

Mississauga Writers Group

MWG Writes on Q

Quarterly e-zine



Winter 2016

MWG Writes on Q

Mississauga Writers Group Quarterly e-zine

It's getting chilly out there, so come on in, curl into your favourite chair and enter the warm and welcoming world of "MWG Writes on Q"!

The highlight of the past quarter was of course "Culture Days", the annual national event celebrating art and artists, to which MWG was invited for the third consecutive year. Supported by the Mississauga Central Library, this year's event was a much more elaborate affair, as group members had simultaneous events going on – a literary workshop and readings in the Boardroom, books sales in the Atrium, and specialty Information Desks covering topics pertaining to the world of printing and publishing. The day also featured presentations by representatives of Friends of the Library and Old Britannia Schoolhouse.

MWG members are also hosting some fun writing events, including the impromptu "Write On The Spot Mississauga", and the interactive "Shut Up and Write". Let us know if you wish to be a part of these events.

This issue features some great prose and poetry. We hope you enjoy this issue, and we look forward to your comments / suggestions. Also, stay tuned for a special coverage of MWG's Book Launch event!

The Staff @ MWG Writes on Q

Editor: Samna Ghani

Assistant Editor: Rashmi Pluscec

Copy Editor: Elizabeth Banfalvi

IN THIS ISSUE:

Cross-Words

Daniela Oana

Review: One With You

Samna Ghani

We will Remember

O. Stephen Peart

A Final Spit and Polish

*Sheila van den Heuvel-
Collins*

Still Standing

Susan Ksiezopolski

May I live what I have
learned

John Fraresso

Normal – What is it?

Elizabeth Banfalvi

Poetry

Cross-Words

By Daniela Oana

The words crossing my mind
Weave into one another
Like a knitted blanket
And they also create a pattern
As the yarn in a quilt

The shapes in my quilt
Stack nicely in place
Creating symmetrical sides
Just like kaleidoscopes
As the colours yell out

The hues consistently match
Bleeding into one another
Like the tones in rainbows
And they also create an arc
As an island's horizon

As my words start to unravel
And my quilt begins to tear
With all colours fading out,
The submerged half of the island
Holds the clues to my cross-words.



~ About the Author ~

From Romania to Quebec and finally to Ontario, Daniela Oana's poetry romanticises sorrow, tragedy and death, showing a particular delight in traditional poetry. Through poetry readings and poetry courses, contemporary poems begin to emerge in her more recent work.

Daniela studied Journalism-Print and hopes to soon publish her own poetry book.

Website:
www.danielaoana1.wix.com/poet

Twitter:
[@DanielaOanaPoet](https://twitter.com/DanielaOanaPoet)

Book Review

One With You by Sylvia Day *A Mix of Fifty Shades and In Death*

By Samna Ghani

Sylvia Day fans finally got their wish after a long and agonizing wait for One With You, Book 5 of the Crossfire series. Personally, I don't see what the fuss is all about. This series seems like a complete rip-off of Fifty Shades of Grey and is very very similar to J.D. Robb's In Death series. I mean, let's analyze:

Let me start by saying that I am NO FAN of E.L. James and her writing skills (or lack of for that matter) but in the name of fairness, I must say that ripping off somebody's ideas is not cool!

Christian Grey is a drop-dead gorgeous, successful and disgustingly rich gift of hot, maleness to womankind.

Gideon Cross is a drop-dead gorgeous, successful and disgustingly rich gift of hot, maleness to womankind.

Christian Grey is fifty shades messed up because of a tormented childhood and was raised by adopted parents.

Gideon Cross is fifty shades messed up because of a tormented childhood and was raised by adopted parents.

Christian Grey has a beautiful, breathtaking home with all luxuries known to mankind (walk-in closet with ACTUAL clothes included).

Gideon Cross has a beautiful, breathtaking home with all luxuries known to mankind (walk-in closet with ACTUAL clothes included).



~ About the Author ~

Samna Ghani is a creative writer and editor. She works as the Regional Editor at HealthManagement.org and is a published author with Books To Go Now and Laurus Publishing.

She is the Co-Founder of the Mississauga Writers Group, Canada. Samna actively contributes blogs and articles to several online platforms.

She is an avid reader and loves classic novels and regency romances. Her favorite authors are Jane Austen, Georgette Heyer and P.G. Wodehouse.

Christian Grey has a playroom.

Gideon Cross has a play pad.

Christian Grey is a dominant.

Gideon Cross is a dominant.

Christian Grey has a thing of making out in elevators (among other places).

Gideon Cross has a thing of making out in elevators (among other places) ... maybe I mixed this up... both series are so similar, I am just not sure anymore.

Christian Grey is “to die for” in a three piece suit.

Gideon Cross is “to die for” in a three piece suit.

Christian Grey has a string of weird ex-girlfriends (or whatever you want to call them).

Gideon Cross has a string of weird ex-girlfriends (or whatever you want to call them).

Anastasia Steele uses Ah and Holy cow a lot.

Eva Tramell uses Oh God and Ah Gideon a lot.

In both cases, the occasion to use such Ahs and Ooohs should be obvious to people who are thinking of reading this series.

Anastasia Steele is a brunette.

Eva Tramell is a brunette (or maybe I just assumed that since I was no longer sure which book I was reading!)

Anastasia Steele’s mom is on to her 3rd or 4th marriage.

Eva Tramell’s mom is on her 3rd or 4th marriage.

Need I go on? Seriously. All the playroom scenes in FSOG were at least a bit more creative than putting the woman on the couch and doing it as was Gideon Cross’s modus operandi in most of the sex scenes, not to mention going down on her every single time. Creative much?

Oh and did I forget? Christian Grey and Gideon Cross. First name, last name – C and last name, first name G. Seriously???

The only thing I would say is that Sylvia Day’s writing skills are clearly much better than E.L. James’ but really, reading two erotic romance series that are so similar to each other is difficult to digest. It’s like replacing names, changing suits and just using better grammar and ta daaaaaa you have a best-seller! Even more frustrating is that the Crossfire Series is also so similar to J.D. Robb’s In Death series.

No offense to anyone who likes the Crossfire series. To each his own but my core objection is the lack of originality. So not cool!

Poetry

We will Remember

By O. Stephen Peart

You never asked what your journey's end
You never fought the thoughts within
But stood brave the freedoms will
And set the stage so we could live.

Facing tyranny was a priceless sacrifice
One that we will remember for it was never nice
So the tribute of those who gave their lives
Forever marked as a path lived twice.

On our walls,
In our halls,
Spoken before the call.

Written in our pages,
Seen on the skin of our faces,
Let alone imprinted in our minds.

If we could see
The dream that could be,
The memories unfold.

The fight you fought,
The conviction you taught,
Left to be passed on through the ages.



~ About the Author ~

O. Stephen Peart is a writer and the author of Released Expressions - the journey begins.

It is Stephen's belief that there are within each of us, expressions which are yet to be released.

The Author challenges the reader to walk alongside him in this, his poetic journey.

writer.author.listener.
releasedexpressions.com

**Let not it be,
Just a journey to see,
But a memory not forsaken.**

**The sacrifice,
The mystery of your lives
The memories of missing faces.**

**For we will remember,
How canst we not endeavour,**

We will, Remember.

A Final Spit and Polish: Proofreading 101

By Sheila van den Heuvel-Collins

Proofreading is not just a matter of aesthetics: as we have all learned from the internet, it can contribute, particularly in the case of punctuation, to the saving of lives.



It's also good for mental health. If you're a grammar cop, you appreciate the orderliness of a proofread piece and you feel calm, peaceful; if you're the writer, you'll appreciate not having the grammar cops going ballistic on you.

It's also good for artistic health: agents, editors and readers will pay attention to your immaculate writing. No one is going to think highly of a piece that begins with a spelling error and a misused semi-colon, and switches verb tenses every couple of paragraphs. While we're all accustomed to rejection, there's no need to deliberately invite it.

But what if proofreading isn't your thing? There are a few ways to wrap your mind around it.

1. Teach yourself the basics. It won't hurt to learn a few things.
 - a. Donate rice and learn grammar: www.freerice.com/#/english-grammar
 - b. Win a virtual cow when you get the answers wrong: <http://chompchomp.com/>
 - c. Read something new every day: <https://www.grammarly.com/handbook/>



~ About the Author ~

Sheila van den Heuvel-Collins is the author of two self-published collections of short fiction: *To Be Human Again*, and *Holland and Jaime*. *To Be Human Again* was released October 2016.

She lives in Mississauga.

d. Write a grammar textbook. The act of writing creates clear neural pathways in the brain (thus improving your memory), and explaining something so someone else can understand also helps you understand it. If your textbook ends up being particularly good, you can publish it!

2. Take your word processor's suggestions with a grain of salt. It's merely a computer programme. You may as well set it to check everything, but you can click "ignore" if the squiggly underline is obviously not reading your work properly.

3. Grammarly has a free plugin for several programmes, including Word, Chrome and Outlook. (If you find that Grammarly really works for you, you can invest in the full proofreading programme. The programme isn't designed for creative writing, though.) Again, it's just a computer programme, so it also makes mistakes.

4. Read your piece out loud to yourself. Read slowly, so you're sure to pronounce the word you've written rather than what should be there.

5. Get other people to proofread your work. Even if you're good at proofreading, it's difficult to find mistakes in your own work. Trading off proofreading with other writers kills the proverbial two birds: your work looks better, and you learn more by proofreading other people's work.

6. Hire an editor. If you go to www.editors.ca, you can search for a Canadian editor who supports your genre of writing. Many of them have hourly rates, so you can pay them for just one or two hours; expect to pay between \$30 and \$50 per hour. This step is highly recommended for anyone in the final step of self-publishing or sending something out to a publishing company or agent.

Is your work all shiny-clean? Excellent. Now make sure your work doesn't go to waste: expose your art to the world!

Culture Days 2016



**Back Row L-R: Marijana, Daniela, Sofia, Kyle, Susan, (a visitor), Elizabeth, Jesse.
Front Row (kneeling): Hans.**

Culture Days 2016



L-R: (2 visitors), Clarinda, Sofia, Elizabeth.



Susan, Elizabeth.

Poetry

Still Standing

By Susan Ksiezopolski

I don't want to wallow
In the hollow of pain
Because it can swallow
Me and there is nothing to gain

I am not escaping to feel
I am staying present to what is real
Looking inside to get a grip on the gripe
That is causing the strife
Tackling it to the ground
So I can rebound
Out of pain out of sorrow
Even if I have to beg and borrow
The strength it takes to rise
And stand as the pain dies
Buried in my resolution
This is not delusion
It is determination to endure
Born out of necessity to self-cure

Standing still inside pain
Pain inside still standing
On the floor
Grounded and ready to soar



~ About the Author ~

After working for 32 years in public sector business transformation, Susan Ksiezopolski is now retired and her own change agent.

Her work has been featured in magazines, poetry related websites and in various anthologies.

Susan has a passion for inspiring others to write and to tap into their full potential.

Visit her website
www.mywordsnow.com
for information on her upcoming workshops.

Author of *My Words*, and
Writing For Change.

"May I live what I have learned"

By John Fraresso

These words became my mission statement for my life several years ago.

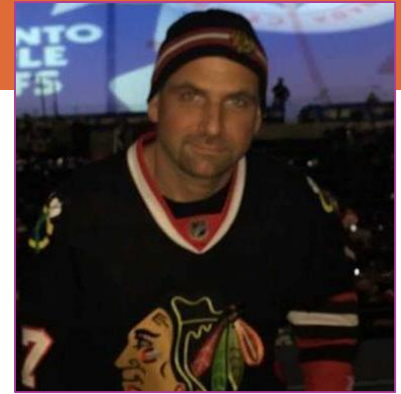
Life presents us with many experiences, people, and various things that form who we are as people. Who we are as people can be quite different from Who We Really Are (that is, the deeper part of ourselves, the Inner or Higher Self that is our divine perfection).

Life's lessons can be used for good or bad. In particular, struggles – those experiences we define as "bad" – can either cause us to regress on our journey or catapult us into greater awakening and help us to grow. All experiences either strengthen our ego or help us to align with our Highest Self. The decision regarding what these experiences serve – our ego or Highest Self – is entirely ours.

Life has blessed me with many incredible lessons, experiences, and people. As someone who has rigorously pursued learning what our highest truths are as humans – as one example, whether there is a "God", whether things just developed due to a natural course of events, or whether God and Evolution are even incompatible in the first place – I have been guided to many different teachers: spiritual masters in our collective history, writers, and giants of wisdom I have known personally.

Interested in all discussions about what it means to live a good life (a life of true wealth, not the Wealthy Barber type), I have never discounted the "negative" life experiences, nor the "negative" people who have come into my life and the immeasurable positive impact they have on my life learning journey.

May I live what I have learned.



~ About the Author ~

John Fraresso's love affair with writing started at an early age.

Since then, he has written hundreds of poems, has had several letters to editors published in newspapers, essays, and has completed his first book.

I repeat these words several times a week to myself, hoping that I will take all of the lessons I have learned and put them to good use: to serve my Highest Self, so that I may best serve my sisters and brothers on this earth. Recognizing what is good and living it, and taking the lessons from the "bad" so that I know what's best left behind.

I ask myself often, though: How do we really know what is "good" and what is "bad"? Sometimes the answer to this is obvious, but often it is not. Sometimes even when we have great conviction that we are listening to that higher truth, the voice of doubt (and possibly reason) asks us to question what we are hearing.

Of course, in many instances we simply don't and may never know. I love what A Course in Miracles says about our thoughts:

"The 'good' ones are but shadows of what lies beyond, and shadows make sight difficult. The 'bad' ones are blocks to sight, and make seeing impossible."

I truly believe there is a lot more to us than what we experience here, especially in our highly complex, fast paced, material world. The lessons are abundant; we simply need to practice awareness and be ever vigilant of the lessons that our experience in time and space provide.

May I live what I have learned.

Normal – What is it?

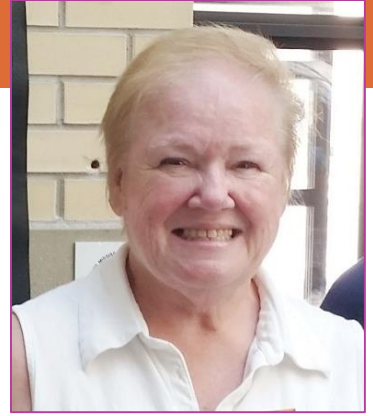
By Elizabeth Banfalvi

Normal can be anything – how we live our lives; how we feel; what we do every day; what we read, eat, watch or listen to; how we see our lives progressing. We go to the same places; interact with the same people; and do the same things. It is when doing something new seems “out-of-ordinary” or “out-of-your-comfort zone”. We eat, sleep, converse, interact, watch, and are active in the same way all the time.

So is this it? What happens when things happen out of the ordinary? We are forced out of our normal. Why is the same alright with us? It is an ordinary we feel safe in. It is easier to comprehend the normal. It is less work. But is it?

So many people I know have a very tense jaw and have to wear a mouth guard every night. This is their normal. They have headaches and stiff shoulders from their jaw being so tight. It is difficult for them to bend forward. So is their normal irreversible? I talk to them about loosening their jaw and rubbing the ear area to relax it. Practice pushing the tip of their tongue to the roof of their mouth which releases their jaw. A tense jaw is normal for them and their mind and brain has accommodated their tension. Now they have to train themselves to relax their jaw. Takes time but it will slowly release and tensing their jaw didn't happen overnight.

So will they change their normal? It is their choice. What happens when things happen out of the ordinary? We are forced out of our normal. How do we handle it? Can we easily change and accommodate? Do we find it difficult or unmanageable? How does change feel? Do we accept or reject? What is our normal? How easily do we leave normal behind?



~ About the Author ~

Elizabeth is a Certified Reflexologist.

She is the author of the Meditation book series, and conducts workshops on stress & meditation.

Normal should be reactive. If it isn't then you are using a lot of energy fighting the inevitable. Can you change your normal? Yes and you probably do it all the time without knowing it. We accommodate changes more often than we realize or we stagnate. Every moment presents challenges either in our personal lives or the outer world. Our circle is larger than we think.

So how do we change our normal to go beyond what we have?

- 1. Physical – get a new exercise routine, relax more, stretch and release, journal, breathe deeper.**
- 2. Mental – change your mind and thoughts: use mantras: positive words: promote positive or inspirational sayings; be part of positive workshops, movies, television programs, books, and readings.**
- 3. Emotions – check your reactions; find out why you react, relax your emotional level; emotions are based on memories – let go; do volunteer work helping others.**
- 4. Spiritual – Discover your spiritual belief systems; embrace a greater feeling of being connected.**

Normal is just what we have today and what we are used to. Tomorrow is what you can change and make the most of. So find out what is beyond normal! Enjoy the journey.

Event Alert

Shut Up and Write, Toronto and GTA



Get that writing *done*.

We meet weekly at a café. We each have something we need to write. We write for 25 mins at a time, with social breaks in between.

Find us on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/526905317510039/>

Contact Us

WE ARE THE MISSISSAUGA WRITERS GROUP

We are a group of writers who have established this forum to share our experiences and pursue our dreams through creativity, knowledge and mutual respect. We want to learn from our strengths and talents and have enjoyable and stimulating conversations that only writers can relate to!

We would love to have writers from our community join us. All aspiring and established writers are most welcome. We believe we all have something special inside us. Come explore your talent with the Mississauga Writers Group!

Website - mississaugawritersgroup.com

Email - info@mississaugawritersgroup.com



Samna Ghani

Regional Editor Health Management.org. Author with *Books to Go Now* and *Laurus Publishing*.



Rashmi Pluscec

Author of *Chaos*, *Desolate World*, and *in 15 words*. Poet on anthologies *Threads*, *Passages*, and *Ballads*.



Elizabeth Banfalvi

Certified Reflexologist. Author of *Meditation* book series. Conducts workshops on stress & meditation.