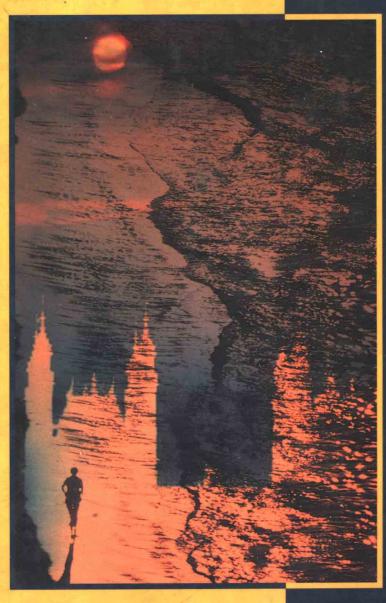
## Dreams and Inward Journeys

A Reader for Writers



Marjorie Ford • Jon Ford

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### DREAMS AND INWARD JOURNEYS: A READER FOR WRITERS

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## To the Instructor

Art is a dream for awakened minds . . .

PLATO.

The birth of a new idea, especially an idea that is later shaped with great thought and care into a book, is an important event. The concept for this book was born as the focus for a theme-based freshman composition course at Stanford University. The fundamental working assumption for the original course and for this text is that writing is a process that includes the imagination and the inner self of the writer as well as logic, rhetoric, and style.

We believe that writing is an inner struggle, an inward journey. The writing process can be seen as analogous to a dream in two ways. First, it is a movement toward articulating and clarifying one's feelings and thoughts that draws upon the resources of the unconscious mind and of the writer's inner voice. Second, writing is dream-related in the sense of the dream as a sustained vision, a hope or aspiration. We believe that the best writing comes from a sense of vision, from a strong sense of commitment to an experience, idea or belief. A consistent focus on a theme as personal as dreams and inward journeys will capture and maintain the students' interest in their composition course, helping them to develop and to sustain their voices as writers.

The text begins by exploring the relationships between self-understanding, writing and reading. We develop the theme through an examination of the power of childhood memories, myths, fairy tales, fantasies, obsessions and mass culture. In the final chapter we look at the power of dreams to inspire and guide us into the future. The thematic focus of the text is

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integrated with the related strategies of reading, writing and thinking by means of the following special features:

- A thematically arranged collection of essays, stories and poems by both classic and modern writers, including selections by women and Third World authors.
- An entire chapter focused on the act of reading as a dynamic process of self-discovery closely linked to the writing process. This chapter includes essays on reading theory and presents reading strategies as well as advice on writing personal and analytic responses to readings.
- A set of study questions for each piece of writing. The questions encourage students to respond personally as well as critically to the selection's content and style.
- Thematic introductions for each chapter.
- Discussion of strategies that relate to thinking and writing practice, including prewriting, narrative, comparison, evaluation, definition, causality, argumentation, logical fallacies and research writing. Strategies for creative thinking and problem solving are also included.
- Suggested writing assignments for each chapter as well as a student essay that is a response to one of the chapter's writing assignments.

Our students have been very enthusiastic about the approach presented in this text. They have valued the opportunity to learn more about themselves and their world through the readings and the writing assignments. Students also have enjoyed sharing their dreams, fantasies and writings in class discussions, and the writing that they have produced has been exceptional. We hope that you, too, will find the experience of working through this text with your students a rewarding one.

## Acknowledgments

Many people helped us as we researched, wrote and shaped Dreams and Inward Journeys. First, we would like to thank Charles Fifer, Director of Freshman English at Stanford, and Frank Murray, former Teaching Administrator of Freshman English at Stanford, for their support of the experimental course from which the book developed. Other instructors at Stanford, particularly Nora Bacon, Carolyn Keen, Dennis Matthies, and Ann Watters, shared student papers with us and exchanged ideas and insights. The students at Stanford, DeAnza College, and the College of Alameda, who enrolled in the first sections of the Inward Journeys classes, inspired us through their appreciation and their perceptive comments on readings and assignments. We would especially like to thank those students whose essays appear in the text; they worked many extra hours revising their texts to create thoughtful and memorable essays. Our gratitude is also extended to Cecil Webb for his comments on biblical passages and to Patricia Garfield, whose classes and writings on creative dreaming taught us to value our dreams.

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Our reviewers also gave us valuable guidance and suggestions which have enlarged the scope of the manuscript considerably: Michael Bartos, William Rainey Harper College; June Beisch, Massachusetts Bay Community College; Kathleen Boardman, University of Nevada-Reno; Sarah Dye, Elgin Community College; Edward McCarthy, Harrisburg Area Community College; Joseph McLaren, Mercy College; Dianna Menna, Queens College-City University of New York; Patricia Morgan, Louisiana State University; Betty Jo Hicks Peters, Morehead State University; William Roba, Scott Community College; Joan Sevick, Nassau Community College; Carol Stevens, Eastern Illinois University; Jack Summers, Central Piedmont Community College; and Karen Vaught-Alexander, Valdosta State College.

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## To the Student

Nothing said to us, nothing we can learn from others, reaches us so deep as that which we find in ourselves.

THEODORE REIK

dream: 1. a sequence of sensations, images, thoughts . . . passing through a sleeping person's mind 2. A fanciful vision . . . daydream; fantasy; reverie . . . 3. a fond hope or aspiration 4. anything so lovely, charming, transitory . . . as to seem dreamlike . . . 5. to imagine as possible . . . 6. to conceive of or devise, as by giving free rein to the imagination.

ADAPTED FROM Webster's New World Dictionary

As we can see from the complexity of the above definition, the concept of the dream involves much more than the images that come into our minds while we sleep. The lyrics of popular songs, the plots of movies and novels, advertisements and travel literature—all speak to us about the power of our dreams, promising fulfillment of our fantasies of romance, success or peace of mind. Just as we all dream while sleeping, each of us has a personal dream or vision that guides our waking lives. Perhaps it is a dream that we are starting to explore, one that we have been working to accomplish or one that has just "come true."

We have designed this text using the concept of the dream as a common meeting ground, one we hope will interest students and unite us with them in our mutual attempts to better understand ourselves, one another and the world in which we live. Dreams, with the insights they bring to us from xxii To the Student

our inner selves, with the universality of their patterns, imagery and meaning, also provide a central metaphor for the writing process as an inward journey that involves such dream-related elements as imagination, creativity, aspiration and vision.

Dreams and Inward Journeys: A Reader for Writers is composed of nine chapters. Each chapter presents an aspect of the book's theme as well as a writing strategy that will help you to understand yourself and your world while improving your writing fluency and skills. The earlier chapters ask you to reflect upon your personal experiences as a reader and as a writer. As you progress through the book, you will relate your personal and imaginative experiences to the social and cultural realities that also help to shape your identity and values.

In Chapter 1, "Discovering Ourselves in Writing," writing is seen as a frequently chaotic but powerful and rewarding process of self-discovery. The prewriting techniques explained will help you to get started on your writing as well as to overcome writing-related anxieties and fears. The dream journal project introduced in this chapter will provide you with the opportunity to discover the similarities between the writing process and dreaming, to discover the concerns of your unconscious mind.

In Chapter 2, "Discovering Ourselves in Reading," you will explore the ways in which reading is an active process that encourages a reader to understand and clarify his or her inner resources and values in relation to the values and experiences that have been recorded by a text. Each selection in this chapter presents a unique perspective on the reading process and reflects on the relationships between dreaming, reading, language and the imagination. The reading strategies introduced discuss techniques for activating and enriching your reading and language experiences while emphasizing how reading is closely related to the process of writing.

The readings in Chapter 3, "Memories from Childhood," explore how childhood experiences and memories, especially those inner experiences that are rooted in dreams, fantasies or even obsessions, influence our sense of self. The readings included in this section also suggest that the stories created and remembered from our childhood shape our personal myths. In this chapter we discuss creative strategies for writing effective description and narratives. These strategies will help you when you write about your childhood dreams and memories.

Chapter 4, "Dreams, Myths and Fairy Tales," will help you to put your inward journey into a broader cultural perspective, bringing meaning and resonance to your life experiences by suggesting how your self-concept and values have been influenced by ancient and popular myths and fairy tales. Some of the readings in this chapter discuss the similarities and relationships between dreams and myths. Because you will be asked to compare different versions of fairy tales, to contrast an early memory of a favorite childhood book with a more recent reading of that book or to create and evaluate a personal myth, we will discuss techniques used in

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comparison writing as well as approaches to making clear evaluative statements.

Chapter 5, "Dreams and Fantasies as They Shape Our Conscious Intentions," presents a variety of perspectives on the way that our irrational, unconscious selves influence our rational goals and practical routines. The thinking and writing strategies presented in this chapter will help you with defining and drawing close distinctions between complex concepts such as those presented in this text: dream, myth, fantasy, fairy tale. We shall also discuss some common misuses of words and barriers to clear communication as well as the difference between the private and public meanings and associations of words.

The readings included in Chapter 6, "Obsession and Transformation," reveal situations in which the writer or the main character is overwhelmed by a submerged part of the self. Whereas in some of the selections the unconscious need is translated into an obsession that is finally transformed into a greater self-awareness, several of the obsessions presented in the essays and stories are self-destructive. The writing and thinking strategy presented in this chapter, causal analysis, will help you to analyze and interpret the readings and will provide you with a structure for composing the essays you will be asked to write in response to the readings.

Chapter 7, "The Double," begins with a discussion of the dual nature of the human personality and presents readings, including a variety of classic stories, many of which are based on dreams or fantasies. These stories reflect different forms of the dualistic struggle within the human mind: the good self as opposed to the evil self, the rational self as opposed to the irrational self. The writing strategies in this chapter focus on how to create a balanced argument through exploring opposing viewpoints, empathizing with your audience, making decisions and taking a final position of your own.

To what extent have your self-concept and self-image been influenced by the dreams of our mass culture or the prevailing political ideology? What happens to those people who don't choose to fit into, or who feel excluded from, the predominant "dream" of their society? These are some of the questions that are considered in the readings included in Chapter 8, "Society's Dreams." For your writing assignment you will be asked to write a research paper. The writing strategies covered will help you to analyze social issues and to think critically about outside sources of opinion while maintaining your own personal perspective and sense of voice.

The finest quality of dreams is that they can become visions; they can help us to reshape and rebuild our personal or social worlds. We have chosen essays and stories that speak of visions of the future and visions born of dreams for "Dreams of Vision and Prophecy," the final chapter of the text. For a final writing project you can create your own vision of the future, envisioning a utopian society or developing an ideal program for improving a serious social problem. Synthesis and problem solving, the

writing strategies presented in this chapter, will help to reinforce your understanding of the chapter's readings and aid you in structuring your final essay.

We believe that it is important for students to have the opportunity to share their writing with their peers. The use of model student essays and a consistent pattern of sharing of student essays are crucial to the success of a writing class: student writers gain confidence and motivation when they can see their work in relationship to the work of their peers. Therefore, in each chapter we have included a student essay written in response to one of the chapter's writing assignments. You may be impressed by the quality of the essay included; perhaps you will be convinced that you can do better. In any case, you can compare these essays to your own work and use them as a point of departure for class discussion of student writing.

Although writing is a demanding and challenging activity, it can be an experience to look forward to if we feel that we are writing about something vital, something that engages us at the deepest part of our beings. We hope we have helped to provide opportunities for this type of engagement through the materials and activities included in the text. The rest is up to you!

Marjorie Ford Jon Ford



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	Robert Louis Stevenson, "A Chapter on Dreams" A writer of children's books discusses the "little people" in his dreams who are the source of his ideas for stories.	5	
	Joan Didion, "On Keeping a Notebook" A novelist presents notebook-keeping as a way of recording experience in which the real subject is the self: "How it felt to me."	9	
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