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What Contemporary Writers Can Tell us about Writing Process: Hartnett's Trees and Clouds, and Garner's 'I'.

Abstract:

In recent years, bestselling authors Sonya Hartnett and Helen Garner have written accounts of their writing process. Sonya Hartnett's 'The Colours of Success' was published in 2004 by *Australian Author*; Garner's 'I' appeared in *Meanjin* in 2002. Both essays address the issue of how writers start writing; how they convince themselves they 'know' enough and have the material to write a novel.

Hartnett and Garner approach the writing of first drafts very differently. Hartnett uses a private language and coloured paper to imagine the novel before she begins writing. Garner, as is well-documented, accumulates details through observation and note-taking and uses her notes as bedrock for her books. Hartnett's account charts her development as a writer learning to structure her novels, while Garner's essay is part justification for her method.

This paper describes and attempts to analyse these accounts, in relation to Hartnett's *Of a Boy* and Garner's *Spare Room*. It will explore other possible interpretations of Hartnett's and Garner's essays, reading them alongside papers on writing practice. Ultimately, this work aims to consider how writers' accounts of praxis can be used to think about writing process, or to teach writing.

Biographical Note:

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An artist must regulate his life. Here is a time-table of my daily acts. I rise at 7:18; am inspired from 10:23 to 11:47. I lunch at 12:11 and leave the table at 12:14. A healthy ride on horse-back around my domain follows from 1:19 pm to 2:53 pm. Another bout of inspiration from 3:12 to 4.7 pm. From 5 to 6:47 pm various occupations (fencing, reflection, immobility, visits, contemplation, dexterity, notation, etc.) Eric Satie, 'A Day in the Life of a Musician'

Introduction

In his essay, 'The Domains of the Writing Process', Nigel Krauth writes that 'there is little discussion that focuses on the writing process *as experienced by writers*' (Krauth 2006:188). Krauth's claim is in relation to a debate on the nature of authorship. He cites Burke's introduction to *Authorship: From Plato to the Postmodern* (2005), in which Burke states that the debate about authorship has swung between the idea that the author is the authority and source of creativity, the 'unacknowledged legislator of the World' (Shelley 2001: 717); and the idea that the world or text is the authority (Burke 1995: xviii), and its author is impersonalized or dead. This second view of the author is exemplified in Barthes' much-cited 'Death of the Author', in which 'writing is that neutral, composite, oblique space where our subject slips away, the negative where all identity is lost, starting with the very identity of the body writing' (Barthes 1977:142). According to Barthes, writing is a text made of multiple writings, from many sources, and the unity of this text lies 'not in its origin, but in its destination' (Barthes 1977: 148).

Although Krauth's claim about the scarcity of essays about the writing process by writers is open to question—a number of accounts by authors have been circulated in recent years, including Alice Munro's 'What is Real?' (1982, republished 2006) and *The Story Behind the Story* (2004)—it is the case that these more recent accounts of process have not been subjected to scholarly scrutiny.¹

This paper examines two recent accounts of process, Sonya Hartnett's 'The Colour of Success' (2004) and Helen Garner's 'I' (2002), essays which were written by contemporary Australian writers, about their experiences of the writing process. In this paper, these essays will be read alongside Hartnett's *Of a Boy* and Garner's *Spare Room*, in order to see to what extent the writing processes described are embedded in published texts, and to what degree questions about the author are enacted in Hartnett's and Garner's fiction. In addition, this paper is interested in how these essays illuminate recent work on the author, process and creativity. Work by Krauth (2006), Kroll (2006 and 2007), Freiman (2007), Pope (2005) and Brophy (1998) has, to a greater or lesser extent, discussed creativity and the author, using research in the fields of psychology, especially relying on the work of Margaret Boden and

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, and philosophy, using Deleuze and Guattari, Foucault and Barthes. This paper is particularly interested in Hartnett's and Garner's implicit or explicit ideas about the author, but it also aims to consider the relevance of theoretical writings about creativity when thinking about these writers' accounts.

Sonya Hartnett's Approach

Sonya Hartnett's essay 'The Color of Success' focuses on her development as a writer, and her ritualized writing practice. Her working method enables her to imagine the novel before she starts writing. Unlike Garner, who uses her immediate circle of friends and family from which to draw ideas for her novels, Hartnett doesn't obviously write about people known to her. There is no discussion of where the ideas for her books come from, although she seems to view the inspiration for her novels as stemming from her own mind.

Hartnett says that when she started writing novel-length manuscripts, she would think up what she called a 'core idea'—for example, a story about a fourteen year old boy—and lie on her bed and write. She says she had many failures, stories that she couldn't continue, 'the idea proving unsustainable, the plot running dry' (Hartnett 2004:8). She likens her early process to 'free falling', and she contends that this is the best way to learn writing skills; she calls this method the 'ride the wild pony' approach (Hartnett 2004: 12). Hartnett therefore sees the developing writer as an active subject gaining mastery over a method. In her experience, it was a focus on solitary work that enabled her to find a fail-safe method of writing a novel. Her representation of her experience is very different to Krauth's². Krauth writes of the importance of his engagement with the world in his development: 'I risked AIDS to find out what sexual experiences were like...I sat talking too long in pubs and walked unhatted in a desert and argued too fiercely with friends' (Krauth 2006: 189).

Hartnett writes in detail about her ritualized writing practice. She says that when she starts writing now, she does so 'with complete certainty that the story will work' because she's developed methods of 'organizing, testing and controlling the work' (Hartnett 2004: 9). She now views the core idea as the source of the novel's direction and strength. A core idea is a straightforward concept, capable of being explained in just a few words. In her essay she gives the example of *Thursday's Child*, a book for young adults. The idea was a story about a boy who digs underground (Hartnett 2004: 9).

Once Hartnett has decided that she's interested in the idea, and that it's large enough to sustain a novel, she does something she calls 'gathering clouds'. She likens the core idea to the trunk of the tree, the clouds to the branches. 'Clouds are inspirations that drift in and wrap themselves around the core idea: they provide the structure, plot, themes, characters and atmosphere' (Hartnett 2004: 9).

Hartnett then writes a list of these 'plot clouds'. For *Of a Boy* her list includes: 'Sea monster', 'Mad child on the roof' and 'Running away' (Hartnett 2004:10). She finds ways to tie these ideas together, and some ideas suggest others. For example, 'mad child on roof' became 'horsegirl', a girl who is so obsessed with horses that she gallops in the playground, carries a bridle, and ends up on the roof, pretending to be a horse. Hartnett writes that sometimes the

clouds can take months to gather in numbers sufficient to make her trust the idea enough to begin planning the novel further; sometimes they appear in great numbers immediately (Hartnett 2004:10).

When Hartnett has planned the novel, and has characters and plot developments worked out, she goes to the newsagent and buys colored paper. She then uses colored paper to create a map of the novel before she begins to write. This method grew out of her learning to use storyboards as part of a media studies course at tertiary level (Hartnett 2004:11). This is the only part of the essay that directly references the influences of the ‘outside world’ on Hartnett’s work. Color is important to Hartnett, however, and therefore she doesn’t storyboard conventionally—using black and white hand drawn pictures—instead she sees the entire novel in what she terms ‘atmospheric color’ (Hartnett 2004:11).

For Hartnett, plot strands are closely associated with places. She writes that *Of a Boy* has several plot strands: Adrian at home; Adrian at school; Adrian at his neighbour’s, and the abducted children storyline. Each of these strands is assigned a colour, usually according to how Adrian feels about the situation. Adrian dislikes school, and so the school scenes were visualized by Hartnett in harsh orange (Hartnett 2004:11). Hartnett cuts up color cardboard into rectangles of about 8 by 4 cm and writes on each rectangle a plot development which corresponds. For example, one orange card reads: ‘Horsegirl slaps substitute teacher’ (Hartnett 2004:11). Once all of the plot ideas are recorded on their colored cards, she lays the cards out on the floor, and arranges them in an order that makes sense. She’s careful to distribute various plot strands throughout the book, so there’s no long section where any of the strands is forgotten. Once she’s happy with the layout of the cards, she writes numbers on the backs of them and arranges them on the sideboard (Hartnett 2004:11).

It’s interesting to read Hartnett’s account of her process alongside *Of a Boy*. The novel feels carefully-structured. The scenes at school, for example, are distributed at regular intervals. The first, from pages 15-22, introduces Adrian’s attitude to school, and also Horsegirl. Horsegirl first appears on page 20 described as the most ‘unlovely and unloved of the Home children’ (there are some children at Adrian’s school who live in an orphanage). The next scene at school begins on page 53. On page 54, a substitute teacher asks Horsegirl about the bridle she carries with her. She responds to the substitute teacher’s question thus: ‘It’s mine!’ Horsegirl snarls, baring a trapdoor of teeth...Meanwhile the other children are coming to Horsegirl’s aid, driven less by sympathy than by dread of a scene...’ (Hartnett 2002: 54). In the following school scene, on page 68, Horsegirl slaps the substitute teacher with the bridle’s reins. Horsegirl’s thematic importance is emphasized after this scene. ‘Adrian does not know why, but every time Horsegirl’s madness flares, he fears for the soundness of his own mind. He worries that what lives so violently within her is also living in him’ (Hartnett 2002:74). Horsegirl appears for the last time from pages 97 to 102, when she runs around the roof, ‘a high-strung thoroughbred’ (Hartnett 2002: 97).

After horsegirl is coaxed down from the roof, the main character in the novel, Adrian, never sees her again. In the second last scene at school, on pages 116-117, it’s clear that horsegirl has been institutionalized. This is chilling for Adrian, who has been removed from his

mother, abandoned by his father, and now lives in tenuous circumstances with his grandmother. He fears that he, too, will be cast out of his home.

It does not seem so unusual to include particular settings or motifs at regular intervals in a novel. Another recurring image is of a small cherub attached to the lid of a bowl, which Adrian strokes to comfort himself. What's interesting, perhaps, is Hartnett's conscious planning of these recurring settings, characters and motifs; that she maps out these instances carefully before she begins writing. 'The cards are the dots: when I'm at the computer, I'm working to join them, to make a living picture out of the skeleton mapped by the cards' (Hartnett 2004:12).

Hartnett mentions that she adheres to particular rituals while writing. She says that she rarely writes a word without knowing what she intends to write, and when she sets out to write a scene, she knows in advance which point of view she'll take, the atmosphere she wishes to create, the aspects she'll emphasise, and why. She uses walks with her dog in the morning to help visualize scenes she'll write that day, and to compose loose sentences. (Hartnett 2004:12).

Like Garner, Hartnett uses a notebook. She buys an exercise book when she begins writing a novel, and it sits beside the computer and contains notes about characters, possible titles, factual research, useful phrases, repeated words to avoid, and information she needs to keep in mind. The exercise book contains details which will help flesh out the plot (Hartnett 2004: 11-12). She doesn't appear to use a notebook with the same fervour as Garner (see below), but it is nonetheless important, and besides notes of relevance to the novel, it contains phone numbers she's jotted down, grocery lists, spots of coffee (Hartnett 2004: 12).

Although Hartnett views herself as the creative source for the novel, her mention of factual research, and *Of a Boy* itself show that she does not operate in a vacuum. While the novel is primarily about a young boy's journey, which ends in his drowning, it is set against the backdrop of a series of child abductions. It is about how ideas circulating in a particular time and place—1977, suburban Melbourne—have an influence on a young boy's life and that of his family. The prologue of the novel opens with a scene of three children, who are abducted on the way to the milk bar, and ends with a list of events occurring in 1977: '...In 1977, a Year of the Snake, the purged Chinese leader Deng Xiaping was returned to power. The Audacious angles of Concorde took to the air...Three children bought no ice-cream, did not return home' (Hartnett 2002: 5). The novel conflates historical and cultural events with the events in a child's life, and repeatedly shows the connection between culture and the individual. It compares public and private tragedies, stressing the importance of both.

Hartnett writes, 'These days, my strictly-regimented colored cardboard and my minutely-detailed exercise books are absolutely necessary tools of my trade. Perhaps, in a way, they are also security blankets, lucky charms, or talismans for me...' (2004:12). Hartnett's process is not only practical, but has become an emotional necessity. Her method mostly involves working out a way to imagine the entire novel, with minimal false starts and time in front of the computer. The impression the essay gives is that Hartnett's careful pre-planning enables her to write a clean, polished novel in few drafts: one major draft, with a little tinkering on a daily basis. It's important to note, although it's probably an obvious point, that her process

enables her to write the kind of novel she wants to write: a compelling, carefully-plotted book. Hartnett clearly views herself as responsible for the success of her novels: she is their sole author.

Helen Garner's Approach

Helen Garner's approach appears very different from Hartnett's. Garner published an account of how she works in *Meanjin*, 'I'. It's not an attempt to give a full account, of course—nor is Hartnett's—but Garner's account is slighter. In it, Garner poses the question: 'Shouldn't a real writer be writing about something other than herself and her immediate circle?' (Garner 2002:40). She says that she's been haunted by this question since 1977, when a reviewer of *Monkey Grip* questioned the novel's status as novel: all Garner had done, as far as he could tell, was publish her diaries (Garner 2002:40). Garner writes that she went around in a lather for years afterwards, saying to herself 'it's a novel, thank you very much' and but then goes on to write, 'I'm too old to bother with that crap anymore. I might as well come clean. I did publish my diary. That's exactly what I did. I left out what I thought were the boring bits, wrote bridging passages, and changed all the names. It was the best fun I ever had...I'll never be that innocent again' (Garner 2002:40).

She then defends diary-keeping, arguing (convincingly, if anyone needed convincing) that diary-keeping is a creative activity, and that using a diary to write a novel is not an easy task (Garner 2002:40-41). As she said to Susan Wyndham earlier this year: 'Material isn't a story, it's a mess, a cloudy series of events or experiences. On every page there's a thousand tiny decisions about how you're going to tell it' (Wyndham 2008: S26).

In 'I', Garner argues that 'there can be no writing without the construction of a persona' (Garner 2002: 41). She doesn't think of herself inventing a persona, or choosing a persona since that seems to imply something rational and purposeful. Instead, Garner writes that there is something organic in the development or crystallization of a persona (41). This idea of working 'organically' is something Garner has spoken about previously. In an interview in *Making Stories: How Ten Australian Novels were Written*, edited by Grenville and Woolf, she says 'I'm no good at planning. I just start. That means I'm rather slow.' (Garner 1993: 64).

There are two key ideas in Garner's writing and interviews about her process. One is that she uses a diary and takes notes; the other is that the Helen Garner persona, the first person narrator in her novels (and in her nonfiction, too, but I'm most interested in her fiction) is something that crystallizes slowly. In her interview with Grenville and Wolf, Garner talks more specifically about how she uses her diary. She says she keeps a notebook or a diary because she can't invent a book 'out of thin air' but needs a 'bed of detail for the book to be based on' (Garner 1993:61). She goes on to say that she jots things down shamelessly, in front of people (61).

This comment is interesting in relation to *Spare Room* (2008). *Spare Room* is an autofiction, in which Helen is the narrator. She's a writer of about 60—as Helen Garner is in life—and she's looking after Nicola, who's dying of bowel cancer. Nicola has been trying a range of

alternative treatments, and is reluctant to face the idea that she's going to die. Helen's note-taking isn't revealed until late in the book, when Helen goes with Nicola to see a neurosurgeon: 'From my seat near the door, scribbling madly in my notebook with a shaking pencil...' (Garner 2008: 178). A few pages later, Helen is revealed as an unreliable note-taker.

By this point in the book, Helen can't look after Nicola for much longer. Nicola is very sick, in a lot of pain, and Helen is sleep-deprived and emotionally exhausted. Initially, Helen agreed that Nicola could stay with her for three weeks, while Nicola visited an alternative treatment centre, after which she would return to Sydney. Towards the end of the three-week period, it becomes obvious that Nicola needs surgery. Helen wants Nicola to go back to Sydney to have surgery; Nicola, having found a surgeon she trusts, wants to stay in Melbourne.

In the midst of an argument about where Nicola is going to have surgery, Helen's note-taking skills are called into question:

'Nonsense Hel. I'll be out of (hospital) so fast. What were the days Hathaway operates? Tuesday and Friday?'

For this, at least, I had evidence. I pulled the notebook from my bag and read out in an authoritative tone what I'd written in his rooms: 'He operates on Mondays and Fridays.'

...'No. It wasn't Monday. It was Tuesday.' (Garner 2008: 187)

When Nicola calls the surgery, Helen turns out to have been wrong. In this passage, there's an acknowledgement of the unreliability of Garner's notes, and by extension, her account as a whole. The narrator, a writer, is not meant to be infallible.

Garner's essay also speaks about the crystallization of the persona/ main character. In *Spare Room* Helen seems initially confident in her preparations for Nicola. But early in the novel there are hints that the experience of looking after Nicola is going to change Helen's view of herself. On page 9, before Helen goes to pick up Nicola, she says she felt 'the same anxiety I felt before a writing deadline: the inescapable requirement to find something new in myself'. The shattering of the mirror in Nicola's room, while at first appearing to be symbolic of Nicola's imminent physical decline, reflects a shattering of Garner's self, a questioning of who she is, and who she thought she could be for Nicola.

Part of this questioning arises from Garner's relationship with Nicola, and her furious response to Nicola's denial of the severity of her illness. The book is about shared emotion, about the effects of one person's imminent death on her friends and relatives. Iris, Nicola's niece, says about Nicola, 'She's cast us as the carriers of all the bad stuff—and somehow we've let her. She sails about with that ghastly smile on her face, telling everyone she's going to be better by the middle of next week, and meanwhile we're trawling along the bottom picking up the anguish and rage that she's thrown overboard' (Garner, 2008: 134).

By the end of the novel, Helen is no longer solely responsible for Nicola's care. Instead, Nicola's relatives and friends take turns looking after her. Not only that, the importance of

Helen in Nicola's life is questioned. At Nicola's Memorial Service, one of Nicola's friends says to Helen, 'I'm Verity. I was at school with Nicola. I see you're to speak, and I was curious to know—what exactly is your connection with her?' (Garner 2008: 192-193). Helen—the main character in the novel—is revealed as a bit player in Nicola's life.

While the persona is central to Garner's fiction and writing process, the importance and authority of the persona is questioned in both Garner's *Spare Room* and in 'I'. In 'I', Garner writes, 'I once went on holiday to Vanuatu. There I saw a row of tall trees across the tops of which a creeper had grown so hungrily and aggressively that it had formed a thick, strangling mat: the trees were no longer individuals, but had become part of a common mass. I found this spectacle strangely repellent' (Garner 2002:42). In this image, Garner sees the interdependence of people, and perhaps her own parasitic role as writer. This idea of the role of the writer, the dependence of the writer on her friends and family, and even Garner's method are all enacted and questioned in *Spare Room*.

Garner views the persona that emerges as she works as more than an extension of herself, as having emerged through her interactions and relationships with others, and as less central, less trustworthy than readers might like to think. Her crystallized persona, then, is something that she at once needs and questions, and it is this questioning of the writer-self's subjectivity, about the relationship between the self and others, that is at the heart of *Spare Room*, just as it is central to Garner's 'I'.

Hartnett's and Garner's Methods; Authorship and Creativity

According to Elizabeth Grosz, art's 'fundamental goal is to produce sensations', and 'sensations, if they're complicated enough, if they're interesting enough, if they're surprising enough, of course they generate thought' (Grosz Interview 2008). Whether or not this is how Garner and Hartnett conceptualise the aim of their work—to produce sensations, and to provoke thought—it is certainly true that their books encourage sensation and emotion in the form of attachment and identification with characters, and sympathy for the characters' situations. It is also the case that both novels—through immersion in a complex fictional world—provoke thought: Hartnett's novel compels the reader to consider the life of a disenfranchised child; Garner encourages thought about caring for the dying, and the inevitability of death. Whether or not one is in agreement with Grosz's statement, and its usefulness as a measure for successful art, Hartnett's and Garner's works appear to be 'successful' when considered in light of other measurements, including public acclaim and impact.

It is evident from Garner's and Hartnett's accounts that their processes are, however, very different. Hartnett is concerned with imagining and testing the novel's plot, characters and ideas prior to beginning writing, while for Garner note-taking serves as the ground on which she builds a novel, and the novel emerges from a mass of accumulated detail and description. Both writers perform acts which can give them some control over writing of the novel; at the same time, both acknowledge that there are aspects of the process over which they have little mastery: Hartnett has to wait for her clouds, Garner for the crystallization of persona. Both

are aware that writing a novel is a process, which involves a number of moves, at different levels of consciousness³.

There are clearly several levels on which Hartnett's and Garner's essays, and other essays by writers about their writing process, can be read. At a most superficial level, these kinds of accounts can be useful to undergraduate students who might find it interesting that writers of 'successful' novels use different processes, and that Hartnett's and Garner's processes, and their own understanding of how they write, is something that has evolved over time. Another superficial distinction between Hartnett's and Garner's processes appears to be that Garner views the crystallization of the persona as crucial, her subjectivity as problematic, and the interdependence of writer and community as a given. Garner would acknowledge, as Pope argues, that 'creativity is rarely, if at all, a matter of the individual creator creating in splendid and miserable isolation' (Pope 2005: 65). Hartnett, on the other hand, outwardly appears to consider herself as autonomous, separate, alone: the source of a text.

Hartnett and Garner, then, occupy two different extremes or poles of practice, according to Krauth (2006). Hartnett would be aligned with Krauth's 'Writer A', who is study-bound and wishes to produce a 'perfect work of the imagination'. Garner, on the other hand is more similar to Krauth's 'Writer B', who sees 'writing as an excuse to...investigate, to explore, to observe' (Krauth 2006: 189). Krauth's conceptualization of different domains or planes on which the writing process takes place⁴ 'which combine in their influence to make product' (Krauth 2006: 193) is also useful here. For Krauth, the writing process can be thought of as happening in private spaces of the author's mind and work space, and the more public spaces of readership and the 'investigable real world'. In addition, Krauth writes of a fifth domain, designated neither private nor public, 'the imagined space which is the fictional world where characters reside and play out their lives' (Krauth: 2006: 193). One way of reading Hartnett's account would be to suggest that her conscious, deliberate acts, her careful pre-planning, enable this 'fifth domain' to flourish.

While both Hartnett's and Garner's processes are of practical use, could it also be that both, in some way, allow the author to erase and re-make private and public selves, in order to participate in or inhabit this 'fifth domain'? Kroll writes that 'authorship has become...a continuous process of self creation...it involves an effort to sustain multiple creative identities' (Kroll 2006: 207). It's possible that Hartnett's elaborate process of imagining clouds, using coloured paper, arranging coloured squares, and visualizing individual scenes, allows her to enter the novel as an imaginative space, and by this means, to formulate a new identity. I am suggesting that although Hartnett appears to regard herself as the source of her fiction, it is also true that her conscious acts—her ritualized process—permit her to work within a plane or space which enables her to draw material from a variety of sources, perhaps from different levels of consciousness. Hartnett might emphasise the fact that she sees herself as a solitary artist, but as discussed above, her fiction shows that she sees cultural and social forces as having a profound influence on the individual.

Whether this theory about Hartnett's method is useful, Garner does seem to view the crystallization of a persona as central to her method, and explicitly acknowledges the importance of community to her process.

Much recent work on creativity stresses the importance of domains, places, and planes (Boden 1994; Krauth 2006; Webb 2006), and space is certainly crucial in understanding process. However, a clear similarity between Garner's and Hartnett's processes accounts is their acknowledgement of the importance of time. At a superficial level, Garner and Hartnett recognize that their development as writers has taken a lengthy period. Time is also necessary for Garner's persona to crystallize, and for Hartnett's 'clouds' to arrive in sufficient numbers for her to work.

How could we speak more generally of the role of time in the writing, and notions of authorship? Bergson, in an essay entitled 'The Possible and the Real' speaks of the living being as having a duration, 'precisely because it is continuously elaborating what is new and because there is no elaboration without searching, no searching without groping. Time is this very hesitation, or it is nothing' (Bergson 1946: 93). I do not pretend to fully understand what Bergson is saying here, although he seems to me in this essay to be making a link between creativity and mortality. Webb, in her essay 'Something to Live Within: Writing as an Architectural Act' states that Lessing announced that the literary arts are temporal, and the plastic arts spatial (Webb 2006: 213), and argues that she, too, while acknowledging the interrelatedness of time and space, wants to draw attention to the quality of space (Webb 2006: 213). While I could not argue that either space or time can be given primacy in thinking about writing process (nor could I refute the idea that time and space are interconnected) it does seem important to look again at temporality. Time is given importance in Hartnett's and Garner's essays on process; moreover, it's important in their fiction. Hartnett's novel is situated in a specific time, and focuses on the impact of that time on a child. Garner's book is about imminent death—a person running out of time. Mortality is an important theme throughout, as is demonstrated by this conversation between Helen and Bessie, Helen's five year old granddaughter.

[Bessie] had been thinking; she wanted me to hear the fruits of it.

'When a person dies,' she said, 'a little bit of them flies away from their body.'

'Yes,' I said. 'I've heard people say that. What a beautiful idea.'

'It's called a soul.'

She took hold of my wrist and gently moved the skin up and down over it. I felt the crepy looseness of what covered me, the fragility of the joint.

'Everyone has to die,' she said. (Garner 2008: 188)

Careful consideration of time and mortality could prove invaluable in the development of ideas relating to authorship and creativity.

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¹ At least, I have been unable to find any scholarly studies of these accounts

² Krauth, cleverly, sets up two writers occupying different extremes in their praxis, Writer A, who is study-bound, versus Writer B, who sees writing as “an excuse to get out of the study and into the real world” (Krauth 2006:189).

³ Pope questions conscious/unconscious models for writing, arguing that some kinds of creativity result from “the constant crossing and redrawing of all sorts of boundaries (not just the un/ conscious interface)” (Pope 2005: 74)

⁴ Krauth attributes his idea of domains of the writing process as having grown from Deleuze and Guattari’s Introduction to *A Thousand Plateaus*. (Deleuze, Gilles and Guattari, Felix. “Introduction: A Rhizome.” *A Thousand Plateaus*. 1980. Trans. B. Massumi. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987. 3-25)