

Jeanine Gherardi

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College Writing 1~ Monday 2:20 pm

Literacy Narrative

As I reflected back on my literacy history, I came to the conclusion that I had not liked reading or writing since I was a child. I believed that reading was equivalent to studying and that it lacked any enjoyable benefits to offer me, and writing was synonymous with homework, which I was not good at. There is no childhood memory of any relatives reading to me, or some favorite story that would eventually lead me to the love of reading. For instance, if someone ever suggested that I read a book to pass the time I would vehemently object, explaining that I didn't find reading to be entertaining. My evaluation seemed reasonable to me since I was told by teachers that my ability to comprehend what I was reading "NEEDS IMPROVEMENT", and my grades throughout high school continued to confirm that throughout my youth and into my adolescence.

When I continued combing through the years of my literacy history there were not many occasions that I chose a book that was not academically enforced on me but I remembered one occasion. For my eleventh birthday, my aunt Donna brought me to a New York City store to choose a gift, and I surprisingly decided on a book. I still can not recall why I chose a book but what came to mind was that it was a mystery story that enabled you to choose the decisions for the characters at the end of each chapter. There was something exciting about choosing the

outcome each time and since it was the antithesis of what I read at school, I found it was entertaining. Easy reading was primarily the type of reading I found to be enjoyable, and what I chose as a youth, and throughout my young adult years.

I went to Cosmetology School and Makeup Training programs, they had little to no writing and reading so I was able to excel and learn in that type of school as a result. The majority of my learning at that time was based on listening and demonstration, rather than reading or writing. While working as a makeup artist in my early twenties, I encountered celebrity clients who had written their biographies that I was interested in reading. This began a period of time when I started reading by choice, looking forward to reading a number of books about people who had been affected by childhood adversity and the ways in which they dealt with it. Eventually, the way I viewed reading changed over time, I began to develop a passion for reading and an appreciation for it.

Writing, however, remained to invoke the same reaction that it did when I was a young, an overwhelming feeling of unenjoyable work that I was not good at. That was my general feeling toward any type of writing, regardless if it was simple text, an apology, letter or even directions, if it involved writing it was an overwhelming job. I felt I could not articulate in writing what I wanted to say, which is why if there was something I needed to say that required writing I found a way to avoid it. I would either make a template response for work or call instead of writing anytime it was an option. I never realized just how much my dislike for writing had become, I guess I felt justified having disliked something I believed I was not good at or capable of improving. I was creative with beauty and loved talking to people, I was able to

express my feelings with ease in that manner. I felt my emotions and energy that I displayed when I communicated could not be conveyed in words, or at least if they could it was too much for me to accomplish..

When I decided to go back to college at age fifty-two, my adverse reaction to the writing assignments gave me a clue that there was a deeper issue with my relationship with writing than just the negative emotions and academic criticism I associated with it. I was frustrated that I did not have the ability to express what I wanted to say on paper the way it played out in my head. I could not decipher why I would react with such anxiety when asked to write about my feelings or just about anything. When I was encouraged to journal for stress relief, I would just summarize bible sermons instead of creating or articulating my thoughts on paper. I realized after exploring what might be the issue, I started realizing that writing is teaching us how to process our thoughts. Writing has turned out to be what God has been using the last couple months to heal the way I think and evaluate my emotions better. I still continue to find writing an extremely daunting task but it has caused me to lean into the strength of God for the ability to write.