Writers Block Essay, Research Paper

It is said that writer s block is the inability to write because of a loss in creative thought about a given subject. It is entirely possible that this term can be attributed to other aspects of writing and life in general; it is this area I will explore.

Virginia Woolf explains the angel in her house as the pure spirit that would come between her and her paper when writing reviews about men. You are writing about a book that has been written by a man. Be sympathetic, be tender, flatter, deceive, use all these arts of our sex. She was able to slay this angel because of a trust fund left to her by family, which paid her a handsome living. These payments liberated her from the need to use charm and the arts of her sex to provide sustenance and lifestyle maintenance. This mentality was widely held during her career. As society changed, it paved the way for other female writers to be less encumbered by gender, and appreciated for their works. I wonder how the writings of Joan Didion would have been accepted fifty years earlier during the start of Woolf s career. Would she posses the same confidence in her work?

Orwell writes What I have most wonted to do throughout the last ten years is to make political writing in to an art. One can write nothing readable unless one constantly struggles to efface one s own personality. Society dictates what is and is not readable, what is and is not acceptable, what is expected and what are success and or failure. We are all shaped and trapped by the popular opinions of our time. We are not free to indulge in art, literature, or even our daily lives with out the watchful eye of society s scrutiny. It is necessary to test these opinions in order for society to grow up and accept change.

From a small child we are sculpted by our experiences. Our opinions are formed by exposure and hard lessons learned. We are dependant upon others and this dependence is paid for with sacrifice in order to for fill the expectations of our benefactors. Many will never be liberated by wealth, fame, or status, and thus even in adulthood we are required to meet standards and expectations or follow the beat of society s drum. Yet others are shackled and restricted by wealth, requiring that they have social responsibilities and requirements of class structure to be met. Deviation from the rhythm can and often does come at the expense of those who trespass beyond social or economic boundaries.

Picasso was not accepted as a great artiest by society when he was alive; in fact he was considered a failure. This is true of many artists who were unable to efface their own visions or expressions in art and literature. Only after death and change in public opinion are their works truly appreciated or valued. The media and politics drive macro-level social structures, which shape public opinion. This serves as the foundation for society build its house. Only in reflection into the past can we discover all the nails used in these houses of failure. Who will take responsibility for quality control or inspection?

Artists who meet social expectations are rewarded with fame, wealth and reverence. What does this say for society? Is oppression of opinion and idea so common place that we overlook or repel great works simply because of opinion and idea?

This phenomenon is not restricted to the artistically gifted; it is part of our daily lives. Our very existence appears to depend upon it. In order to receive good grades, we must meet the expectations of the instructor; In order to receive a raise or promotion at work, we must meet the expectations or standards of our employer. In order that we receive love, we must meet the expectations of our loved ones. Few are free from this and are able resist the compelling lyrics of societies song. Only those who are willing to forgo the rewards of acceptance pursue self-gratification, those who do often live lives of loneliness or misunderstanding and misery.

Expression is not free, for a price must be paid for it. Opinion is not ours unless it is coveted. We must in most respects dance to the beat that society drums in order to live the lives that Dillard speaks of. Orwell, Woolf, and Dillard all speak of the struggle of life in their essays. They tell how it is necessary to efface ones self. To use all the arts of your sex, and other quotes of the like, described through their eyes. The need to be herd, understood, rewarded, appreciated and valued can only come through perceived distance and irony. They use these tools in order that writings are readable to society. Tales must be told in such a manner as not to overly offend or become too personal. Offences of this unspoken law are often met with misunderstanding, misinterpretation, failure, or loss of the sustenance required to live the good life. Artist, writer, employee, student, we all suffer from this block that society imposes. We allow these trespasses against us because we serve as societies foundation.