

Notebooks, Annotations, and Tweets: Defining Everyday Writing through a Common Lens

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A woman routinely annotates her favorite cookbook; frustrated citizens bring hand-made signs and placards to a meeting with their Congressional representative; a child writes with chalk on the sidewalk; a man crafts captions for the photos he posts on Facebook; a couple compose their own wedding invitations; and a student draws graffiti on the door of a bathroom stall: all of these writers are composing texts we call everyday writing. Such writing is both ubiquitous and, as Jamie White-Farnham explains in a recent *College English* essay, outside of “the common purview” (209): commonplace in daily life, and yet not fully recognized as a legitimate area of study. As we argue here, however, there are benefits in seeing very different texts—separated by time, material, and context—as instantiations of the phenomenon of everyday writing, a subject worthy of study. Such benefits range from connecting otherwise-disparate scholarly approaches located in very different frameworks and periods to conceptualizing writing more capaciously—as an activity that mediates not only school, the workplace, and the public sphere, but all of life. In fact, without including everyday writing in our models and theories of writing, such models and theories are necessarily incomplete.

The approach to everyday writing we share here rests on two assumptions: 1) that the varied texts of everyday writing can be considered as instances of the same phenomenon; and 2) that theorizing everyday writing as a particularized and yet concurrent general phenomenon can help scholars both identify the myriad forms of textuality such writing takes and research and account for writing more fully, accurately, and capaciously. Based on these assumptions, the article here proceeds in four movements. First, we synopsize the scholarship on, and adjacent to, everyday writing. Second, given that context, we outline Stephen Witte’s framework of text/context/intertext as a heuristic useful for analyzing individual instances of everyday writing and for demonstrating their relationship to each other as instances of ev-

Yancey, et al.

everyday writing. Third, we employ Witte's framework to analyze three texts, occurring in scenes of writing different from one to the next, as particularized instances of everyday writing; collectively, these scenes illustrate the taxonomic range of the category and its corresponding value for studying acts and texts of writing. Finally, we argue that larger theories and models of writing can never be fully realized without the inclusion of everyday writing.

Everyday Writing: Multiple Frameworks

In her recent *College English* essay, Jamie White-Farnham observes that studies of everyday writing are organized under various names; they include

the *rhetoric of everyday life* (Nystrand and Duffy), *rhetoric of the everyday* (Cintrón), *vernacular rhetoric* (Hauser), *extracurriculum* (Gere), and *vernacular literacies* (Barton and Hamilton). . . . [T]he study of everyday writing and rhetoric takes up a variety of meaning-making and materially consequential language and symbol uses in such contexts as cities and towns (Barton and Hamilton; Hogg), housing complexes (Fleming [2003]), gangs (Cintrón), women's clubs (Gere), and families (Brandt; Rumsey). (208)

A central characteristic of these approaches to everyday writing is their attention to the mundane, ubiquitous writing practices of the non-elite, the marginalized, and the invisible; they also trace resistance and power as exercised in such writing. As White-Farnham's description of the approaches to everyday writing also makes clear, however, the scholarship addressing such writing is dispersed across several fields. Inside Rhetoric and Composition, as explained below, it is understood through diverse frameworks, among them vernacular rhetoric, everyday literacies, and the extracurriculum. In other disciplines, it is understood in yet other ways, with historian Martyn Lyon, for instance, calling it "writing from below" in his study of World War I European soldiers learning to write so as to compose letters to loved ones at home, while Marguerite Helmers, focusing in literature on the diaries kept by women serving with both US and British service units during that same period, invokes a rhetoric of domesticity in the letter-writers' documentation of the everyday. Generally in scholarship taking such different approaches, the texts of everyday writing seem different in context, in material instantiations, and in the frameworks at-

tempting to elucidate them. In sum, given such dispersion, thinking categorically about everyday writing as a *kind* of writing is not an easy task.

The Scholarship on Everyday Writing Theorized *in Relationship*: To a Curriculum, a Public, a Monumental Text, and Everyday Life

Two factors, at least, account for what we might call the invisible ubiquity of scholarship on everyday writing. First, the instantiations of everyday writing, from one to the next, differ; and second, the frameworks used to interpret everyday writing also differ—and often considerably, as White-Farnham observes. Moreover, these frameworks typically theorize everyday writing in relationship to something else under investigation often considered more important or substantive—a curriculum, a public, a monumental text, or everyday life itself. In “Kitchen Tables and Rented Rooms: The Extracurriculum of Composition,” for instance, Anne Ruggles Gere studied everyday writing as it was composed in the Tenderloin’s women’s community and in an agrarian Iowa writing workshop; Gere’s intent was to focus on contexts “beyond the academy . . . in which persons seek to improve their own writing” (80), with writers acting as their own teachers. Focusing on these sites, as Gere says, creates a richer representation of writers, providing for “more diversity in gender, race, and class among writers” (80). Framed as the writing of the extracurriculum, this everyday writing is viewed in relationship to the school curriculum and is thus largely valued for its self-sponsorship of both composing and instruction.

Shannon Carter and James Conrad’s “In Possession of Community: Toward a More Sustainable Local,” much like Katrina Powell’s *The Anguish of Displacement*, addresses everyday writing composed by people who are often invisible, and in the case of Carter and Conrad, writers of the everyday who are “historically excluded from public spaces” (85); their texts, once recovered, can contribute to archives of everyday writing. In particular, Carter and Conrad articulate two interests: to identify “firsthand, lived experiences” contributing to “local histories,” especially narratives of social justice; and to preserve such work, primarily through recovering and preserving primary documents in the context of recording and archiving oral histories, claiming that “[l]ocal, research-driven archives like the one we are building together in North Texas attend to the everyday, local dimensions of writing and writers by promoting research and preservation projects that document the ways in which literacy has manifested itself across re-

Yancey, et al.

gions like ours and among populations like the ones our campus serves. . . .” (100-101). Although different in intent from Gere’s extracurriculum, this project too is a revisionist one, since archiving these materials both records a history and makes such everyday materials available for future use.

Yet a third approach to everyday writing also attentive to the public, articulated by Nathaniel Rivers and Ryan Weber, is interested in the ways that publics are created and sustained through interactions between two kinds of texts, what Rivers and Weber call the mundane, or the everyday, and the monumental, those latter texts animating larger cultural narratives. Drawing on the US civil rights era, Rivers and Weber argue that everyday writing sets the stage for the more-familiar monumental texts. As they explain, “publics emerge in the relationship across texts and not just in the relationship between a single text and its immediate audience” (194). For exemplar, Rivers and Weber turn to the kinds of mundane texts authored by Rosa Parks anticipating and preparing for her landmark refusal to move seats: “Parks eventually became a volunteer secretary for the [NAACP], performing the mundane institutional tasks necessary to maintain an organization—spreading the word door to door, calling members, sending letters, and compiling the stories of women who experienced discrimination on the buses” (198). Other mundane texts, authored by many others, also participated in this literacy event: “handwritten signs placed at bus stops encouraging African Americans not to ride the buses” (200), newsletters, women’s narratives, and letters. Rivers and Weber argue that these kinds of everyday texts contribute to, and in some ways make possible, monumental events and texts (e.g., “Letter from Birmingham Jail”) and that the mundane and the monumental participate in the same ecology creating the public. “While these mundane documents are not always as exciting or visible as the rhetorical fireworks of more obvious public displays,” Rivers and Weber point out, “supporting documents are no less necessary for the creation and re-creation of publics” (187). This framework for everyday writing puts such mundane texts in service to monumental writing, identifying them as contributing to a larger writing ecology that includes protest writing and institutional writing.

Scholars in Literacy Studies have also theorized everyday writing, chief among them the UK scholars David Barton and Mary Hamilton, who cast everyday writing in a three-part scheme: within the vocabulary of literacy, often in relation to reading, and specifically oriented to everyday life. For Barton and Hamilton, everyday life is the ground of everyday writing. The “notion of *literacy practices*,” they say, “offers a powerful way of conceptualizing the link between the activities of reading and writing and the social structures in which they are em-

South Atlantic Review

bedded and which they help shape” (43). Such practices are, in their terms, “vernacular.” In *Local Literacies: Reading and Writing in One Community*, Barton and Hamilton, much like Gerard A. Hauser and Erin Daina McClellan in “Vernacular Rhetoric and Social Movements,” identify the origins of such writing in “everyday life,” finding this writing operating outside of “the formal rules and procedures of dominant social institutions” (245). Barton and Hamilton list six areas of everyday life where “reading and writing are of central importance”: (1) organizing life; (2) personal communication; (3) private leisure; (4) documenting life; (5) sense-making; and (6) social participation (245). Likewise, in yet another model of everyday literacy oriented to purpose, Lauren Resnick proposes six different categories of literacy activity, several of which, like Rivers and Weber’s ecology, point to the permeability of boundaries, in Resnick’s case between self-sponsored everyday writing and sponsored institutional reading and writing:

the sacred (using print in religious practice and instruction); the useful (using print to mediate practical activities); the informational (using print to convey or acquire knowledge); the pleasurable (reading for the fun of it); the persuasive (using print to influence the behavior or beliefs of others); and the personal-familial (using letters to stay in touch with family and friends). (172)

Like Barton and Hamilton, Resnick approaches everyday writing in the context of reading and writing as interlocking activities. In relationship to everyday life, this version of everyday writing is unregulated, self-sponsored, and reading-inclusive.

Everyday Writing: Locations, Features, Perspectives, Definitions

Other scholarly inquiries seek to define everyday writing by identifying one or more of its features as categorical. For example, scholars in Rhetoric, Composition, and Literacy Studies often categorize writing according to the site of production; put differently, a taxonomy of location tends to define writing, at least implicitly, and thus to shape inquiry into it. For these fields, academic writing, both conceptually and geographically, dominates the taxonomy and provides a point of contrast and departure for other kinds of writing, for instance, workplace and civic writing. From this perspective, the salient feature of workplace writing and civic writing is their *not*-classroom site of production; using

this logic, everyday writing can also be defined as not-classroom writing. Such a site-based definition of everyday writing, however, seems at odds with what we know of composing practices, especially given research such as Kevin Roozen's documenting the role of everyday writing—journals written in childhood, for example—in shaping students' literacy trajectories, including their collegiate and career-related writing practices. Collectively, such research demonstrates how students' non-classroom writing contextualizes and informs their school writing and thus how permeable such composing locations are. In sum, a site-based taxonomy tends to make invisible the everyday texts composed and circulating in academic environments, among them handwritten notes students surreptitiously send each other in class and the classroom Facebook posts they compose during lectures.

Material characteristics of texts are also cited as means of defining everyday writing; such scholarship (e.g., Lillis) cites everyday writing's ordinary-ness, its mundane quality, its ephemerality, and its discardability. And again, this definition presents a conceptual challenge. Such writing, as Rivers and Weber illustrate in the case of Rosa Parks, can be both ordinary and extraordinary; sometimes institutionally oriented, it is very different from the stuff of everyday life traced by Barton and Hamilton. Likewise, everyday writing, in the case of a protest movement like Occupy Wall Street, can be ephemeral but not discardable. To cite another example, the missing person flyers in the wake of 9/11 are both mundane and extraordinary; as a featured element of museum exhibits, some of them have acquired another, more permanent, and almost canonical status. While such material features do characterize everyday writing, they do not define it.

What texts of everyday writing share, in terms of defining features, is threefold: they are purposeful; they are self-sponsored;² and borrowing from Jenny Rice, they are enactive. Gere's agrarian writers, like Powell's Appalachian farmers, demonstrate the purposefulness of everyday writing. Rosa Parks's writing, like that of Martyn Lyons's European World War I soldiers writing to loved ones at home, is self-sponsored. And such writing, as Rice explains, is enactive; as Kenneth Burke would also have it, such writing is itself a form of action, in this case, one informed by and constitutive of everyday life.

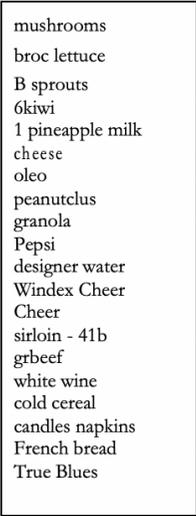
A Framework for Analysis: Text/Context/Intertext

In considering how scholars might learn more about everyday writing, Lauren Resnick raises a series of questions intended to guide exploration, one of which focuses the inquiry here. She asks: "What are the

South Atlantic Review

[everyday] texts themselves like, and how do their characteristics facilitate particular forms of literate practice?" (170). To assist in that exploration, and to inquire concurrently into the larger construct of everyday writing and into the nature of specific texts and their "facilitat[ion of] particular forms of literate practice," we draw on Stephen Witte's three-part schema of text/context/intertext.

Introducing and illustrating this schema, Witte argued that writing had not been fully theorized and that the schema of text/context/intertext, through its capacity to articulate characteristics common to writing, could aid in this endeavor. Moreover, in developing and applying this framework, Witte intended to contribute to a unified theory of writing. As examples, Witte cites instantiations of six specific genres ranging from a legal brief to three grocery lists, but it is a specific list, one composed by "Marilee," that provides the article's centerpiece (fig. 1). The text itself is a simple grocery list used to guide Marilee's shopping at a Lucky's grocery in California. As Witte points out, in composing the list, Marilee "was influenced by her knowledge of the grocery store context; and her grocery list itself constructed the context of shopping for her as it would later construct the various familial contexts of meal preparation, the meals themselves, and so forth" (285). In Witte's schema, context is "something akin to a writer's representation of the externally situated or projected 'self'" (289), and, as the seemingly simple grocery list suggests, the context is in fact plural, a first context represented in a writer's mind, and a second context represented in a text's construction. Texts can have both an imagined context and one that is performed, and those can often be in dialogue with another context, the context of production: for Marilee, the context of production was influenced, at least in part, by three sorts of



mushrooms
broc lettuce
B sprouts
6kiwi
1 pineapple milk
cheese
oleo
peanutcluc
granola
Pepsi
designer water
Windex Cheer
Cheer
sirloin - 41b
grbeef
white wine
cold cereal
candles napkins
French bread
True Blues

Fig. 1

Marilee's grocery list
(Witte 250)

'texts,' each woven from different sorts of semiotic materials: (a) those that had what might be called a material or hard-copy existence, (b) those that had what might be called a memorial existence, and (c) those that existed potentially as anticipated or projected events. (264)

Yancey, et al.

The grocery list is thus one of an ensemble of texts—other material texts; the composer’s memory of other texts; and texts that might be called into being—evoked and informed by the context of production.

The grocery list is also in relationship to what Witte calls “its various intertexts”: according to Witte, an intertext is “something akin to a writer’s representation of the situated ‘other,’ or the ‘social’” (289). In the case of Marilee’s grocery list, it includes but is not limited to the conversation that Marilee had with her husband about the planned meal:

the conversation Marilee and her husband had about the projected guest meal can be seen as subsumed by an intertext of semiotically constructed meanings between Marilee and her husband. As I have suggested, *that* intertext figured in the writing of the grocery list. Moreover, the intertextual stream of which that intertext was a part would be perpetuated and enlarged both by the shopping trip and by the guest meal itself. (285-6)

Moreover, across text, context, and intertext there is a reciprocity. Witte notes that the relation of text to context is reciprocal as is the relationship of text to intertext: “depicting those relations as reciprocal,” he says, “is necessary in order to accommodate the sorts of influences that we saw operating in the individual production and the use of Marilee’s grocery list” (285).

While Witte’s purpose in developing the text/context/intertext schema, as suggested above, was to develop a framework useful for understanding all writing, ours is a more modest aim: to define *everyday* writing as a self-sponsored, purposeful, enactive composing growing out of and in response to the private and public exigencies of everyday life. Such a schema can demonstrate that as much as texts differ—in context, in intertext, in materiality, in medium of delivery, and so on—they are all manifestations of the same phenomenon of everyday writing. To illustrate this point, we turn to three very different scenes of everyday writing, which collectively provide a wide range of different kinds of texts and the particularities of each. The first scene depicts a private notebook chronicling life; the second scene includes annotations operating at the intersection of the private and the public; and the third scene highlights self-organized public protest movements. In invoking such scenes of writing, we follow the lead of Anis Bawarshi, who characterizes scenes in relation to writing studies’ social turn:

South Atlantic Review

This social turn recognizes that there is more at work on the text than the writer's seemingly autonomous cognition; there are also various social forces that constitute the scene of production within which the writer's cognition as well as his or her text are situated and shaped. Within composition studies, this scene of writing is commonly (and, some would add, problematically) identified as a discourse community—the social and rhetorical environment within which cognitive habits, goals, assumptions, and values are shared by participants who employ common discourse strategies for communicating and practicing these cognitive habits, goals, assumptions, and values. (5)

We understand scenes, then, as *social and rhetorical environments* including what Bawarshi refers to as “the localized, textured conditions” situating writing.

At the same time, we understand scenes, much like genres, to be recurring; in that sense, White-Farnham's grocery writing and Marilee's grocery list participate in the same scene of writing. It's also worth noting our three reasons for selecting these scenes. First, the range of selections collectively represents several dimensions of everyday writing—including its private character and its public; its analogue production and its digital—and several kinds of writing—including writing responding to other texts and writing responding to experiences both personal and public. Second, these scenes of writing include some of the more common ones (e.g., family writing, community writing, and protest writing): similarities across scenes are thus articulated and a method of analysis is provided. Third, some of our selections illustrate aspects of everyday writing that have yet to be fully addressed in the literature. Scholarship on protest writing, for instance, has tended to focus on *either* the analogue (e.g., Rivers and Weber) or the digital (Bridgman), not on both, and little of it focuses on the digital; here, demonstrating the ways a scene can represent variation, we treat one protest relying on print and another defined by the digital as the same scene of writing. Likewise, while some scholars have considered the value of annotations for what they can teach us about writing (e.g., Sullivan), that writing has been school-based writing; here we take up annotations not as a scene of reading, as is also often the case, nor as a scene of *school* writing, but rather, simply, as a scene of writing.

Not least, in using this approach—that is, in focusing on a set of single instances to map each and a larger phenomenon—we follow the lead of scholars such as David Fleming (2001), who argues that in the

examination of a single case, we can come to a better understanding of the larger event or practice it represents. He notes that we

tell a general story by focusing on a particular one . . . a case study, which involves gathering and analyzing data about an individual example as a way of studying a broader phenomenon. It is done on the assumption that the example (the “case”) is in some way typical of the broader phenomenon. The case may be an individual, a city, an event, a society, or any other possible object of analysis. The advantage of the case-study method is that it allows more intensive analyses of specific empirical details. The disadvantage is that it is sometimes hard to use the results to generalize to other cases. (21)

Here, then, we analyze specific cases—in our case, scenes—that collectively represent the larger category of everyday writing. These texts are, as the Writing Studies threshold concepts project would have it, the objects of study, with their examination guided by a central question: What do we learn about the texts of everyday writing, both in its particularities and as a broader phenomenon, from examining, analyzing, and interpreting them, especially through the Witte framework?

In the next section, then, we examine three scenes of writing representing a continuum from private to public, with the first scene showing the writing of/as life; the second showing the re-writing of reading; and the third showing the writing of protest, all in order to demonstrate the ways a schema of text/context/intertext can elucidate specific texts and document them as instances of the category of everyday writing itself. More specifically, the first scene hosts a personal notebook recording life details spanning 15 years and functioning as a kind of pre-digital augmented memory; the second scene includes a dual set of annotations making other texts their own, one in a library book, another in a cookbook; and the third scene brings together two sets of protest texts as common instances, the first contributing to Occupy Wall Street, the second to the Greenham woman’s movement from 25 years earlier.

Scene One

That writing (inter)mediates activities, (re)structures relationships, and (re)constructs individual and group identities is not a new claim; scholars working in Rhetorical Genre Studies such as Carolyn Miller, Charles Bazerman, Anis Bawarshi, and Clay Spinuzzi have been gathering empirical evidence and developing and refining frameworks

South Atlantic Review

(e.g., genre sets, systems, repertoires, and ecologies) for attending to these functions of genre for over thirty years. Much of this scholarship, however, is located within a specific domain (e.g., academic, professional), focusing on the individual only insofar as s/he (re)produces genres within and across domains, sometimes introducing variation through this movement (e.g., Spinuzzi). One value of everyday writing as a category or phenomenon, then, is that it brings the individual into focus in a way these frameworks do not, providing an analytical lens for understanding the identity work that individuals engage in as they compose “humble genres” (Bazerman 298) with different recurring intertexts. Focusing on a notebook composed by an individual writer over a fifteen-year timespan, this scene depicts the notebook as an intertextual palimpsest used by its writer to facilitate her daily activities as part of the complex work of identity (re)construction.

The scene: a composition notebook kept by a white working-class woman with an eighth-grade education, Bessie Dominick Suber, the notebook poorly preserved and inscribed with dates ranging from December 19, 1964, to November 4, 1979. The faded black marble-print covers of the Royal brand composition notebook are worn, barely held together by the navy-blue binding peeling away from the spine. Scrawled across three lines in fading blue ink on the front cover are the words “Mrs. Henry Suber / 310 E. Florida St. / Clinton S.C.”; arithmetic problems, now faint, are haphazardly etched around the name. Written in the top right-hand corner of the first page is the date, December 19, 1964, with Bessie’s signature, written horizontally, filling most of the left margin. Six different mailing addresses for relatives in South Carolina, North Carolina, and Arkansas are penned in blue ink, visible despite the brighter blue and graphite markings crossing through four different out-of-date entries—traces of the recurring intertext of conversations carried out via written correspondence. The first twenty-four pages contain address book entries and marginalia, with intertextual traces evident in Bessie’s notes about to whom she has written and on what dates, as well as when she visited the beauty parlor and whether she paid for the visit. Starting on the twenty-fifth page and continuing through the seventy-fifth page are dated diary entries, though they do not occur chronologically—that is, the chronology differs within a single page—and these entries are often interspersed with other genre traces and fragments, among them notes about correspondence and records of spending. These words and markings, appearing variously and in different colors throughout the notebook, indicate revisiting and re-visioning; they mark the passage of time as they construct a second intertext, one constituted by routine activities. The notebook then has sixteen pages missing after the seventy-fourth page,

but it closes with three pages that include song lyrics, a grocery list, and arithmetic problems.

From the outset, this text whispers of the everyday. Analyzed through Witte's framework, Bessie's notebook reveals how everyday writing can serve one's private "everyday needs and interests," a category of literacy practices that Theresa Lillis differentiates from those "driven by institutional demands and regulations" (77). This documentation of activities functions as the record of intertexts enacted by Bessie's use of eight different genres: 168 dated diary entries; 146 address book entries for 95 different correspondents; 11 financial record entries; 11 correspondence log entries; 86 marginal notes; 8 arithmetic problems; 1 transcription of song lyrics; and 1 grocery list. As seen through Witte's framework, instantiations of these humble genres function as texts joined together through the context of the notebook and animated by different kinds of intertexts, including daily activities within different domains—such as home and church—and written correspondence with others. Bessie uses these ordinary, mundane texts, as Jennifer Sinor puts it in describing Anne's diary, to "writ[e] *in* the days rather than *of* the days" (123), in Bessie's case to organize her daily life as a southern housewife engaging in the domestic, familial, social, and religious tasks constituting her life.

To organize and document her life, engage in personal communication, and participate in social communities, Bessie used address book entries for her friends and family, some in distant locations such as her relatives in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, and friends in Lake Forest, Illinois. She crossed through entries, updating them if space permitted, or noting that the addressee had "died," indications of the dynamism of this intertext, which changed over the years as Bessie's life did. Interspersed with address book and diary entries is Bessie's log of her correspondence, detailing to whom she had written and when: "I wrote Sept-1-1965 Maggie, Mary, Lucille W., Lucille C." and "Nov-1-1979 Wrote Edd K. and family." She also recorded the dates on which she "got a permanent" and whether she had "payed." Often, Bessie used the notebook to help her complete other, sometimes unknown tasks, as can be seen in the arithmetic problems peppered throughout the notebook, texts that denote Bessie's "experience of *time in*" (Sinor 124), but whose purpose is inaccessible to the reader because, as Witte notes, the "metaphorical space between the contexts of production and use" is too great (287). Collectively, these genres reveal some of Bessie's everyday life and point to two recurring kinds of intertexts within the notebook, written correspondence and daily activities, including going to the beauty parlor, visiting friends and family in their homes or in the hospital, attending church, shopping for groceries, and preparing meals.

South Atlantic Review

These intertexts inform Bessie's diary entries as well, though her diary does not adhere to Western notions of "diary-keeping" that are often "reduced to the single model of self-centered and daily writing" (Mbodj-Pouye 127). Rather, Bessie's diary entries are "a process rather than a product" (Bunkers 211), an act of *engaging in* life rather than shaping it for an external audience. Although Bessie writes in these entries of the same kinds of measured, mundane tasks that have been documented in much scholarship on Western women's diary writing (e.g., Sinor), the daily activities that function as an intertext—such as doing housework, caring for her family, maintaining contact with her relatives and friends, entertaining company, and spending time with her children and grandchildren—are interspersed with other genres and point to the notebook "as a crucial site where the notion of a personal sphere is put into practice" (Mbodj-Pouye 142). As Mbodj-Pouye observes, "keeping a personal notebook appears to be a way of setting aside some personal information and thoughts, which is a way of objectifying a domain 'of one's own'" (141). Bessie used her notebook to carve out this personal domain, one linked to but separate from those she shared with others, to document activities and to render material the various intertexts situating her activities.

The notebook thus provided a context for facilitating activities and recording the multiple intertexts situating Bessie's existence within and across different domains, including home and church. For instance, an entry dated Sunday, March 1, 1970, reads:

March came in like a Lamb I went to Church
Pet, and Sarah came We went
to see Doris, and family Ace Jr. was sitting up.
Acey, and Henry, came to Church. They sat with me.

The content of this entry resembles others in that it is "private, but not intimate" (Mbodj-Pouye 141), a record of occurrences presented without self-scrutiny, and in Bessie's case, evoking the intertexts of her daily activities as she attends church; visits her daughter Doris and her son-in-law Ace Jr. who, despite having been ill, "was sitting up"; and supervises her grandsons "Acey and Henry," ensuring their proper behavior as they "sat with [her]" in church. Bessie frequently comments on the weather, noting whether it was warm or cool, rainy or icy; she lists the places she visited that day, which often include church, the beauty parlor, grocery store, and her relatives' homes; she writes about who accompanied her to these places—as we see above when she writes that Pet and Sarah, her cousins, went with her to visit Doris—and who came to see her at home; she records the illnesses and deaths of her loved ones, updating her

Yancey, et al.

address book as needed. A particularly striking diary entry memorializes the death of Bessie's husband using the kind of parataxis Sinor identifies in Annie's diary:

Henry passed a way in his sleep June -20 1965
was a large crowd at funeral at my home, all the food
and flowers. God bless everybody.

Here Bessie "simplif[ies] complicated realities and order[s] out the unstable" (Sinor 132), but she also leaves traces of this text's intertexts, including verbal remarks and conversations that took place "at funeral" and "at my home" and physical gestures of grief and comfort, sadness and love, presumably offered by members of the "large crowd" with gifts of "food and flowers."

Bessie's notebook contains writing that, in Barton and Hamilton's classification, organizes and documents life, a kind of everyday writing that, in Rice's sense of writing enacting, facilitates the *doing* and *tracking* of daily life and work, as well as social relationships across multiple domains and chronologies, both lifewide² and lifelong. Through the contexts of producing and using these texts, Bessie (re)constructs her identity, effectively (re)forming and representing it in a text that she can revisit and revise. The a-chronological diary entries, along with her use of different writing instruments on the same page, suggest that we understand this notebook as an intertextual palimpsest, created as Bessie revisited earlier pages, updating and crossing out, or ripping out, what was no longer useful. Bessie's everyday writing practices enabled her to document and complete her daily activities within different domains and to maintain her relationships as part of the complex work of identity (re)construction, a process made visible through the texts, contexts, and intertextual traces joining these humble genres into a living composition.

Scene Two

Everyday writing also demonstrates how composers' self-sponsored, mundane writings can function as a bridge between their private and (more) public lives. One example of such bridging occurs in the notes and marks that readers leave in books. Unofficial, even transgressive, these texts—the lines, symbols, comments, and other marks left by readers in the margins and endpapers of books—show, as examined through Witte's schema of text/context/intertext, how everyday writing responds to different exigencies. The annotations hosted in this

South Atlantic Review

specific scene have hidden between the pages of two different kinds of books, one in the stacks of a library and a second in a used bookstore, but the annotations from both stretch outwards. More specifically, analyzed through Witte's text/context/intertext framework, such annotations are used by writers to (1) make a text one's own, (2) illustrate tacit knowledges and connect old understandings to new ones, and (3) socialize a primarily private activity.

A first text in this scene: a two-page spread from a popular collection of essays—bell hooks's *Teaching to Transgress*—slightly yellowed, covered in the scrawled markings that serve as an informal record of its readers. A yellow highlight brightens the expression “engaged pedagogy,” a penned blue star marks “self-actualization,” and a faded sentence fills the margin in the bottom left corner. Both pages are covered in such marks—lines, stars, brackets, circles, boxes—left by one or more of the sixty-seven or so readers who checked out *Teaching to Transgress* from this university's library (Scheel).

A second text in this scene: a single page, lightly stained and a little dusty, of two recipes—one on the top of the page, one below it—in a spiral bound cookbook, the Junior Service League of Panama City's 1977 *Bay Leaves*. This particular page from *Bay Leaves* features two recipes, the first for “Fruit Cocktail Cake” and the second for “Feud Cake,” attributed respectively to “Mrs. Dimples Duncan & Mrs. Jim Riggan (Karen)” and “Seven Seas Restaurant” (247). A lengthy annotation between the recipes, handwritten in black, offers an alternative recipe for Feud Cake that begins in the middle of the page, in the white space between the two printed recipes, and then meanders down the righthand margin where it begins to encroach on the original “Feud Cake” recipe.

These two books demonstrate what this everyday writing, writing in books, is doing: in this scene, annotations-as-Witte's-texts respond to public, published texts, hooks's *Teaching to Transgress* and the Junior Service League of Panama City's *Bay Leaves*. While the composers, locations, purposes, and other features of these texts differ, they are alike in sharing proximity to and context provided by an officially published text and other annotations, themselves everyday texts. Collectively, the texts, contexts, and intertexts of the annotations left in these books speak to multiple respondents—writers conversing with books, with others who have read those books, and with future selves who will make use of those books.

By means of annotations, a composer takes ownership of a text: moreover, annotations contained within a book distinguish each individual copy, making the annotated book a unique text. Although hooks's words in each copy of *Teaching to Transgress* are the same, the marks and annotations composed by writing-readers make each in-

stance of the book a unique variant, each with its own context. Such a variant is called a “witness” (Tanselle 54). The witness of *Teaching to Transgress* discussed here is rich with annotations, with pages fourteen and fifteen alone containing forty-two individual marks—eighteen underlined words and sentences, eight encircled words, four asterisks and stars, two checks, five brackets, two triangles, and three alphabetic marginal notes, made by at least seven different writing implements, among them a yellow highlighter, a blue pen, a black pen, and at least four different pencil lead weights. Likewise, the front matter of *Bay Leaves* indicates that as of 1977, 30,000 copies had been printed, but this particular witness of *Bay Leaves* contains additional, personalized recipes located only in this book. Through everyday writing, writing-readers have made someone else’s text their own. By circling, highlighting, or underlining hooks’s words, the reading-writers of this witness of *Teaching to Transgress* have altered her words, making connections to them or redirecting attention from them. Similarly, the annotator of *Bay Leaves* has added a new recipe for Feud Cake, asserting his/her own expertise alongside that of the original authors’.

These annotations exist in, and are affected by, several contexts, including the genre of annotations and the composers’ rhetorical choices. The contexts for the marginal texts left in *Teaching to Transgress* and *Bay Leaves* include: (1) a generic context, formed by the composers’ understandings of the genres of books and cookbooks situating their annotations; and (2) a rhetorical context, formed by composers’ knowledge of annotation practices. H. L. Jackson, author of *Marginalia*, the authoritative volume addressing marginalia by the famous and less famous, explains the generic context of annotations. The most common marks left in books, she explains, consist of simple symbols—an asterisk, exclamation point, or line (*Marginalia* 13)—much like the ones in *Teaching to Transgress*. These notes and symbols “respond to an antecedent text; they express the separate (usually contrary) views of the marginalist, and thereby assert a separate personality; they make a critical appraisal of the original statement; and they must do it economically because of the physical constraints of margins” (Jackson “Writing” 219).

Such characteristics can be found in both of the annotated texts described above, but as Jackson points out, such annotation practices are seldom taught: slightly idiosyncratic, they are yet also identifiably generic (*Marginalia* 5). Put another way, this everyday writing practice illustrates the annotators’ tacit knowledge of the genre of marginalia and its potential rhetorical conventions and choices. In *Teaching to Transgress*, for example, the notes and symbols show annotators critically appraising hooks’s original statements; in underlining, circling,

South Atlantic Review

and highlighting hooks's text, the annotators emphasize their sense of her key ideas and their perception of the impact of her words. The annotators have also written back to hooks's ideas, sometimes to agree: "my thoughts are similar to hooks on this essay." More definitively, the *Bay Leaves* annotator asserts a separate personality in the margins of the cookbook: by providing an alternative recipe, s/he indicates where his/her tastes differ from those provided by official cookbook contributors. Still, the new recipe enacts the genre conventions of a recipe, following the same arrangement of information and order of ingredients as the published recipes.

In both books, there is a material dimension as well: as Jackson observes, the annotated comments and symbols must fit within the limited space provided, written comments crammed and slanted to fit within their margins, symbols packed in between lines, words, or recipes. The fact that both sets of annotations on very different kinds of books—one from the academic canon, *Teaching to Transgress*, another from the local domestic, *Bay Leaves*—share the common features of annotation identified by Jackson points to a generic context framing the act of annotating and to the annotators' rhetorical knowledge about the genre. Without prompts, annotators draw on context as they project themselves as annotating author.

As important, Witte's intertext highlights the social dimension of the often-private act of reading. Even if they are reading in solitude, the annotators are imagining and conversing with the author and the text's past and future readers, whether themselves or someone else. Annotations "speak" to the original author: these annotations respond to hooks with affirmations like "this is important" and "education is liberty" and to the Junior Service League of Panama City with emendations like new ingredients and baker's ratios. At the same time, the annotations also speak to other annotations and to traces of annotators. In *Teaching to Transgress*, for example, one annotator has underlined a sentence about Thich Nhat Hanh's meditative philosophy, a second annotator has placed an asterisk next to the underlined sentence, a third has bracketed that sentence, and a fourth has added a star. In a public text like a library book, annotators can expect that others will see their private-now-public-notes; the annotations become a choral writing marking what is important in different situations and for different people. In *Bay Leaves* the annotator converses with a future self, or future cook, by adding a new but related recipe to the officially distributed text; s/he imagines a kind of future and social life of his/her dish. The web of intertextual connections made through annotations enacts and exemplifies a kind of Bakhtinian dialogism: each annotation alters the initial text, adds to the conversation, and influences the later additions.

Witte's context/text/intertext framework highlights how this self-sponsored, mundane, and often overlooked type of writing exerts ownership over and individualizes a text, illustrates composers' tacit understandings of the contexts of genre conventions and rhetorical choices, and enacts intertextual connections between our private and public lives. The annotators who have left notes in these books use writing to externalize their thoughts as they write the book into unique intertextual networks. Each instance of underlining, circling, asterisking, or emending signifies a reading-writer taking ownership of the text, turning it into a specific witness. This scene also shows how everyday writing can help us see seemingly solitary, material acts like reading as more intertextual and thus social acts: linking the utterance of the official text to the utterance of the unique witness to the utterances of the other texts being brought into dialog with them.

Scene Three

Everyday writing also appears integral to the ongoing self-organization of publics. Certainly, the advent of social media—and likewise the self-sponsored, purposeful writing occurring in such spaces—has placed into spotlight the power of everyday writing in facilitating civic and public life. *TIME*, in anointing “The Protester” the 2011 Person of the Year, cites technological mediation as critical to movements such as the Arab Spring, the Mexican Indignados Movement, and the Occupy movement. In these cases, the technologies of writing prompted new means of access and spread, but the desire to connect—to bring together hearts, minds, bodies—is an old tradition. Through Witte's framework, the everyday writing facilitating the 2012 Occupy Wall Street (OWS) movement and the 1980s Greenham women's protests, much like the everyday writing surrounding Rosa Parks's refusal to move, appears central to the protestors' activities and goals. Moreover, while time, space, and technology separate the OWS movement and the Greenham resistance, both protests called on everyday writing to construct and maintain the social imaginary facilitating the networked, civic actions of their public protests.

One site in a protest scene: November 15, 2011, New York City's Zuccotti Park, two months into the park's occupation by Occupy Wall Street (OWS) protesters, where after two months tensions between the protestors and the city came to a boiling point. At 1 a.m. on November 15, police raided Zuccotti Park, removing many of the dwellers' fixtures: tents, booths, personal belongings. A review of tweets geo-tagged within a fifty-mile radius of New York City paints a picture of how

South Atlantic Review

the raid unfolded, with some of the tweets focusing attention on one aspect of the raid, the treatment of books housed in a makeshift library at the protest site:

I just realized that the hundreds of books in the #OWS library were thrown in a garbage truck and crushed. Now I'm mad (Dylan A. Marcheschi, @thomasmonopoly, 7:15 a.m.)

RT @norock #NYPD destroyed the donated library at #ows I don't think you need a metaphor, but crushing 5000 books might be one #BARBARIANS (BROOKE CERDA GUZMAN @TRANSLATINAS_NY, 8:21 a.m.)

Reports that police beat protestors, trashed library, blocked media vehicles, and closed airspace to news helicopters. Hypocrisy. #ows (Michaele Taylor, @michaele, 9:37 a.m.)

Protesters wares incl all their books tossed into dumpsters by NYPD during raid on #OWS" (Sam Thielman, @samthielman, 11:20am)

These four tweets conjure and circulate an image of books in dumpsters, each user threading tweets with the #OWS hashtag. As a particular kind of everyday text—digitally mediated, rapidly circulating, and immediately accessible on mobile devices and desktops—these tweets facilitate specific types of literate activity (Resnick). A salient defining feature of Witte's notion of context for the analysis of the OWS tweets is its different loci: large-scale and also local (including even the individual person), the latter of which represents what Witte refers to as "non-hereditary," or reality contingent on the immediate material. In addition, texts pointing to other texts exemplify Witte's notion of intertextuality. This notion of intertextuality, appearing in texts like the tweets above, points to everyday writing's particular capacity for facilitating and constituting social imaginaries (Taylor) of the kind that Michael Warner sees as integral to the constitution of publics (Hayes).

Philosophers Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri describe OWS as a movement experimenting with a new model of democracy: a movement utilizing a "multitude of forms," such as the writing in different social networking platforms, and characterized by "participatory decision-making structures" that, according to the authors, tend toward a more horizontal, less hierarchical, flatter, "real democracy" (np). By design, and unlike the monumental/everyday relationship plotted by Rivers and Weber, the OWS protesters did not organize around impor-

tant texts or leaders; rather, the movement was sustained throughout by ongoing circulation of small, everyday acts of writing via the protesters' social media across many platforms (e.g., Tumblr, Reddit, and Facebook), most notably Twitter. In particular, the presumed leaderlessness of OWS highlights the movement's ability to construct, define, organize, and maintain its (imagined) community of OWS protesters.

Often overlooked as too ordinary for study, the mundane, everyday writing practices of a social movement are in fact integral to the consent, solidarity, and maintenance of movements like OWS; however, as Hauser and McClellan note, social movements are often understood within neo-Aristotelian models of discourse focusing on the role of leaders and privileging "the rhetorical norms of civility and decorum appropriate to the podium" (27). Hauser and McClellan also observe, however, that the values of a national or global social movement can be upheld by protesters engaging in local, immediate contexts. In OWS, participation/enactment at the local scale is apparent, demonstrated, for instance, in the tweets above responding to the exigence that is localized to Zuccotti Park, NYC. But, as explained below, such everyday writing also functions in the context of a social imaginary wherein some of the protesters' everyday texts emerging through local exigencies, including images and symbols, are scaled not so much vertically but rather networked *horizontally* to other local, satellite OWS campaigns across the country.

Everyday writing's capacity to move between contexts both local and large might best be understood through the concept of "social imaginary," an idea Warner conceptualizes as the imagined bond of commonality created by strangers participating within a public. For Warner, the imagined bond among strangers is integral to the cohesion of an otherwise leaderless movement. Charles Taylor further outlines the concept of social imaginary in noting that it involves construction of "the ways in which [people] imagine their social existence, how they fit together with others, how things go on between them and their fellows, the expectations which are normally met, and the deeper normative notions and images which underlie these expectations" (106). He provides three tenets to his concept, which he contrasts with "social theory":

[1] I speak of *imaginary* because I'm talking about the way ordinary people "imagine" their social surroundings, and this is often not expressed in theoretical terms, it is carried in images, stories, legends, etc. But it is also the case that [2] theory is often the possession of a small minority, whereas what is interesting in the social imaginary is that it is shared by large

South Atlantic Review

groups of people, if not the whole society. Which leads to a third difference: [3] the social imaginary is that common understanding which makes possible common practices, and a widely shared sense of legitimacy. (106)

The images of books in dumpsters, manifested in New York City OWS protesters' everyday writing of Twitter posts, demonstrates how such writing serves the social imaginary of the movement on the whole despite emerging from the immediate, local exigence of the Zuccotti Park raid. Evoking a specific image of books in dumpsters, this everyday writing occurs within the local, material context, Zuccotti Park and subsequent raid; in addition, it carries with it a referential meaning with symbolic and cultural capital for the larger context of OWS protesters across the country. This (verbal) image of books provides protestors across the country a way to develop an imagined, shared context, one created in and through writing, and thus to orient themselves toward shared behaviors and practices. For example, one common practice among protesters was a prototypical, non-location-specific response to police. The composer of the second (re)tweet above—"#NYPD destroyed the donated library at #ows I don't think you need a metaphor, but crushing 5000 books might be one #BARBARIANS"—recognizes that this image of books in dumpsters at Zuccotti Park is participating within a larger, national narrative of police aggression that has been building for two months. The verbal image emblemizes that narrative, even though no user seems to have circulated an actual visual of books in dumpsters. In other words, this particular user recognizes the "meaning potential" (Halliday qtd. in Witte 253) of the verbal image functioning intertextually: within the network of like-images, both verbal and visual, describing police behavior. The verbal image functions to solidify, distill, and define a value that members of OWS can rally around: its technical accuracy is less important than the theme it sounds as it contributes to a social imaginary. As such, the image becomes a repeated trope speaking to a protester's everyday participation via writing: it points to an intertextual network of similar images, operating across many everyday texts and many everyday writers-as-protesters. The circulation of everyday writing among the OWS participants is integral to the common practices of the movement because those everyday pieces of writing construct common understandings of the values of the movement. Here, everyday writing constitutes and maintains the social imaginary among strangers through the dynamic, ongoing invocation and construction of intertextuality.

Another site of a protest scene: the Greenham women's protest. A protest movement's reliance upon everyday writing is not unique to

OWS or to digital technologies. This site, described by Margaretta Jolly, was created by protesters in the 1980s-era Cold War, the Greenham women, who opposed the United Kingdom's escalation of nuclear arms; this long-running event also participates in the scene of everyday protest writing. In this instance, the mediation of the movement occurs via a complex, *non*-digital web of written interactions. For the Greenham women, the web of associations and affiliations was constructed through analogue letter-writing networks producing an "imagined community" among protesters displaced from the central hub of the Greenham Common Royal Airforce Base, where a group of women and men camped out in protest. In this case, the concept of "web," as opposed to its digital referent, was so integral to the values of movement that an *image* of a web became a repeated motif throughout much of the campaign materials, including postcards, leaflets, and newsletters. "The web," as Jolly writes, "emblemized an aspiration to unify ends and means. It was a declaration of values that even women who had never met, or who could never come to Greenham, could share" (200). Such an imagined community, facilitated in part by the circulation of images of the web, functions much like the social imaginary facilitated by the verbal image of books-in-dumpster for OWS. The image of the web cited and fed into the larger context of the movement, one networking multiple protest sites and contexts, but it emerged and lived in the local. While the image of webs became a widely circulated motif for the values of the movement, emphasizing collective action, it was adapted and recreated in other contexts. For instance, the motif of the web began to emerge during the UK's Miner's Strike ("Your Greenham"). In this way, the web image became a point of convergence, an intertextual marker connecting local contexts participating globally with the Greenham Women and/or other adjacent protests such as the Miner's Strike. And, further, the intertextual network of repeated tropes and images operated at the larger locus of values, the global Greenham protests.

For the writers of Greenham and OWS, mundane writing functioned to bring together strangers who shared common interests through the creation of multiple threads of intertextuality—via images, genres, platforms, and so on. Analyzing such texts through Witte's framework demonstrates the ways such writing functions in public scenes by observing its scales of context, large and local, as well as such writing's interrelation and intertextuality. Explored through Witte's framework, everyday writing can provide a means to articulate, sustain, and organize values from the rank-and-file at the locus of their immediate, local situation. And more, everyday writing enacts participation in these movements. Through their composing and the horizontal circula-

South Atlantic Review

tion of everyday writing between and among multiple local contexts, strangers oriented themselves to one another and developed a movement, one greater than the sum of its parts, based on common practices and values. Moreover, as these examples show, everyday writing is not defined by a particular medium, particular site, or kind of text; rather, protesters compose everyday writing in a variety of media—both digital and non-digital—to facilitate a networked, imagined community.

Conclusion

In these three very different scenes, everyday writing in its particularities comes into view, and at the same time, analyzed through Witte's schema of text, context, and intertext, these three scenes illustrate the same phenomenon, everyday writing. Bessie's everyday writing, creating a palimpsest of intertexts of lifelong and lifewide writing, recorded her written conversations, her daily activities, the connections she made, and the losses she endured. The everyday writing of different annotators demonstrates how solitary writing becomes communal and intertextual, linked to other contexts and to other readers as well as to the future. Intertexts and contexts define the everyday writing of OWS and the Greenham women as well, with digital networking the means of communication and circulation for the former group and print networking the circulation for the latter. As the analysis of these scenes demonstrates, everyday writing includes texts composed on various sites and in multiple media. Of course, we could have analyzed these scenes and their texts using the more familiar lenses: Bessie's notebook demonstrates Barton and Hamilton's organizing of life, much as the witness of hooks's *Teaching to Transgress* exemplifies the extracurriculum, and the protest of Occupy Wall Street provides us with a case of vernacular rhetoric. Viewed through the Witte schema, however, these texts of everyday writing, while maintaining their distinctiveness, take on a common cast: each is an example of the same phenomenon of everyday writing. In the scenes presented here, such texts are purposeful, self-sponsored, and enactive: a life-notebook writer crossing domains of activity as she records daily events and a life-memory; writers composing annotations to make various kinds of meaning; OWS participants engaging in collective action. The intertexts for such texts function similarly: socially present, they are lifewide and oriented to the future.

Everyday writing constitutes, then, a category of writing, one that is, in Linda Adler-Kassner and Elizabeth Wardle's terms, both a practice and, as presented here, an object of study. Writing itself is ubiquitous

and pervasive, as Charles Bazerman points out; its study is thus important but also difficult, especially given its dispersion across fields. Likewise, everyday writing, which as variously understood—for example, as extracurriculum, as vernacular rhetoric, and as partner in monumental writing—has proven difficult to recognize and to construct as a category of its own. Scholarly approaches to it are not well connected: relationships between vernacular rhetoric and the extracurriculum, both theorizing everyday writing if differently, go unexplored. In sum, given the dispersion of scholarship on everyday writing, in *Rhetoric and Composition* as well as in other fields such as literature and history, a rich field of activity has failed to be well organized, fully explored, or in some cases even recognized as a legitimate kind of writing or object worth studying. The results are twofold. First, there is the loss of articulated and related scholarship on everyday writing itself: a field with multiple scenes has yet to cohere. Second, writing itself more broadly, as a practice and an object of study, cannot be fully and accurately represented until and unless it includes everyday writing, which is perhaps our most common kind of writing, the writing that consistently mediates life, from day to day.

Thus, while scholarship in everyday writing is dispersed, the texts themselves, located in scenes and as demonstrated by the text/context/intertext schema, constitute a phenomenon, one that has much to teach us. Everyday writing is the practice from which other writing emerges, a practice supporting the identity work of individuals like Bessie, the tracings and annotations of various kinds of readers, and the organizational activities of protest movements, some constituted by letter, others by tweet. Adding such texts to our scholarly agenda and our definition of writing will thus enable us to speak more authoritatively—inside the academy and without—about writing as well as to establish new relationships among the various and multiple kinds of texts constituting writing.

Notes

1. Much (if not most) of everyday writing occurs at the intersection of sponsorship and self-sponsorship, as Resnick argues and several of our examples demonstrate.
2. We borrow the term *lifewide* from work in electronic portfolios seeking to include all aspects of a student's life; the term is particularly sensitive to the multiple, often less valued spaces of production. See Cambridge.

South Atlantic Review

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Yancey, et al.

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Yancey, et al.

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