" without necessarily engaging with the existing community, and they have little long-term fealty to the communities with which they do interact. In Jones' formulation, the emphasis shifts from the needs of the community to those of the individual, since what "we" want drives our choice or rejection of communities.

Derek Foster acknowledges the Internet's potential for cross-community exchange and membership, but, echoing Jones' concerns, also warns of the solipsism that online community participation can engender, a "protective enclosure against the onslaught of a brave new world of information" (26). Because communities remain virtual, typically connected only through written text, "all of [Computer Mediated Communication's] users exist as individuals extending their selves through the computer network, but isolated by the necessary mediation of the cathode ray tube and the keyboard" (26-27). Consequently individuals remain apart, investing in their idea of their own self as projected onto others, despite the immediacy—and apparent intimacy—that online exchange provides. Foster argues that Internet users, rather than committing to multiple communities, each of which requires members to understand its "norms and values," "gravitat[e] towards spaces that do not seem so strange, and engag[e] in a
process of self-legitimation" (32). The diary’s traditionally intimate information structure, which, as we have seen, fosters the sense of insiders and outsiders to a community rather than exchange, in particular makes this self-legitimation possible. Instead of revolutionizing or reigniting cross-community discourse based on the immediate exchange of multiple voices or viewpoints, the Internet has given users what they seem to really want: the ability to interact more often and easily with the familiar and the known.

Online community participation becomes, therefore, a means for writers to replicate their offline imagined communities and, by extension, their offline identities, a key concern for Internet diarists, who base their texts and found their diary communities on their personal self-performances. Despite the Internet’s reputation for role-playing and identity play (or fraud), the virtual and the real remain connected, particularly in this intimate genre. Nancy Baym notes that this persistent contiguity of offline and online goes against contemporary theories of and fantasies about the Web. “Judging from the scholarly attention paid to anonymous CMC [Computer-Mediated Communication] interaction and its uses in identity play,” she observes, “one would think most on-line interaction is anonymous and few people ever interact as themselves. The reality seems to be that many, probably most, social users of CMC create on-line selves consistent with their off-line identities” (55). In actual practice, then, the strategies and processes of community membership, participation, and construction that the diary demonstrates have not changed dramatically from the offline world. Online autobiographical performances,

---

54 Foster’s theory describes my own experience with online diaries and their communities. Initially I was repulsed by the whole idea of the Internet diary, seeing these texts as the height of narcissism, and decried their frequently tepid, ill-written, and insipid content. However, once I found diaries that narrated experiences to which I related, and whose writers espoused values that I shared, I became an avid reader for
like those captured in print, on film, or any other medium, are referential, pointing back
to the lived life they represent.

Though much of Rheingold’s theorizing, along with the early idealism that
surrounded the advent of the Internet, have been challenged and expanded,55 his emphasis
on “community” as comprised of the “webs of personal relationships in cyberspace” (5)
does point to the centrality of communion as well as communication, the desire that
online diarists project to make (personal and virtual) connections. Despite the enduring
view of diary-writing as a solitary activity, online diarists have made community-building
a major component of their texts; instead of secrecy or privacy, “communication and
community” have become the diary’s chief concerns (Sorapure 10), a significant shift in
social action from the traditional diary. In addition to joining other diarists through Web-
rings, writers can provide links to fellow diarists on their diary home pages, constituting
themselves and their readers as part of multiple communities. This “recommendations”
section, often called “Friends,” is a built-in feature of fill-in-the-blank online diaries like
LiveJournal, Diaryland, and Diarist.net. These often reciprocal links among diaries not
only connect readers and diarists but also act as legitimating forces, the online diary
community’s version of print-culture practices of celebrity endorsements or book-jacket
blurbs, “selling” readers on other personal journals and their diarists. Blood observes that
these lists mark how diarists “position themselves in this community [of bloggers]”; the
selections of other diaries become “an affirmation of the tribe to which they wish to
belong” (“Weblogs” 10-11). Situating themselves as connected to a wider community,

55 See, for example, Shawn P. Wilbur’s “An Archaeology of Cyberspaces” for a history and rethinking of
this concept.
whose members will all use the diary genre to accomplish their purposes, provides the legitimating stamp of belonging for diarists at the same time that it asserts particular identities based on that community connection.

This unification through generic participation suggests that we could usefully consider online diary communities as discourse communities, defined by John Swales as groups united by their commitment to similar rhetorical goals and their shared “familiarity with the particular genres that are used” to accomplish those goals (9). Online diary communities would be familiar with such genres as the e-mail, the blog comment, and the blog or diary itself, and more specialized diary communities would in addition share genres that were particularly relevant to their aims: the wedding etiquette guide, pro-Confederate rant, or HTML instructional manual. Though, as Swales argues, members may be geographically isolated, and may never meet each other in person, or “real life,” they still form a community linked by shared identifications and values. To remain a community member, one has to participate actively in the group, though each community will define “active” differently (Swales 31), and acknowledge one’s allegiance to the community.

The notion of discourse communities encompasses the range of community interaction that Internet diaries experience, including not only the diarist and active participants who e-mail the diarist or submit comments but also “passive” members, who read but do not comment. These readers, known as “lurkers,” or, more accurately, “blunkers,” as one blog respondent suggests (Going Bridal, 29 June 2002), nevertheless feel part of that diary’s community because they share the diarist’s values, identify with her experiences or persona, or value the life/stories of everyday people they read on the
Web. Such readers must form the majority of community participants, since diaries can attract thousands of site visits but will not receive thousands of comments or e-mails. These silent readers acknowledge their community allegiance by continuing to visit the site; they may add it to their bookmarks or “favourites” on their Internet browser. If they keep a Web-page themselves, they may add a link to the site under “Friends” or “Reading.” Through the diarist’s utterance and site design, using links and supplementary pages, even a lurker may feel like an insider in the community.

In these communities, the “private” diary has become the means of accomplishing “public” goals for an entire community, a different function than we have seen it perform for either literary or internment diarists. Though internees certainly represented their community when they wrote their personal texts, they had to hide their diaries (albeit openly), and in fact faced resistance from members of their community who did not see the diary genre as a means to achieve group ends. Sarton and Carr discussed their diaries with mentors and friends prior to publishing, but this consultation verged on generic disobedience, given the code of secrecy that we have seen still lurked within expectations of the diary even in texts written for publication. Further, these discussions only directed their own diary habits, rather than furthering a community’s wishes. Online diarists, however, openly use the diary genre to accomplish shared goals. The relative newness of this application of the genre, and the community to which it is connected, accounts for the high traffic in meta-generic commentary, as users seek to establish norms and rules for “communal decorum” that will “structure [the] joint action” they see their diaries performing (C. Miller “Rhetorical” 74). Whereas a published print journal represents a completed product by the time it reaches a reading public, an online
diary is on-going, in process, and consequently able to evolve to meet the evolving needs and numbers of community members.

Diarist Tracy Lee’s experiences with the fledgling Web-diary community of the mid-1990s illustrate the potential for divisions within the larger community when one genre serves multiple smaller groups with their diverse purposes. Her 1995 diary, which featured explicit entries and erotic photographs, brought disapproval from other online diarists. She recalls, “I got the impression from a few journalers who considered their pages to be ‘Serious Writing’ by ‘Serious Writers’ that I was dragging them down merely by being associated in the same category on Yahoo” (“Personal Recollections”). Lee had deviated from the online diary community’s codes for decorum; her online persona as an “intelligent person who also happened to be involved in erotica” (Lee, “Personal Recollections”) addressed different audiences and served different purposes than the other diaries that a search engine grouped together by genre. Other readers, however, did identify with Lee, and her diary created new discourse communities that were perpetuated by positive reader response. As the discourse communities served by the Internet diary emerged and divided into sub-groups (Wal-Mart employees, fans of erotica, “serious” writers), meta-generic activity announced and sustained these divisions. So Neale Talbot demands that “diarists” stop diluting the “blog” with personal details, policing the boundaries of his community, while Schalchlin celebrates the innovative potential of the online diary, its unique ability to serve his particular discourse communities. This establishment of community practices and decorum illustrates a turning point in how the genre is perceived, contrasting the online and offline functions it can perform.
Lee’s sense that she had “sullied” the Yahoo diary category also highlights the different movements online diaries take to acquire readers. As Jane Pinckard’s design that distinguishes between casual browsers and serious readers, and Johnny Reb’s warning about his Confederate-friendly political views remind us, Web-diarists want to attract real, live readers, just as Sarton, Crouter, or Page did. Like serial diarist Sarton, who wrote for publication and often profit, online writers extend the invitation to read not only to intimates but also to the reading public at large. They post their diaries in the hope of reaching a wider audience, an imagined community who, by reading and responding, will become an actual community. But, as Michele Willson argues in “Community in the Abstract,” simply making a community space does not mean that a community will in fact develop, a fear that seems inherent in these diarists’ use of counters and appeals for feedback. Building a site “does not mean that interaction will automatically take place,” she notes, “nor that a community will form, since people cannot be forced to participate” (654). Even if you build it, they may not come. For online diarists, who write explicitly to be read, the absence of an (active, responsive) audience would be a significant blow.

**Counting on Readers: The “New Deal” of Internet Diaries**

Many diaries prominently feature counters that record how many visits a site has received. The presence of the counter, an optional feature, underscores the fact that attracting readers is a central, perhaps the central, purpose for keeping an online diary. The counter reassures diarists that they are in fact being read, or at least visited, and demonstrates to potential new audiences that others have also read this text—a promise.
of quality based on volume equivalent to McDonald’s “One billion served.” Counters give diarists a way to assess in the moment of writing their success or failure as diarists (and, possibly, as people, given both diarists’ and readers’ conflation of life and text). For example, a counter indicating that the site has registered no visitors or that visits have stopped will alert the diarist that her text has not been well-received or even noticed by the particular community (or communities) she meant to attract. In response, a diarist could redesign the format of the diary for easier access, relaunch it to appeal to a more specific audience, or simply abandon it altogether. Similarly, based on their readers’ questions, comments, even demands, bloggers can alter the course of their narratives or their identities within their texts to address their readers’ desires and therefore keep them engaged.

Though Web-diaries are rarely commercial ventures, this attention to a text’s popularity indicates the very public nature of this “new” personal diary. Publicizing one’s daily life online becomes an easy avenue to a degree of celebrity or renown, despite the relative anonymity of the Internet. Blood chronicles the “[c]ults of personality” that emerged following Blogger’s 1999 launch and the subsequent explosion in the blogging community (Blood “Introduction” 10). Notoriety can be achieved by creating a “good” blog, one that meets readers’ expectations. A chief concern of Web-page designers, both amateur and professional, is the “stickiness” of their site—its ability to attract and retain visitors, to turn visitors into buyers on a commercial site, or to turn visitors into readers on a personal page. Competing for readers with thousands of other personal pages, Web-diarists need to market and package themselves with care; the self and its story are their product, marketed to the consumer-readers of cyberspace. Jay Bolter describes how,
beginning in the mid-'90s, the Web became an increasingly commercial space, where the "individual reader, listener or viewer is constructed as a consumer, whose wants and needs are defined in terms that particular products can satisfy" (18). Though self-promotion through autobiography is not a new concept—Sarton, for example, was a master of this art—the kinds of subjects who have put their lives on the "shelf," so to speak, have changed. Sarton had her professional career on which to base the value of her public persona, as well as the skills to produce her life story with literary savvy. While bloggers too must tell engaging stories, they also need to be aware of rules and expectations specific to Web-diaries. Such rules include the need to update frequently, and to design their diaries as effective and easily navigable Web-pages as well as texts.56

This particular generic knowledge seems to be tacit,57 and is perhaps based on diarists' experiences of other online genres, such as the personal or commercial home page, as well as their familiarity with the expectations of the diary as a daily, or at least regularly written, form.58

Journals on diary servers such as Diaryland include links where readers can vote for their favourite diaries to receive awards. On Diarist.net the diaries with the most

---

56 Marketing companies have seized on the blogging phenomenon, recognizing its popularity and ubiquity with the highly desirable youth demographic. In 2003, 7-Up enlisted (it's unclear whether or not they were paid) several young, "A-list" bloggers to promote a new milk product in their blogs. These "blog spots," however, were not explicitly ads, but were incorporated into the bloggers' personal entries. The scheme backfired when the truth came out, sending the blogging community into an uproar. Bloggers were outraged by not only the company's apparent belief that teens are gullible enough to believe anything but also the hijacking of this personal form for commercial gain. The bloggers who had participated were denounced as sell-outs, and criticized for breaking the trust of readers who had metaphorically "bought into" the life-stories of virtual "friends." (See Heinzl for a full discussion of this incident.) This brouhaha suggests the existence of other rules, also implicitly stated, that govern the appropriate use of genres in particular discourse communities.

57 I have not seen instances of meta-genre that addressed such practical details, though such guidance could well exist in one if not many of the thousands of blogs online. As well, the popularity of blogging makes the topic a likely candidate to be the latest entry in the lucrative journaling "how-to" market.

58 Certainly print diarists may go days, even months between entries, and these gaps can be significant. But when their journals are published, such gaps do not disrupt the act of reading, because the text continues on
“clix” are featured in a weekly “Top Sites,” and other diary servers have “Top Ten” lists or equivalent means of designating “best” sites. Counters and awards create what Kitzmann calls an “economy of recognition” (58), markers of public value for (and evaluation of) the personal or “private” life story that borrow from offline, mainstream media. Such attention and the generation of evaluative measures (what makes a “good” site? How has the diarist created his popularity?) institute norms for this genre and its creators. With the genre still establishing its purpose and methods in cyberspace, its users seek models on which to base their own foray into Web-publishing their personal narratives. In their borrowing from and reiteration of these “model” sites, new bloggers help produce generic expectations as well as a proto-canon of Internet diaries. While Crouter and Abkhazi, for example, read and took a page from Shirer in their own war diaries, Internet diarists may admire and emulate Justin Hall, Meg Hourihan (co-founder of Pyra, Blogger.com’s parent company), and Jason Kottke, all of whom Joe Clark cheekily numbers among blogging’s “A-list” (59). Though the very nature of cyberspace culture makes these “literati” and this canon unstable and constantly under construction and revision, as texts appear, disappear, or fall into disrepair, their presence, however temporary, demonstrates how particular generic knowledge is both imported from print culture and produced by the genre’s users. Even in this new context, bloggers do not write in a vacuum; they participate in a generic activity with a long history, and this history will be activated each time the genre is used. They know that their diaries will be recognized and understandable by their audiences in part because of this generic

\[59\] I’m not wanting to suggest here that I believe in a model online diary, but I do think that some Web-diaries have influenced the concept of the genre, in the same way that Anais Nin’s diary has shaped
precedent, even as the genre evolves in this different situation. Blog awards, voted on by bloggers’ peers as well as blogging institutions (the host servers that enable diary access), reward sites that successfully combine traditional generic performances with innovations that will continue to make the diary relevant to Internet users.

Diarists’ ability to anticipate and meet readers’ expectations of both the traditional and new features of the genre is critical in order to attract and maintain a readership. For example, in their explicit publicity, Web-diaries confound the popular concept of the personal diary as a private form, one that will be “authentic” because it should be uncensored or unmediated, written in the moment for no external reader. However, since diarists can post entries immediately after writing them, they have less opportunity than published print diarists to “tamper” with their texts, less time for hindsight to alter the “true” version of experiences. Therefore the technology allows bloggers to apparently uphold this feature of “authentic” diaries.

Of course, the ability to make seamless emendations to entries, or even delete them altogether without the telltale signs of a ripped page can undercut readers’ confidence in the “stable” text. In his initial entries, longtime Web-diaryist Steve Schalchlin struggled with how to handle the fluidity of the online diary. After looking back at the previous month’s entries, which he feels painted an overly optimistic view of his life, he wonders, “Is it fair or practice [sic] to go back and insert things like that upon reflection? I mean, I’ve gone back and inserted details I’ve since remembered but left out. But is it fair to add or change the way you felt at any given time? I just don’t know” (27 June 1996). By September 1997, he records the impulse to change an old entry in which contemporaneous ideas of the diary so that subsequent diarists, whether in manuscript or in publication, may call upon her diary—or its stereotype—as a basis for their own texts.
he had been extremely angry, but concludes, “My diary page from yesterday will stay as it is (because readers have now laid down the law about me changing a single word of anything I write)” (12 Sept. 1997). To Schalchlin’s audience, his going back and changing entries that cast him in an unfavorable light would be “cheating,” inauthentic, inaccurate. They seek a text that cannot be altered after the fact, a “finished” version that would most resemble the fixed nature of the entries in a published diary. Though Schalchlin can reflect in a subsequent entry on previous utterances as part of his triple role as writer, reader, and critic, the generic “rules” his readers have articulated in their feedback prevent him from changing anything. The fact that readers have “laid down the law,” and that Schalchlin is respecting that (legalistic) decision, provides further evidence of an implicit pact based on the new rules of the diary and formulated to suit this particular community’s understandings of the genre. Online readers and writers may have taken the “law of genre” quite literally, creating the “law of diary” as the form emerged and continues to evolve.

Playing by these “rules” therefore both upholds community norms and assists in attracting readers, whose presence, as we have noted, is key to the social actions the genre performs online. Andreas Kitzmann argues that for bloggers this “actual audience” is empowering. “The Web diary community,” he explains, “sees allowing public access to one’s life and thoughts and personal space as a form of agency—a way to make one’s life significant through the feedback and support of readers” (56, emphasis added). Unlike Carr or Vaughan, for example, who wrote to a reflexive addressee, one that simultaneously represented themselves and an outside reader, many Web-diaryists seek attention, communion, and approbation from an audience that is strictly external. They
express their desire for acknowledgment, perhaps praise, for their life or their writing, some assurance that their voice is being heard. At A Diary for Any Eye, "Yellowrose" prefaces her diary with the plea, "PLEASE- analyze me!!!! PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE!!!! ANALYZE ME!!!!!!" (http://yellowrose.diaryland.com). Johnny Reb ended his first diary entries on August 15, 2002 by begging readers for feedback: "drop me a comment or something so that i know somebody reads these!" (15 Aug. 2002). One of the first things he wants to add to his site is a counter (17 Aug. 2002). Such comments suggest that without (responsive) readers, keeping an online diary is pointless. One writes to be heard, to enter into conversations instead of writing for oneself, a direct challenge to the contemporary stereotype of the "secret" diary, and a change in addressee from those projected by the literary or internment diarists. For Yellowrose, and Johnnyreb, and thousands of other diarists, the assertion of identity that the online diary performs demands a response to be valid and worthwhile. Since the majority of online diarists are private citizens, without public roles or, traditionally, any regular or sustained access to the public’s attention, Internet diaries allow such people a way to speak out and be counted, literally and metaphorically, giving them an empowering sense that their lives have significance.

This emphasis on creating a community of responsive readers invites a reconsideration of what exactly readers are investing in when they become part of an online diary or Web-diarist’s community. Readers are becoming part of the autobiographical narratives they read—as we shall in Schalchlin’s diary, they might even take over writing some of its entries—and quite explicitly demanding that these narratives fit their desires and expectations as well as the diarist’s. This emerging
The auto/biographical relationship recalls Philippe Lejeune's pact, first proposed in 1973. The pact is a reading contract, verging on a legal commitment, guaranteeing that the author and the subject of the narrative are the same person; it therefore tells readers to approach the text as autobiography. The facts laid out in the narrative can be verified, and the binding element is the proper name. Although the pact has its limitations and blind spots—even Lejeune has renounced it ("Autobiographical Pact—(bis)")—the impulse behind it to try to articulate the specific reader-writer agreement that autobiographical texts rely on has renewed relevance for the study of online personal narratives. While Internet diarists and their readers may not be entering into Lejeune's pact per se, they do seem to come to some kind of agreement, an entente cordiale, that designates particular roles and rules of engagement for both parties. The anticipated need for such an agreement, and the public discussion of its terms, make another contrast with the stereotypical print diary, which, as a "private" and artless text, should not require any rules or roles to be articulated.

The technology of online diaries allows a kind of reader-writer relationship for which there really is no offline equivalent. Bloggers ask, expect, even need readers to participate in their autobiographical acts. But this participation, though active and even intimate, remains virtual and disembodied, and consequently fosters the sense of fictional reality that surrounds Web-diaries and their writers. At the same time that readers buy into diarists' claims to be real people, they also want them to act like fictional characters. As we will see with Schalchlin's diary in particular, reader comments demonstrate that audiences expect full exposure, neatly-wrapped-up plot lines, and characters with whom they can identify. They want "real life" but it had better make good reading, and they are
quick to voice their disapproval, or contribute helpful suggestions, when it doesn’t. This fictional reality may explain the dismay voiced by the readers of Going Bridal: when the narrative derailed they felt powerless—real life intruded on the virtual story. They were expecting “happily ever after,” even promoting it through their feedback and encouragement, and instead got real life, which is never as tidy or satisfying.

Readers’ insistence on “good” narratives—that is, narratives that are engaging, updated regularly, responsive to feedback, and authentic—as well as their sense of personal involvement in the lives/stories of people whom they have never met gives me some pause. The diarist’s identity, the “real” person she represents in prose, no longer hangs on the equivalence of the author’s and protagonist’s name but on the diarist’s ability to tell a good story, to keep readers interested, involved, invested. That’s the “New Deal,” another kind of reader-writer pact. It has a “diary on demand” quality that suggests that these diarists are no longer using their diaries to serve or improve or write their own selves, for their own edification. Now they are writing to entertain, making stories and selves that live up to readers’ desires and demands, and making sure that they live up to their own hype in order to keep these readers. Facing the new figure of the consumer-reader, diarists are under great pressure to maintain their “product” up to online diary community standards, which differ from those of the traditional diary.

Fulfilling generic expectations, as Schalchlin’s experience demonstrates, is one way for diarists’ to keep their end of the implicit pact. Despite finding these diaries on the Internet, which flies in the face of the notion of the diary as private, readers still want “public diarists” to maintain the generic promise of the confessional, the intimate, and the secret. Readers now expect nothing less than full disclosure, full-time. Even in a public
diary, Schalchlin extends the promise of total and unmediated honesty: “Part of the ‘deal’ we have together—as diary writer and diary reader—is that I do not hide the times when I am an ass or a fool” (26 Apr. 1997). Despite his readers’ awareness that he writes for an audience, they have bought into this contract. Schalchlin’s “deal,” so reminiscent of Lejeune’s pact, underlines the popular concept of autobiography as requiring some kind of participation from, even communion with, the reader, who accepts the writer’s claims of identity and facticity and believes in the autobiographer as a real person. For Schalchlin’s readers, this deal extends beyond readers’ faith in the “truth” of his existence and his claims to encompass their demand for full disclosure, almost to the point that Schalchlin should have no life outside the written version. The division between the online/written life and the offline/lived life becomes, to some diary readers, obscure or non-existent.

After being promised this disclosure, even confession, readers come to demand it, without seemingly acknowledging the offline cost of online revelations. After admitting in April 1998 that he had not written in the diary about the breakup of his long-term relationship, Schalchlin receives an angry e-mail from a reader: “i began to really question whether you had really been honest in the diary all along.... and i quit reading your diary except to catch up once a month or so.... i began wondering if all the things you'd written about all along were not-as-they-seemed” (14 Apr. 1998). By inviting readers into his personal, and what they consider his private, life, Schalchlin sets up expectations not just of honesty but actually of total exposure. This level of immediate disclosure may be anticipated only in an Internet diary. While Sarton’s failures to disclose (for example, in referring to “the hell of the last two years” and providing no
explanation) may have been read as duplicating the information structure of a correspondence with an intimate friend or no external reader at all, Schalchlin’s silence has been seen as duplicity.

This immediate and complete disclosure may well be one of the authenticating features of the personal online journal, features that are unique to the Internet context. Technological innovation—immediacy of publication—makes a discursive feature—immediacy of style—into reality: readers really are reading what has been written “on the pulse.” However, this “real-time” access has implications for the diarist’s online and offline worlds. The diarist feels a sense of responsibility to the online community, to deliver the diary regularly and “authentically”—that is, by telling all as if no one else will read it. But he will also have a responsibility to the members of his offline communities, who may not wish to have their lives or relationships chronicled for the reading pleasure of hundreds, even thousands, of people they do not know.

This dilemma has parallels to the published print diarist’s situation, but the technological immediacy marks a key difference. As noted previously, Sarton’s audiences only get the chance to read about her life months, perhaps years, after these events have occurred, when the fallout from these incidents may already have passed. Schalchlin, on the other hand, has to make decisions about what to talk about publicly during the experience, knowing that his narrative will become public immediately. He cannot go back and edit with the benefit of hindsight, as Sarton might, before readers see the entry. Writing in an era that begat the reality television show, in a medium that introduced the Web-cam, Schalchlin encounters audiences who bring expectations of “Truth,” confession, and revelation from both the “old” media, the diary, and the “new”
non-print, “unmediated” forms. Such expectations also suggest readers’ belief in these online diarists as real people, despite the possibilities for total identity deception on the Internet. Even in diaries that do not provide a proper name, once hailed as the defining element of the autobiographical pact (Lejeune, “Autobiographical Pact” 19), readers of online diaries accept the diarist’s identity claims. This acceptance arises again, perhaps, from popular conceptions of the diary as unmediated, artless, and therefore honest, somehow less manipulative than other autobiographical forms.

Diarists feel obliged to accommodate readers, who have become virtual friends and family over the course of these narratives in progress. The diarists’ need to post even seemingly insignificant details, such as Nora’s shopping list or Johnny Reb’s record of a night watching videos and drinking beer, illustrates their recognition of their responsibility to these readers, who expect new reading material every day. When Sara of Going Bridal called off her wedding, she immediately updated her blog to address this new state of affairs. She took down her previous entries, her “countdown to the wedding” and her e-mail address, and announced that she and Dennis, her fiancé, needed some time. But hours later, she posted again with an update, because “Dennis felt [she] owed the universe more of an explanation” (goingbridal.com). Though in fact the “universe in general” may care very little about this turn of events, the very particular group of readers her site has attracted have been made to care very much. Achenbach’s sense of duty to this community further illustrates the “New Deal” that governs relations between Internet diarists and their readers. Simply disappearing or quitting on your

---

60 Blogger Glenn Fleishmann would describe such stop-gap entries as classic cases of “blogorrhea,” the “tendency for creativity-strapped bloggers to write meaningless prose in an attempt to keep their blog active” (109). The fact that this activity is so commonplace as to merit its own noun gives another
readers, who have invested (metaphorically and sometimes literally, by donating funds towards the cost of running a site), would not only be an egregious breach of “Netiquette,” but would also break the textually-founded trust and understanding between the diarist and her virtual readers. Having built a community around her diary, Sara felt compelled as its leader to make her personal life public, upholding her end of the bargain: she writes, they read, they respond.

But readers’ constant clamour for more—more frequent updates, more personal information, more substantial entries, more response to their feedback—can be too much for Web-diarists. In some cases, the virtual diary impinges on their real life in ways that are threatening, uncomfortable, or just not fun anymore. After returning for a few entries, Sara decided to “take down the blog for a while [because] it’s just not helping right now.”

The virtual served as a painful reminder of the real story gone wrong. Nora’s experience of “journal stalking” highlights a potentially more dangerous side to putting one’s life online; the readers that she felt knew her in real life violate the implicit writer-reader bargain that keeps online and offline worlds apart. Many other blogs are simply abandoned altogether after diarists lose interest, move on to other projects or crises, or simply lack the time to keep up, which causes them to lose readers. Without new material to keep them coming back, readers feel that the deal is off, and stop visiting the site.

indication of how aware Web-diarists are of generic expectations. Bloggers, like academics, feel the pressure to “publish or perish.”
Anonymously Intimate: Real Lives, Virtual Confessions

The Internet diary culture, with its close attention to satisfying both old and new reader expectations by using both old and new strategies, has built on a particular notion of the diary as not only personal but also confessional. The diary, in its functions as a spiritual journal and a private space to tell secrets, has a long association with the confessional mode in both its private and its public forms. Seventeenth-century Quaker and Puritan diaries in the English tradition, and the nineteenth-century journal intime in the French one, establish precedent for the contemporary ideal of the diary as a site for (private) confession. The Internet diary, however, has the advantage of allowing writers to make intimate confessions in a public forum while remaining anonymous. The opposition of intimacy and anonymity, and the related binary of virtuality and reality, are central to understanding the confessional function the Internet diary performs.

The fixation on confession is not, of course, limited to diarists and their readers, but is symptomatic of this contemporary moment; Leigh Gilmore charts Western—particularly North American—society’s growing fascination with and expectation of the confessional mode in this “age of memoir” (2). Noting the influences of the “media confessional” and “real life media,” Gilmore posits that “[c]onfessional practices pervade and, arguably, define mass culture” (17). Not only does this culture sharpen consumers’ appetites for confession, she suggests, also it creates a new representative subject for autobiography. Instead of presenting the exemplary life for the purposes of a reader’s edification, as did Augustine or Benjamin Franklin, the contemporary confessional invites audiences to identify with a different ideal: “neither celebrity nor statesperson, but
the dysfunctional and downtrodden, the cheated-on and cheating, the everyman and
everywoman of the bad times that keep coming” (Gilmore 17).

Online diaries therefore continue a diary tradition and keep pace with the current
standard for autobiographical practices. The pleasures of reading these journals may lie
partly in their potential for confession; readers expect self-exposure and the telling of
secrets based on their knowledge of and associations with the genre. Despite the very
public nature of these texts—or perhaps because of this publicity—diarists embrace the
confessional mode, casting readers as both addressees (confessors) and overhearers,
listeners not intended to be part of the discussion. This dual audience design returns to
diary reading the sensation of voyeurism that would otherwise be lost in the public diary,
though in this situation the voyée explicitly arranges for the voyeur’s gaze. By including
passages of titillating or shameful conduct, online diarists adopt attitudes of full
disclosure that may make audiences slightly uncomfortable about what they are reading,
as if they had come upon texts not intended for their eyes. The resulting response of both
curiosity and discomfort might evoke the guilty pleasure of finding and opening a private
manuscript diary.

Online diaries’ confessional qualities draw attention to a key feature of these texts
and the interactions they invite. Even as these texts make very personal connections to a
reading audience that recognizes and confirms these individual life assertions, their

---

61 Gilmore observes that the confession is also a quick route to contemporary stardom or renown.
“Celebrity confessonals mark a significant overlapping of factors,” she argues, “the media confessional
saturates contemporary life and celebrity is capital” (17). Though the issue raises a chicken-and-egg
question—is the confession popular because celebrities have made it so, or vice versa—it highlights the
cultural as well as actual currency that the confession carries. Never slow to pick up on a trend, celebrities
have also jumped on the blogging bandwagon, trading on the public’s belief in this form as providing a
peephole into the private, inner life of the diarist. Such “star” diarists, including actor William Shatner,
singer Jann Arden, and entertainer RuPaul, tap into the commercial potential of strategic intimacy that the
authors retain a degree of anonymity. Though they do risk having readers from their offline lives discover their diaries, the facelessness and vastness of the Internet means that most diarists can remain anonymous even while revealing a great deal about themselves. As Sorapure notes, “[t]he act of keeping a diary on the Web is thus both grounded in daily life and dissociated from it” (12); while everyday life provides the fodder for online confessions, the two spheres of digital and corporeal can and should be kept separate. In making public their private lives for the Internet at large, Web-diarists display a paradoxical motivation: “to be known, but not by anyone who knows you” (Sorapure 12). However, though “complete anonymity” may be in fact impossible, even undesirable, for Web-diarists, the illusion that identity can be secret or shrouded online contributes to the writers’ sense that they are free, or perhaps required, to tell all. Online diarists combine a traditionally confessional genre, the diary, with a medium that makes confessions widely available but still anonymous, impersonal, separate from diarists’ offline lives and identities. Though some writers do eventually meet their readers in real life, the majority of their audiences remain virtual, a part only of their online existence. The “private space” readers and diarists share, so to speak, invites total self-exposure without necessarily any self-revelation.

Sara Achenbach, Going Bridal’s diarist, plays on the expectation of confession with her “Bridezilla Confession Booth,” where readers admit to their own wedding-induced bad behavior in a safe environment. “You are loved and accepted here,” she

diary form allows. Using their “private” thoughts to reach their public, celebrity diarists illustrate that in such online productions, the personal is commercial.

Sorapure discusses several instances of diarists who explicitly ask readers who know them in the “real world” not to read the diary (11-12). However, unless the diarist password-protects her site, anyone can access the diary, whether or not they are the intended audience. Such disclaimers call upon the same idea of the self-policing reader/community that Nora imagines when she reminds visitors, “if you don’t belong
writes in the introduction, "So let's hear it. What did you do in the heat of bridal insanity that you wish you could take back?" Though not a message board—the instructions warn that "comments about other confessions may be removed, as well as posts which ask for response/validation/etc."—the confession booth allows audiences to become active participants. Because writers cannot respond to each other, these confessions uphold the idea of the confession as a private act between penitent and confessor, with anonymity assured through this one-way conversation. Though confessors are certainly aware that the whole diary community will be able to read their message—that may well be the whole point or fun in confessing—the no-response rule helps to encourage readers to speak out without fear of other readers' reactions. Here readers confess to such sins as hating their future in-laws, behaving inappropriately as brides or bridesmaids, or being caught up in the machine of the wedding industry. These confessions demonstrate this particular community's belief that such behaviors and attitudes are, in fact, sinful; the "Bridezilla" written above the confession entry form nods to this community's sense that weddings make monsters out of otherwise rational women (and some men, though they post much less frequently). This tongue-in-cheek feature encourages readers who share Sara's perspective about weddings and brides to validate this point of view as well as their own by creating a side-narrative to her diary, in which she reveals her own bridal follies. Significantly, however, in the Bridezilla booth confessing readers, unlike Sara, remain fully anonymous, submitting their entries under pseudonyms such as "Stressed Out Bride," "Sad Sister," and "Greedy Greedy." At the same time that it is fully

here, you should leave." The onus is on the reader to respect the site's audience design, a respect that, as Nora's and many other diarists' experiences demonstrate, will often be violated.
participatory, the blog “confession booth” permits complete anonymity, which in turn supports readers’ total disclosure. This combination fosters the anonymous intimacy that is the hallmark of online diaries, and may well be the reason for their immense popularity.

These confessional acts imagine quite specific roles for readers and writers. As Joanna Gill discusses in “Someone Else’s Misfortunes: The Vicarious Pleasures of the Confessional Text,” such narratives cast their readers in the role of “listener/reader/confessor” (82) who must be in place in order to absolve the teller. This response factor is active and even intimate, unlike the imagined or projected addressee in a print diary, but remains virtual, disembodied. The confessor stays behind the “grille” of the Internet, allowing the diarist—and the reader—the illusion of anonymity necessary for “full” self-exposure. Janet Murray notes that “some people put things on their home page […] that they have not told their closest friends. The enchantment of the computer creates for us a public space that also feels very private and intimate” (99). Diarist Jane Pinckard suggests that the “enchantment” of anonymous intimacy is one of the most compelling features of the online diary. “What I love about online journals and diaries,” she comments, “is the paradoxical combination of complete anonymity and a startling level of intimacy” (http://www.umamitsunami.com/why.asp). Her description of this intimacy as “startling” reinforces the idea that intimacy is out of place, or at least unexpected, in an online venue, and that intimacy seems antithetical to anonymity, a state in which nothing should be revealed about an individual.

Though Achenbach has quit this diary, she has left this part of her site up and operational, allowing the confessions to continue; without her close monitoring, however, posters now do respond to each other, turning the “private” confession booth into an interactive virtual support group.
The lure of the virtual confession, as well as its cultural and discursive power, was for many early Internet diarists one of the principal attractions of the genre. Seeing these public personal diaries as opportunities to be "themselves" in ways that would be impossible offline, diarists such as Hall, Lee ("Personal Recollections"), and Carolyn Burke ("Personal Recollections") celebrated the possibilities inherent in the Internet's anonymous intimacy. Burke, one of the first online diarists in 1995, began her journal to address personal issues that she felt she could not talk about to anyone offline. But online, safely separated from "real life," Burke opened up, revealing (she claims) her most intimate thoughts. Such private meditation and confession, she argues, was paradoxically intended to serve a very public good. By setting a standard of total openness in her own pioneering diary, Burke practiced her belief in "the power of good that results from free expression, free information exchange, and open and honest communication between people" ("Personal Recollections"). She continues,

An online diary, a place that exposed private mental spaces to everyones' [sic] scrutiny seemed like a social obligation to me. [I] felt at the time that I could give back to society something important: a snapshot of what a person is like on the inside. This is something that we don't get access to in face to face, social society. Our intimacies are hidden, and speaking of them in public is taboo.

I questioned the privacy taboo. I disagreed with it.

I exposed my private and intimate world to public awareness.

Burke, like many online diarists, embraced the freedom that the Web's anonymity promised, the possibilities for new communication and self-representation that the
Internet offered. At the same time, her statement upholds the very traditional idea(l) of the diary as transparent, an unmediated vehicle for viewing the diarist’s true self and exposing the “mental spaces” typically hidden from the world. Echoing Sarton’s mantra that the public personal diarist should “use oneself impersonally as an instrument,” Burke presumes that such self-exposure would be valuable, and sets herself up in her diary as an example for society to follow. In this sense, she embodies Gilmore’s new representative subject, whose text is exemplary not because of the life it describes but because of the public examination and scrutiny of this life. Burke subscribes to the confessional school of blogging, choosing to break down the walls of the confessional so that anyone can hear her sins.

Burke’s exhibitionist vision of and for Web-diaries was shared by many of the pioneer diarists; though not all felt comfortable emulating her approach, most enjoyed reading such texts. In 2000, five years after the beginning of the Internet diary phenomenon and just after the phenomenon began to explode, early Web-diarists Cara Leitch-Thompson, Jennifer Wade and Sara Astruc started *The Online Diary History Project*. (“After all,” the introduction notes, “who better to write the history of online journals than the people who wrote (and still write) the online journals?”) Part of the project solicited personal essays from the first diarists in the field, provoking a metagenre commentary on and insight into blogging, what it did (and does) for these diarists, and what it can do for the online community. Several of these pioneers cite the influence of and their admiration for Justin Hall, a twenty-something Californian cybergeek who started putting his life online in 1994 and immediately drew the attention of the fledgling Web-diary community. Tracy Lee recalls that Hall stood out because he
was not afraid to make full confessions, telling all to an audience of virtual strangers:
“Save for Justin, the rest of the world ‘cuddled’ instead of having sex. Nobody argued.
There were huge gaps in the information being presented” ("Personal Recollections").
Jennifer Wade notes that she got the inspiration for her own diary from Hall, but admits,
“I wasn’t willing to divulge all the dirty details of my life as Justin did” ("Personal
Recollections"). Hall chronicles his travels, daily life, and experiences with various Web
and gaming technologies, appealing to a wide range of readers also heavily invested in
electronic media and digital culture. However, he has also posted explicit entries
detailing his sexual encounters and fantasies, often with photographs. (In an overview of
his site, he notes, “Most people seem to come to my pages for the sexy stuff.” Clicking
on “sexy stuff” takes the reader to a composite page with selected entries on sex.)
Apparently, this openness was inspirational to others, and set the standard to follow (as
Lee wished to do) or to avoid; Wade, among others, felt too aware of the offline
consequences of such confessions to post her own “dirty details,” despite her enjoyment
in reading other people’s.⁶⁴

---

⁶⁴ The consequences of online confessions also situate these textual acts in their particular socio-historic
and cultural context, as a recent furor in China over a young woman’s blog demonstrates. Li Li, a twenty-
five-year-old magazine writer (she wrote an “Agony Aunt” column) has had to leave her job because of her
“explicit Internet diary” (“Agony Aunt”). Writing as Muzimei, which is also her professional pen name, Li
Li describes her penchant for casual sex and her cavalier attitude towards marriage, values that have
shocked conservative readers and, apparently, drawn the wrath of the Press and Publications bureau, a
state-run body that censors the media. In the Western world, and in some circles in China (including the
Chinese edition of Marie Claire) Muzimei is being touted as China’s answer to Candace Bushnell’s Sex
and the City. But in China Li Li’s confessions have been costly; the book version of her diaries, which was
to be published at the end of November, has been held up, perhaps because of state intervention (see
“Agony Aunt”). This debacle highlights differences in cultural attitudes towards gender and sexual
behavior, and, more broadly, towards concepts of public and private lives and texts. Li Li’s diary and the
range of responses to it indicate the confusion that a personal public journal incites, because it relates
highly personal content in a public medium. Finally, since Li Li has been castigated for the very kinds of
confessions for which Justin Hall and Tracy Lee have been celebrated, even canonized, in North America,
this situation draws attention again to the importance of the circumstances of production and reception for
the texts we read and write. What is possible and expected for some bloggers to say will not be true in all
places and times.
Recently, Hall’s diary has become more mainstream, with less of the lurid confessional material that made his name, though the content is no less intimate or personal. This change indicates not only that Hall may not be living up to his own standard, but also that his venture is no longer a fringe activity. With thousands of diaries online, Hall’s Justin’s Links, though still on the leading edge, has become one among many public personal journals. Further, Hall’s notoriety, built on his extreme diary, may have limited his ability to be so explicit; with so much of his life online, documented and digested by thousands of readers, Hall no longer had the anonymity I argue is so key to the intimacy of online diaries. In October 2003, when his relationship with fellow blogger Jane Pinckard ended, Hall posted an entry that was uncharacteristically obscure. In “Tears for Two,” he writes, “So let’s weep for a moment, let some water fall between us for the promise held by two people. And if it was not held right, hands cupped, leaking barely drops between fingers, then it shall be something to remember for next time, when two hands come near. Maybe they will be ours, maybe those hands will belong to no one we’ve met yet” (7 Oct. 2003). Readers of both diaries may have been able to decode this entry by reading it alongside Pinckard’s equally circumspect entries, but requiring readers to read between the lines and lives marks a departure from Hall’s mandate to write openly about his personal life. The relationship with Pinckard, which started online, inspired by their mutual admiration of the other’s blog, now ended online, but with painful offline, very real, ramifications that potentially could not be articulated for all of cyberspace. For Hall, the blurring of virtual and real that his site tried to embody

65“Old Timer” comments on Hall’s entry “The Quickening,” on September 22, 2003, “I remember when Justin used to post naked pictures of himself and used to babble about Jane’s Addiction. Now he is all jazzed up about an accounting program. Please go get naked again” (“I Remember”). Hall’s original community may be alienated by his change in identity.
complicated the act of confession that the Web-diary initially facilitated, and indicated a
limit of the genre to perform this function in this particular context.

Like Hall, Lee has had a change in heart about the extent of her confessions. In
her latest diary, she writes entries for anyone to read on one page, but creates others with
“all of the good stuff” that are only accessible to “the 70 or so people that I've decided I
can trust” (“User Info”). She concludes, “Not everyone in the entire LJ [LiveJournal]
land needs to know all my secrets” (emphasis added). Although only an intimate
community can read these “secrets,” their promised presence casts a tantalizing shadow
of the “real” Tracy Lee, who does “tell all” in her diary. By splitting her diary into two
texts, each designed for particular audiences, Lee enables the diary’s confessional
capacity to remain functional without resulting in an invasion of her (offline) privacy; the
“wrong” readers can no longer eavesdrop on these intimate passages.

As Web-diary pioneers, Hall and Lee have been instrumental in testing the
genre’s limits online, illuminating for the thousands of bloggers that have followed them
the pitfalls of taking the traditional tell-all, “secret” diary onto the Internet. Lee arrived at
the decision not to bare all to everyone after years of doing so; the public-private style of
her latest journal marks a significant change in attitude from her first online journal, I am
becoming, which she began in September 1995. She recalls her original concept of the
role of the diary: “What would make my site different from the other journals out there
already would be that I wouldn’t hold anything back. Good times, bad, arguments, sex -
whatever was happening in my life that I’d normally write about in my personal journal
would go up on the website” (“Personal Recollections”). However, once people from
her “real life” began to read and comment on the journal, she felt that she had lost her anonymity and therefore could not write freely; she ended that journal and began others that incorporated the dual public and “private” modes. These changes illustrate the ongoing evolution of and experimentation with these diaries and their possibilities. Diarists are still figuring out what are the acceptable uses (to both readers and to themselves) and the limits of these texts, and realizing that the offline and online worlds cannot remain separate if these full confessions happen under one’s given name. Confession is only possible when the illusion of anonymity, the separation of diarists and text, remains intact.

The virtual space of the Internet, with its possibilities for role-play, identity performance, and consequence-free fantasy lives, can bear little relation to the real world. Much has been made of the possibilities for multiple, even duplicitous identity performances on the World Wide Web. But Web-diarists, whose personal narratives and acts of total self-exposure would suggest the desire for greater anonymity, also insist on the reality of their self-representations. Though thousands of people may read their journals, in which they tell secrets and intimate details, bloggers still post photographs of themselves, use their real names, and give out their e-mail addresses. Unlike the players in MUDs and MOOs, who take on the identities and characteristics of characters in a

---

66 This journal is no longer available. Lee has a new site, Not Safe for Work (http://angstbabe.livejournal.com/), on which she posts photographs she has taken and invites feedback on them, but she does not include any personal commentary and updates the site infrequently.

67 Again, though, these photographs and names could be false; in most cases, we have little other proof than the diarist’s word. In a play on this theme, Tracy Lee posted a picture of herself taken into a mirror. She is pointing to a sign that reads, “I am Tracy Lee!” Her camera is visible in her other hand and her mouth is open as if she is reading the words aloud. In the comments attached to this entry, reader “kernelpanic” posted a picture of (presumably) himself with a sign that says, “I AM THE REAL TRACY LEE.” Another reader, “Lee7,” adds “That is my name, to[o]. [...]In the begining [sic] of my internet exploits, I used Tracy Lee a lot, and a lot of people thought I was a girl pretending to be a man” (13 June 2002 “Comments”). Online identities, even when the diarist has no intention of duplicity, are open to (mis)interpretation and multiplicity.
larger game, diarists play “themselves,” but in a venue that seems disconnected from, if based on, their offline lives. Though diary readers do not know the diarist outside of the context of her text, they believe in her textual representation as real, the flesh made digital.

(Real) Life as (Virtual) Text: Steve Schalchlin’s *Living in the Bonus Round*

Diarists as well as their readers experience this confusion of the textual and lived life, one of the hazards, perhaps, of inhabiting the unmapped and unprecedented realm of cyberspace, that “consensual hallucination” William Gibson so aptly described (qtd. in Bell 2). The intersections of the offline and the online, and, by extension, of the represented and the real, can have a range of implications for both diarists and their texts. I want to close by looking at one online journal where these intersections have been an integral part of the journal’s functions and forms. Steve Schalchlin’s *Living in the Bonus Round* is one of the earliest Web-diaries to appear, debuting in March 1996; his diary banner boasts that his site is “historically the 28th internet diary they say” (Schalchlin, “First Time?”). Unlike other Web-diary pioneers such as Lee or Burke, Schalchlin has continued his diary in more-or-less the same form, under the same name, at the same address. His site has garnered several awards and attracted thousands of readers over its eight years of development, and, as he explains in his introduction to the diary, *Living in the Bonus Round* played a major role in the critical success of his musical *The Last Session* when it debuted off-Broadway (“First Time?”). Through his diary, Schalchlin has moved from being a “‘somewhat famous’ songwriter living with AIDS” (Schalchlin,
"Index") to a “cyberlebrity” (Senft 191) whose site fosters an international readership and multiple communities that connect at his site and, frequently, in real life.

As we have seen, the online diary already creates a sense of congruency between the lived and the written because of the immediacy of publication. By allowing Schalchlin’s readers to receive the diary serially, reading each entry as it is posted, a process not possible or at least rare in print diaries, the Internet further seems to break down the division of textual and lived lives and selves. Without the delay or explicit mediation of the traditional publishing process to remind readers and writers of this difference, Schalchlin appears to be living, or, in the diary’s opening entries, dying online. *Living in the Bonus Round* began as a “goodbye letter to the world” (“First Time”) when Schalchlin was near death from AIDS. Though the site originally served to record his symptoms for his medical doctor and to keep his out-of-town family up-to-date on his condition, it quickly attracted other readers, strangers who were drawn to his narrative. As Schalchlin’s diary began to take shape as a public record of what he thought were his last days, it became a way for him to live as he could not do offline. Reflecting on the journal’s genesis, Schalchlin recalls, “When I began this diary six years ago, I could barely function in the ‘real’ world. But in cyberspace, I was a superhero” (20 Dec.-2 Jan. 2002). Though his diary identity, for very particular personal and political reasons, was as the representative “man with AIDS” (29 Apr. 1996), and his diary consequently foregrounded the physical toll AIDS was taking on his body, his online presence compensated for these offline disabilities. This “superhero” performance, in which Schalchlin writes himself as he wishes he could be, indicates a function that all the diaries in this study have performed for their diarists. The online publication that makes
Schalchlin's diary identity immediately public and accessible, and that distinguishes his
 textual performances from Vaughan's or Carr's, for example, is key to the particular
 personal and public uses he needs his diary to serve.

As Schalchlin's health improved, and the diary grew, taking on new audiences
 and topics and consequently developing a wider following, the distinctions between life
 and text became literally harder to distinguish. He gave his journal its snappy title,
 explaining that "[i]n the Bonus Round time goes faster and the prizes are better" ("First
 Time") and separated entries into books and, eventually, volumes (he notes, with some
 gallows humor, "It's multi-volume cuz I wasn't supposed to last this long" ("Index")).

The diary has an annotated index for ease of access, along with the usual biography and
 other introductory pages. His online life turned into a book, packaged in ways familiar
 to readers, who responded enthusiastically to this unfolding story. Many of his readers
 began to think of Schalchlin as a literary character, the protagonist of what one calls "a
 LIVING NOVEL" (24 May 1997). A few entries into a new book of his diary,
 Schalchlin anticipates readers' confusion about the narrative, asking, "Are you still
 waiting for something to happen? Something dramatic? [...] I could look for some
 foreshadowing, [...] but then, I don't exactly know what's coming" (8 Dec. 1996).

Though in the actual online diary Schalchlin cannot meet his readers' narrative
 expectations, which derive from both print culture and from fiction, he is acutely aware
 of the fact that he and his life are being read. His diary format nods to this blurring of
 life and text in his readers' minds.

Schalchlin has also started to think of his life in narrative terms, musing in April
 1998 that dividing his diary into books has affected the way he lives. He notes, "This
simple act had a profound effect because it changed the way I perceive life itself. Now, instead of thinking of life as this long highway without end, I see it as little segments of time in which I can accomplish great things. [...] But more importantly, I look forward to each new book, wondering what will come but fully knowing that it's totally up to me to generate the life that will come” (24 Apr. 1998). In the course of creating his online life, a textual/virtual self meant to compensate for and outlast the embodied/actual person, Schalchlin begins to live his life like a story. He makes the transition, outlined by Paul John Eakin, from “writing autobiography” to “living autobiography, performing it in our daily lives” (Eakin 101), adding significance to the traditional diary trope of the “life as book,” or, in Schalchlin’s words, the “real life serial” (11 Dec. 1996). For Schalchlin, the textual has come to shape the lived life; as his comments demonstrate, Schalchlin is now both producer and product of his autobiographical narrative. As we have seen in both internment and literary diaries, through the process of living and writing “on the pulse” the diarist becomes a member of his or her own audience, the consumer as well as the producer of the text. The diarist “reads” his or her life as public and personal, lived and written, potentially embodying Crouter’s mandate to “live as you’d like others to read about.”

However, since the online diarist lives, writes, and publishes “on the pulse,” the story he or she writes and reads plays out for thousands who are reading along with the diarist. The immediate presence of actual readers alongside the projected addressees raises questions for both readers and writers of the diary, questions that have generated the meta-genre that was particularly germane for early practitioners of the genre. By April 1996, Schalchlin began to receive e-mails from people who had discovered his
diary and felt compelled to contact him. With the online diary still a novelty, Schalchlin’s site provoked questions about the nature of such a text. He records that “Someone (a stranger) sent me an e-mail last week and asked me how I could ‘put my whole life’ out on the net for everyone to read. Isn’t it embarrassing, he asked? I hadn’t really thought about it before.” Schalchlin muses about what he really is doing with his online diary, what he hopes to accomplish by turning his life into an Internet serial:

Perhaps I’m like a bug some kid has rolled over onto its back. Perhaps this is me kicking my legs up in the air begging him not to squish me. I just have this weird feeling that if I cry loud enough and long enough, if I make people care, if they get to know this man with AIDS, maybe it will make some scientist work that much harder to find a cure for us all. (Maybe it’ll make them slow down just to get me to shut up!) (29 Apr. 1996)

Schalchlin feels his way in this response, working from his initial self-construction as powerless and insignificant, even inhuman, to a position of agency. Seeing himself as a “bug,” something to be reviled and quickly squished, reflects how society may see a gay man with AIDS, but in this passage, and in his diary, Schalchlin announces his intention to resist and change that perception, using the genre’s capacity for constructing subjectivity. The double uses of both “perhaps” and “maybe” demonstrate his hesitancy about this power, and sound a measured and meditative tone. These notes of uncertainty or exploration illustrate as well his care not to seem arrogant; he does not want to presume, as an ‘ordinary’ person, that his audience will readily accept his life-story as exemplary or instructive. To claim such a distinction may alienate readers, particularly
those who may still harbour doubts about this kind of speaking subject. His incorporation of AIDS and the search for a cure into this passage, which is ostensibly about why he writes a diary, demonstrates the clear political as well as personal uses he imagines for this text.

Schalchlin’s answer foregrounds the need for public speech that his personal diary serves. Though for very different reasons from those of Yellowrose or Johnny Reb, Schalchlin needs his voice to be heard and counted, so that this “man with AIDS” can resist the silencing of his disease. He characterizes himself in this passage as always making noise: he “begs” and “cries loud enough and long enough.” In a characteristically self-deprecating if morbid aside, he jokes that scientists may prefer to let AIDS kill him in order to get him to “shut up,” a warning that he may need to be a bit of a nuisance in his quest to narrate a life and an experience that must be talked about from the inside. But he is also very aware of the potential power to connect that a personal story, and a diary in particular, holds. His meta-genre is interwoven with verbs and nouns of emotion: “feeling,” “care,” “know.” These associated terms project an ideal reader who will be made to invest emotionally not only in Schalchlin’s personal story but also in the AIDS crisis. In the context of this entry discussing why he keeps an online diary, the twin cohesive groupings of emotion and speech illustrate how he will use the virtual intimacy of the Internet, which inspires readers to feel as if they “know” diarists, to persuade people to listen to a subject they might otherwise choose to ignore. The plan to inspire emotional commitment on the part of the general “people,” in addition to the “hard” work of the scientist searching for a “cure,” reminds readers that both kinds of support are
necessary to deal with AIDS. Consequently, his diary will address both medical and lay communities, engaging both in this struggle.\textsuperscript{68}

In these activist functions, the text acts specifically as an AIDS diary, a sub-genre that Ross Chambers identifies as performing a particular assertion of identity. "The very existence of [AIDS diaries]," Chambers argues, "signifies the choice to live one's death and to write it, as an alternative to throwing in the towel" (16, emphasis original). Through the diary, Schalchlin offers himself and his personal life up to the public in order to enact change, a role made possible by both the accessibility of the Internet, its openness to the narratives of "Everyman," and the intimacy and dailiness of the diary genre. His choice to write his death publicly using a traditionally personal form in order to achieve the most public good demonstrates the multiplicity of simultaneous functions that the genre can perform and exigences to which it can respond. Schalchlin sees the AIDS crisis as a situation that calls for action, and in response he turns to the most public and accessible evolution of the diary.

Schalchlin's sense that he could be a "superhero" online, and use his personal story to accomplish things he no longer had the energy to pursue in the real world, demonstrates the urgency that inspired the early diary. Unsure of how much time he had left, Schalchlin was anxious for textual if not corporeal survival. Chambers notes that this uncertainty is a key element in the witnessing AIDS diaries perform, because though "a certain period of survival is vouchsafed for the writer [...] the story to be told is nevertheless that of the author's dying" (viii). Furthermore, through writing a public

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{68} Schalchlin and his diary have been quite useful to the medical world. His daily description of life with AIDS has become a valuable classroom resource for universities and outreach organizations. The scientists who ran a study on the AIDS drug Crixivan in which he participated regularly checked his progress by reading his updates in the diary; they also attended a performance of The Last Session when it ran off-
\end{quote}
diary, AIDS diarists enable the “survival of the story itself, by means of which a textual subject (or ‘subject of writing’) can pursue the task of witnessing, as a social participant, when the ‘writing subject’ has exited the scene” (Chambers viii). Schalchlin’s interest in being “loud” now in his diary writes against a time when he will be “shut up”; he is very aware that his diary may survive much longer than he will, and finds this potential for virtual immortality quite appealing. “When I finally do die,” he notes in June 1996, “this page doesn’t have to. I mean, one can still go to Timothy Leary’s page and he’s dead. Think about it. A hundred years from now, someone could stumble onto this site and start reading these entries and, if they did them one day at a time, it would be as if I were still alive. Interesting” (27 June 1996). To Schalchlin, the diary’s dailiness, and its serial nature that online publication preserves, signal its convincing representation of lived life, so that readers might believe that the diarist still lived because of his or her diary narrative. Through reading, this future audience would confirm the diarist’s subjectivity, allowing the writing subject to live on discursively, an act only possible in the online diary, which lends itself to such piecemeal reading practices.

Through sharing his life/story, Schalchlin invites readers to think of themselves as part of a connected community, a group that now, through him, all “know” someone with AIDS and therefore have a personal interest in the fight against the disease. Through their membership in Schalchlin’s diary community, readers become one of “us all,” and consequently have a personal stake in finding a cure for AIDS. Though his evocation of “us all” certainly imagines a reader who has AIDS, Schalchlin’s diary does not however limit its appeal only to those with the disease. On the contrary, as part of his project to

Broadway, demonstrating the diary’s intermingling of communities and purposes as well its on- and offline worlds.
“make people care,” Schalchlin needs to reach a wide range of people, including scientists, uninformed high school students, gay-bashing evangelicals, and others who could be converted to his causes. Seeing a public use for his private pain and disease, Schalchlin made his site a space not only for his personal diary but also for community forums and exchange. He embeds links to medical sites and health organizations, helping readers to connect to information and assistance based on his own experiences. Parents of gay teenagers have turned to his site as a way to understand their children’s experiences and agitate for their health and safety. Through his daily acts of witnessing, posted in the moment instead of compiled and published after his death, Schalchlin affirms his own existence and through this affirmation he provides a way for people dealing with AIDS in a variety of ways to come together. Like Crouter, Schalchlin turns his personal diary to particular public and political uses, attempting to use his individual story to affect social change.

For Schalchlin to accomplish these purposes, however, he has to forego the partial anonymity that most Web-diarists enjoy and emphasize his reality, even his corporeality. To make the personal political, to put a face on AIDS, or on the other causes he champions, he must make readers think of him as a real person and not a fictional character. Less philanthropically, his online and offline identities need to be contiguous enough in his readers’ minds to encourage their financial and commercial support of his forthcoming musical and his compact discs, which are available for sale through his site. Though both the framing of his diary as a book and the drama of his story invite associations with fiction, his generic choice of the online diary, a non-fiction form, grounds his narrative in the “real” world. While his fans may read his story like fiction,
they seem to accept him as real. Schalchlin’s offline career as a speaker at campuses and churches further enhanced readers’ feelings that the “character” from the “LIVING NOVEL” had come to life, stepped out of the computer screen and into many people’s own personal lives, seemingly obliterating the boundary between representation and reality.

As the site and its creator became somewhat of a cause célèbre, the diary evolved from its original roles of goodbye letter and illness narrative. With scores of eager fans that demanded—literally—daily updates, Living in the Bonus Round grew into an entity and even a career in itself. This constant pressure to produce strained Schalchlin’s enthusiasm for and ability to seem as if he were living online. By 1997, he wonders, “Is this diary a never-ending story? […] Am I now committed to doing this the rest of my life?” (15 July 1997). During the 1998 Laguna Playhouse run of his show The Last Session, the diary “morphs temporarily [into] a backstage fan notebook” (“Index”), and focuses on promoting and selling the show and its souvenirs. Pictures of merchandise and links to purchasing sites usurp the daily personal narrative, reflecting both Schalchlin’s vested interest in keeping his musical financially viable and his lack of time to devote to the diary. The play had become the diary subject, not Schalchlin, whose own personal story, apart from his role as actor and songwriter, became secondary and at times non-existent. His decision to continue the diary even in this truncated form reflects his sense of responsibility to his readers, for whom he fulfills multiple public as well as personal roles.

When Schalchlin posted Part 5 in 1998, he announced that he was taking a “hiatus” from the diary in its present form, thereby ending Volume I. “The Bonus Round
will continue,” he reassured his readers, “but it will evolve” (5 Dec. 1998). The “new
diary” would be a combination of posts to the discussion board and e-mails; “in other
words,” he explains, “the diary is now totally interactive.” His decision came after a bad
blood test and a “backbreaking schedule” of touring. Rather than quit the diary entirely
and let down the many communities who congregate and mingle at this site, rather than
dismantle his online life even though its maintenance and ongoing construction threaten
to disrupt his offline life, Schalchlin expanded the elastic borders of the genre to include
other writers in his personal diary. His diary, then, became “totally interactive” not only
in the sense of providing links to follow, audio files to hear, and photographs to view, but
also in the sense of being collaborative. Throwing open the construction of his diary to
his reading public, inviting them to contribute to his personal story, ensures that the diary
will continue. He can therefore give his readers exactly what they want: they still get the
diary, and, even better, they can write its contents so that it reflects their own desires as
well as his. In this interactive form, the diary’s textual representation thus becomes
representative, reflecting the online diary’s function as a public document built to serve
its writer and its communities.69

Schalchlin’s blurring of the life and text, of virtuality and reality, of public and
private, has accumulated over hundreds of entries, as his online identities took shape and
communities began to form around and participate in his diary. The cumulative nature of
online diaries and Weblogs makes their autobiographical projects distinct from such other
forms of online life-writing as the personal home page or the chat-room persona, genres

69 Schalchlin has returned to his original, single-diaryist format now that the hubbub around The Last Session
has decreased. He has, however, learned his lesson about letting the writing of the diary supplant the living
it supposedly narrates. He still updates regularly but not usually daily, and took all of August 2003 as a
“diary vacation.”
to which readers bring from print culture fewer expectations of both texts and writers. Since Schalchlin's journal was one of the earliest on the Internet, it was for many readers their first experience of this "new artform" that, though similar in many ways to offline diaries, challenges traditional generic definitions and reading practices. Reading online diaries can be a frustrating and discomfiting experience for a reader—and a researcher—accustomed to published print materials. In an online diary, I do not know what will come next, and I cannot jump to the last entry or glean the final outcome from the summary provided by the book jacket; I may even find that the diary has disappeared entirely. Since online diaries incorporate the familiar alongside the strange, they are unsettling narrative territory, uncharted, with the potential for both thrills and peril for writers and readers. As a text that consciously bridges both print and Internet cultures, *Living in the Bonus Round* helps new audiences negotiate the new forms and develop expectations for online life-writing and its producers.

**Conclusion**

Concerned with creating texts that serve functions for both themselves and their readers, online diarists write with an awareness of, and a desire for, a reading public unprecedented for the traditional concept of the diary and diarist. Carrying over to the Internet such expected features as dated, distinct entries, a confiding if not confessional tone, and a concern with the everyday details of one's own life, Web-diarists reassure readers of the print diary that their narrative expectations will be met online. But these diarists also expand the form to fit new uses and users, adding counters, e-mail addresses, links, and discussion boards, supplementing the solo voice of the diarist with a chorus of
respondents in conversation. For online readers and writers, the diary becomes a site for communities to work out their values, language, and membership, by reading, writing, or responding. Participating in these conversations that she has initiated or entered, the online diarist creates a text that is at once both personal and public.

Even as they throw open the diary genre and their lives to the Internet, though, Web-diarists retain a measure of anonymity, writing to readers whom they will for the most part never meet in real life. Bloggers’ simultaneous verisimilitude and immateriality accounts for readers’ conflicting impulses to accept them as real people at the same time as they read them as characters in a life fiction. As an emerging form of life-writing, online diaries serve as fresh reminders of the tenuous division between “life” and “art,” virtual and actual, realms that these texts seem to straddle more explicitly than traditional written autobiographical forms. Their interstitial status, which makes it harder for audiences and even authors to distinguish the represented from the real, contributes, perhaps, to my own concerns about how to read these texts, how to approach these narratives as a genre and as life-writing. Web-diaries challenge not only how we think lives should be written, but also whose lives, and consequently force readers to examine their own aesthetic, cultural, and generational biases.

The diary’s reputation as a most authentic, if biased, autobiographical and historical record, based on its apparent ability as a “private” record to capture life in process without filtering out anything, carries over to the Internet. Online, the form’s dailiness, personal information, and trivia become its markers of “truth,” grounding the life it narrates in the evanescence of cyberspace, making “real life” real in this virtual space. The everyday nature of these diaries reflects the ordinariness of these diarists,
even for celebrities who choose to keep a blog. Shopping lists, marital discord, discussions of favourite books and music, and records of outings with friends have become the new path to textual success, even fame. The best Web-diarists—by that I mean the most popular or well-known—have, seemingly, the most unremarkable lives. Perhaps this new attention to the ordinary life of private citizens, the people Gilmore claims as the new representative subjects, explains the diary’s favoured status on the Internet. As a form that foregrounds not just the daily but the actual moment of writing, that requires no particular skill or talent or even time, that is flexible enough to combine sensational confession and everyday tedium without apparent incongruity, the diary suits and reflects contemporary readers and culture. The detail and, on the Internet, the volume of this production in turn mean that the diary drives the production of this culture, helping fuel the cult of the everyday that has characterized the end of the twentieth and beginning of the twenty-first centuries. The diary, then, that centuries-old form frequently dismissed as the domain of love-struck teenage girls, is both symptomatic of much of contemporary Western culture and a driving force behind it.
Conclusion: Much Ado About Genre

At the end of the Introduction, I explained my synonymous use of the terms "diary" and "journal," concluding that "a diary by any other name is still a diary." But, after exploring literary journals, internment diaries, and blogs, can I still make that statement with the same conviction? Having examined texts in three different situations, in which diaries perform such a wide range of social actions, I have to consider whether in each case we are indeed, to borrow Steve Schalchlin’s phrase, "talking about a new artform here." In considering the phenomenon of this genre, I return to the question I asked in the Introduction: what does "diary" really mean in this particular place and time? Further, is it useful to consider the range of texts I analyze here as "diaries," despite their significant differences? I want to close by considering some answers to these queries.

One solution may lie in Peter Medway's call for allowing genre definitions to be "fuzzy." He explains, "perhaps the notion of genre needs to be fuzzy. Perhaps there are degrees of genreness, from tightly defined (or ossified [...]) to baggy and indeterminate." Medway argues that the concept of "genreness" will help genre theories continue to develop away from taxonomic grids, and pay more attention to "localized and historical situation types." He concludes, "Genre theory may amount to little more than this; that it’s helpful to be able to say that when people do roughly similar sorts of textual things in circumstances perceived as roughly similar, then we are in the presence of a construct that is a real social fact—and let’s call it a genre" (141). Considering the diary as a "fuzzy" genre, one that people have turned to in "roughly similar" situations for over four centuries, may be a way to resolve my qualms about making a comprehensive genre claim for these seemingly disparate texts. Recognizing this genre’s usefulness in a
diverse range of situations that have similarities—the need to confess, the sense of being in a potentially "historic" moment, the desire to resist imposed subject positions—could reasonably and helpfully allow blogs and Quaker diaries of the 17th century, for example, to share the same genre label.

The diary’s chameleonic ability to adapt, its capacity for change, may explain its longevity and its continuing appeal. Users of this form shape and expand its features to fit their specific situation, and yet the diary remains recognizable even when diarists change, substitute, or delete key elements to suit the needs of the context of use. The borders of this genre seem so permeable, or perhaps merely so distant, that specific definition can be elusive; with the potential for so much variety in individual uses of the genre, it can be very difficult to say what the diary is, in all cases. Even privacy, which many would consider this genre’s defining characteristic, does not need to be in place in particular instances. The presence of celebrity, historical situations, or community-building seem to be acceptable and accepted reasons to allow diaries to be public. Such public purposes may replace the notion of "private" (that is, not meant for external readers), with "personal" (that is, intimate, revealing, or simply about an individual), as the constitutive element.

However, the perceived tension or opposition between the private and the public makes this genre work as a method of self-exposure, one of the central factors in its popularity for contemporary readers. Thus, while in actual contemporary practice readers and writers of diaries acknowledge and approve of the public personal journal, these texts will still be read with the stereotypical secret diary and its contents in mind. This genre knowledge or expectation accounts for readers continuing to feel the thrill of overhearing
even in a text they know was written to be read, and for writers taking pains to build this sensation into their texts by using the kind of discursive features I’ve analyzed throughout this study and to which I return below.

The history of the genre, from its earliest instances to its most contemporary, has been marked by change. Significantly, however, these changes have not been in style—a diary entry written in the 18th century will still be recognizable as a diary entry to 21st century readers. What has changed over the centuries has been public perception of the genre, popular and critical ideas about what the diary genre is, what it should do, and for whom, raising a series of tightly interwoven issues that include privacy, authenticity, and audience. These shifting perceptions arise in the different contexts of production and reception, which generate different ideas about acceptability based on the dominant ideologies of the time. What functions will be mutually recognized or seen as appropriate will differ in individual contexts, but the diary’s features have remained relatively constant.

When I first envisioned this project, I imagined the chapters introducing and following a trajectory, beginning with literary diaries, the most traditional, literary, and “private,” and concluding with Weblogs, the most innovative, quotidian, and “public.” This anticipated line was loosely chronological, beginning with Carr and concluding with Schalchlin, but mostly I envisioned a progressive narrative of genre, with the analysis showing advancing degrees of publicity across the chapters. While in several key ways that original concept has panned out, I was not prepared to find so many similarities as well as differences among my three sites. Nor, in my original formulation, did I consider the implications of the binary oppositions on which I grounded my thesis. What did I
think constituted "literary," and why did I expect to classify blogs as "a-literary," or the least literary? How was I defining "traditional" in relation to diaries, and what would I deem "innovative"? In posing these questions now, I see the unexamined assumptions I brought into this analysis. I too had a vague grouping of "private, authentic, traditional, and literary" versus "public, inauthentic, untraditional, and artless," categories that privileged the diaries of public figures over private citizens, and reproduced beliefs about what kinds of writers were appropriate subjects for public consumption. Like the critics described by Lensink ("Emily"), I had distinct expectations for the diaries of professional writers and those of "ordinary" people based on my own biases about whose texts I was prepared to accept as literary. Further, while I had resisted—and still resist—criticism that sees any genre as inherently "masculine" or "feminine," I learned to pay attention to gender as a critical factor for understanding the ways in which diaries are written, read, and used. Though these diarists, particularly the women, may not have been drawn to the diary as a "woman's" or a "man's" genre, the production and reception of their texts have been influenced by the genre's contemporary categorization as "feminine." I had not appreciated the interconnectedness among issues of literariness, authenticity, and gender.

The course of my analysis changed my perceptions of these binaries and acknowledged movement—"grey" areas—between these oppositions. For example, I found that, while literary diaries were, unsurprisingly, the most polished and aesthetically balanced of the texts, internment journals and Weblogs also had rhetorical flair, despite varying degrees of skill in the writers. Partly this similarity occurs, I believe, because all three sets of diarists wrote explicitly for an anticipated audience, whether or not they had plans for immediate publication, and shaped their narratives accordingly. Medway makes
analogous observations in his study of the “private” notebooks of architecture students. He concludes that, “although no one else is meant to see these books, so much of the writing employs a publicly accessible discourse. [...] The writing is partly rehearsal, of specific arguments and more generally of a discourse, for an expected or imagined future performance.” Significantly, he observes that “many of the [writers’] sentences have the articulateness and sonority of weighty public prose. We do not feel we are in the presence of inner speech, with its fragmentary, allusive, and elliptical qualities” (144).

As in my own study, discourse features have “public” and “private” associations; because the writing in internment, literary, and Internet diaries is on the whole cohesive and explicit, it points to an imagined public exchange. However, these diarists have also shown their awareness of the expectations Medway describes for “inner speech,” and have often been artful in their representations of those features even in their public writings.

The similarities in discourse features or style pointed to other unexpected congruencies. Despite the radical differences in situations faced by these diarists, they displayed instances of shared exigence, comparable reasons why they felt they had to write diaries. The closest parallels existed among Carr, Sarton, and the bloggers, all of whom used the diary to record ordinary life unfolding over time, with daily records spanning years of existence, limited only by the diarists’ continued interest in writing. (Though Sarton had artificial deadlines imposed by her publishing schedule, she did keep regular diaries for over twenty years.) These diarists all felt compelled to inscribe the daily in a particular way for a reading public, and found audiences that recognized this
exigence, even with the different degrees of celebrity that distinguished professional writers from bloggers.

Similarly, when Page, Crouter, Vaughan, and Abkhazi found themselves in situations they considered extraordinary, they felt a desire and obligation to write down what was happening to them; though they imagined an audience for this situation, they did not write for immediate publication. While of course a sojourn in Brazil constitutes a radically different situation than does imprisonment behind enemy lines, these diarists shared a response through genre to their experience, and decades later readers recognize that response. Additionally, the situation called for purpose-built diaries with defined points for beginning and ending. This externally-imposed structure (imprisonment and liberation, arrival and departure) makes for diaries that, as Raoul has noted, “read like novels” (“Women and Diaries” 62). The connection to the genres and expectations of fiction suggests that these types of diaries may be in some ways “literary” as well, further challenging a fixed notion of literariness.

These similarities in the style and functions of these diaries across such radically different situations demonstrate the relative stability of the diary genre in this contemporary moment. As well, they indicate the usefulness of this genre as a response to the situations of contemporary society and culture, whether in the moment of inscription or at the time of publication. Diarists writing or publishing within the last forty years could anticipate a readership that would recognize what they were doing in their texts and why. The diary’s high profile (if low ranking on traditional aesthetic or critical hierarchies) explains in part why an individual who reads Emily Carr’s *Hundreds and*
Thousands and Sara Achenbach’s Going Jesus understands both texts as diaries, despite differences in their format and publication.

However, differences exist within these likenesses. For example, as I have shown, the same discursive features—presupposition, gapping, agentless expressions—that have become characteristic of the genre serve different functions and will be interpreted differently in different contexts. The presence or absence of these features, in combination with the particular situation, activate different expectations and definitions of “authenticity” for the reader. So Page’s dropping of the subject in her opening entries suggests an intimate narrative and a style typical of the personal diary, in which “I,” and the identity it inscribes, would be implicitly understood. In the internment diary, on the other hand, agentless expressions represented the danger and uncertainty of the situation, as well as the need for caution in audience design in case the journal fell into the wrong hands. This same textual element thus authenticated each kind of diary. Because they want their diaries to be understood, to communicate with their intended audiences, all three kinds of diarists take care to produce what will be accepted as “authentic” diaries in each situation.

In addition, though diarists would experience “roughly similar” exigence, the social actions they needed their texts to perform in their specific situation differ radically. Bloggers use their journals to produce actual communities of responsive readers, while Carr constructed imagined communities to stand in for what she could not have, and perhaps did not want, in lived life. Vaughan turned to her diary to restore her sense of identity, employing the genre to regulate her self-esteem and resist the destabilizing of her subjectivity in private so that she could preserve her public image. Web-diarists seek
external approbation by exposing themselves in the diary for a reading public; they build their public image on the feedback they receive on their “private”—that is, personal—diary entries.

The Internet diaries in particular seem to represent such a major shift in pragmatic terms that they constitute a fundamental challenge to the limits of the genre diary to represent all these kinds of texts and still be a meaningful category of text-types. So does the movement of the diary onto the Web mean the end of the road for the diary as it has been understood in traditional terms? Or, as Lejeune suggests, “Seule la manière change” (Cher Écran 12)? Has the genre fragmented so much between page and screen that the meaning of “diary” disintegrates, or will these forms exist side-by-side as related but distinct sub-genres? I am inclined to believe that, for some functions, the paper diary and the blog can co-exist. The travel record, confession, daily accounting, scrapbook, memory-box, for example, lend themselves to both online and offline chronicles, whether for immediate publication or for possible readers at some undetermined time in the future. These particular functions represent more personal uses of the diary, ones that certainly address audiences but that may not need or be intended for actual readers.

Further, as I discovered in my own research with the Web, the present state of technology makes the blog a relatively unstable means of creating a legacy. While paper may mildew and ink fade, the manuscript diary cannot totally disappear when a server fails, a user’s subscription expires, or software progresses so that outdated applications can no longer be accessed. Additionally, the Web as diary page may become a site for legal and ethical challenges about privacy, copyright, and personal safety issues. As these concerns arise and are resolved, they may influence the ways in which diarists
write. In this possible future, agentless expressions may take on yet another interpretation, as diarists adopt them to avoid slander.

The Web-diary may, however, render other traditional diary functions obsolete. During the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq, for example, several war blogs, purportedly written by Iraqi civilians in cities under fire, drew international media attention. (The “authenticity” of these diaries was immediately called into question; in this instance, the identity play enabled by the Internet was seen as a problem because sources of information could not be verified.) These blogs suggest that the traditional war diary, as understood and employed by Abkhazi, Crouter, and Vaughan, who documented events for later publication, may have only worked for the war situations of the previous century. War blogs provide the same on-the-ground reportage, but can be published now, meaning that their contents could have immediate and significant effects on the public events they narrate. (Imagine if The Diary of Anne Frank, or Emanuel Ringelblum’s Notes from the Warsaw Ghetto, for instance, could have been published in the moment for an international readership.) While present technology, which requires access to a computer, software, and Internet connection, poses obvious difficulties for a blogger behind enemy lines, the evolution and accessibility of handheld devices and wireless connections may overcome such obstacles. The diary of war, imprisonment, or siege that by necessity was private-for-now with public intentions may be superseded by the innovations of the Web-diary.

The Web’s immediacy is what makes it so useful for public personal journals, diaries that writers intend to share with real, external readers. One imagines May Sarton would have embraced the public relations potential of the blog, but she may well have
paid a price in terms of the reception of her journals as literature. Immediacy and literariness are concepts that at this time may be considered too contrary—hence, my own expectations that blogs would not be literary. Though professional writers do keep blogs—science fiction writer William Gibson, who coined the term “cyberspace,” has a very popular site—these online writings at present complement but do not replace their publications in more traditionally literary modes. The invention of awards and honours to bestow upon blogs points to a growing critical and institutional acceptance of these texts. But both the relative newness of the form and the enduring reputation of the diary as a “low” art form would make it difficult for diarists harboring literary illusions to use the Internet diary to the exclusion of the published print journal.

Whether or not the Web-diary constitutes a branch genre or mutation of the original form (itself a branch genre or mutation of other forms), the popularity of the blog underscores again the relevance of the diary genre to the contemporary moment. Studying the contemporary diary gives insight into the attitudes and beliefs about history, gender, literature, and subjectivity that are in circulation, and demonstrates individuals reproducing, resisting, and creating those attitudes and beliefs. Particular social, cultural, and historic periods call upon particular genres, and contemporary North American culture seems ripe for the diary. Individuals certainly have kept diaries before this time, but without the acceptance or understanding of the genre’s public uses. The popular and critical re-evaluation of the diary that has taken place since the 1970s has meant that contemporary diarists have expectations of the form as both public and private, driven by the needs of the particular situations to which the diary responds. Corresponding to the rise of the diary have been the articulation and mainstream acceptance of theories that
challenge the status quo. These include feminism and postmodernism, both of which articulate new understandings of subjectivity, textuality, and epistemology. The diary, with its provisional, fragmented, and open-ended narrative that constructs multiple formations of identity, may well be the original postmodern form, one that answers some of modernism’s questions about the nature of the subject.

So, what does “diary” mean? In this study, “diary” has signified texts that intersect the traditionally private and public, literary and artless, “masculine” and “feminine.” It denotes individuals using a recognized form to accomplish personal and communal goals, to make their private desires known in public, as Carolyn Miller has shown (“Genre” 158). It identifies a group of “roughly similar” texts that vastly different writers have taken up to respond to situations that they felt should be recorded, for “roughly similar” reasons. Using this “fuzzy” definition, I feel comfortable concluding that, yes, blogs and literary journals and internment diaries—along with many other diary iterations—do in fact fall into the same genre category. Furthermore, it is useful to group them together in order to see what “participation in a genre do[es], to, and for, an individual or group” (Freedman and Medway “Locating” 12). Analyzing how the genre has been seen as the way to respond to situations across time, even if those responses seem to reinvent the genre, has been, I hope, an effective way to understand the diary’s roles and relevance in the contemporary moment.
Works Cited


---. Peggy Abkhazi Papers. Special Collections Library, University of Victoria, Victoria, British Columbia.


---. “Introduction: Diarists, This Diary, and Her Diary.” *Crouter* xi-xxvi.


---. Manuscript journals and correspondence. Inglis Collection. Provincial Archives of British Columbia, Victoria, British Columbia.

---. *Klee Wyck.* Toronto: Clarke Irwin, 1941.

---. *Pause: A Sketchbook.* Toronto: Clarke Irwin, 1953.


<http://www.williamgibsonbooks.com/blog/blog.asp>.


---. "Genre and the Pragmatic Concept of Background Knowledge." Freedman and Medway 155-78.


---. “Re: Civilian Internment Diaries.” E-mail to Laurie McNeill. 21 Aug. 2003.


Juhasz, Suzanne. “Towards a Theory of Form in Feminist Autobiography: Kate Millet’s *Flying* and *Sita*; Maxine Hong Kingston’s *The Woman Warrior*.” Jelinek 221-37.


   Langford and West 185-211.


---. "Expanding the Boundaries of Criticism: The Diary as Female Autobiography."


Mason, Mary G. "The Other Voice: Autobiographies by Women Writers."


---. "Rhetorical Community: The Cultural Basis of Genre." Freedman and Medway 67-78.


<http://www.links.net/daze/03/09/20/the_quickening.html>.


---. "P.K. Irwin – Artist’s Statement." 5 May 2002.


Petillo, Carol M. "Introduction and Editor's Note." Vaughan, Ordeal. Vii-xxii.


Pohli, Carol Virginia. “Saving the Audience: Patterns of Reader Response to May Sarton’s Work.” Swartzlander and Mumford 211-38.


Powazek, Derek. “What the Hell is a Weblog and Why Won’t They Leave Me Alone?” Rodzvilla 3-6.


Talbot, Neale. “Put the Keyboard Down and Back Away from the Weblog.” Rodzvilla 47-56.


