

GENDER, WORK & ORGANIZATION

### Writing resistance together

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## Writing resistance together

### Abstract

This piece of writing is a joint initiative by participants in the Gender, Work and Organization writing workshop organized in Helsinki, Finland, in June 2019. An exercise in writing differently, engage in collective writing and embody what it means to write resistance to established academic practices and conventions. This is an emancipatory process where we care for each other as writers and as human beings. There are many author voices and we aim to keep the text open and dialogical. As such, this piece of writing is about suppressed thoughts and feelings that our collective picket line allows us to express. To maintain the open-ended nature of the text, and perhaps also to retain some ‘dirtiness’ that is essential to writing, the paper has not been language checked throughout by a native speaker of English.

*Key words:* writing, co-writing, resistance, feminism, academia

### Where to begin?

‘Writing is a form of collective resistance for Gender, Work and Organization.’ This sentence was given to us, a group of junior, mid-career and senior academics, as an inspiration for developing a collective piece to reflect on our writing practices as academics. Sitting in a room at Hanken School of Economics in Helsinki in a ‘Writing differently’ workshop, we use

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2  
3 our round-table discussions and subsequent work to rethink academic writing as a form of  
4 collective resistance (cf. Grey & Sinclair, 2006; Gilmore, Harding, Helin & Pullen, 2019;  
5 Pullen, Helin & Harding, 2020). We intend to challenge patriarchal standards – academic  
6 jargon, rigid paper formats, narrow fields, quant focus, formulaic research, gendered review  
7 processes, publishing cartels and so on – that shape academia and constrain our ability to  
8 write meaningfully. After short round-table discussions, the point was clear: we desperately  
9 need a space to breathe and to move beyond the boundaries imposed on us by the  
10 disembodied metrics that evaluate our ‘intellectual’ abilities as academics. These favor  
11 quantity devoid of meaning in our academic production as opposed to meaningful  
12 knowledge.  
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28 The approach to writing we take is experimental, collective, and emerging. The idea for the  
29 piece came from Alison, Joint Editor of GWO, during our two-day workshop. The text was to  
30 emerge from the bottom up, bringing together our voices as authors in a large group of  
31 scholars of different nationalities and in different career stages. First, we divided our group of  
32 22 participants into four groups where we discussed our broad theme ‘Writing as a form of  
33 resistance.’ Each group identified their own themes (silence, blindness, the five senses and so  
34 on), which they then developed further. We returned to the small groups the next day when  
35 each participant had had a chance to think through and experiment with the theme of the  
36 group, and to pen down a sample of writing. We continued the discussion and shared our  
37 writings within each group. The groups then shared their ideas with everyone. Before ending  
38 the workshop, we decided that all participants would write more texts of their own. Each  
39 group chose a person responsible for gathering the texts, and one person volunteered to create  
40 a structure in Google Docs for all the groups where we could all see the collective work that  
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3 became a quilt of different ideas and styles. Who are we as critical scholars ‘resisting’ and  
4  
5 how does our collective thinking and writing reflect it? This is what we wished to discover.  
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10 By writing this piece collectively, we embody our individual struggles and blockages, and  
11  
12 convert them into words. We, the 22 authors, put our women’s and men’s bodies in our texts,  
13  
14 hairy, raw, stinky and leaky as they are (Pullen, 2018), to create a common language and  
15  
16 through this engage in collective action. We use our individual ‘I’s and subjectivities with all  
17  
18 the peculiarities, emotions, messiness, fragility and vulnerability that they carry to construct a  
19  
20 sense of *weness* and togetherness. We do not only write *for* each other but also *with* each  
21  
22 other. We experience our ontologies processually and come together (Ettinger, 2006; Kenny  
23  
24 & Fotaki, 2015). We relate, we care, we take care, we make space for our differences, we  
25  
26 connect...we engage in dialogue. We agree and disagree.  
27  
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33 As Hélène Cixous said, we just need to write. And write about writing, we add... we just  
34  
35 need to write from our women’s and men’s bodies and for them. We are women and men but  
36  
37 allow our feminine sides to emerge. By feminine we denote not the materiality of our bodies  
38  
39 but our ability to shake the symbolic order by crying and laughing where silence ‘has to be’  
40  
41 respected, as Cixous calls for in the ‘Laugh of the Medusa.’ We are ‘bi-sexual’ and we write  
42  
43 as such: bi-sexually to find a common voice and raise it (Cixous, 1976; Phillips, Pullen &  
44  
45 Rhodes 2014).  
46  
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51 We join academic work that calls for the need to rethink writing as a creative process, and  
52  
53 that account for the embodied, affective, and reflexive experiences of the author/s (Pullen &  
54  
55 Rhodes, 2008; Helin, 2019; Pullen, 2018; Kiriakos & Tienari, 2018). This is a process that is  
56  
57 about what we feel, not only about what we know or think (Rhodes, 2015; Amrouche,  
58  
59  
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1  
2  
3 Breckenridge, Brewis, Burchiellaro, Breiding Hansen, Hee Pedersen, Plotnikof & Pullen,  
4  
5 2018). It is not a ‘gap’ in the literature that our text intends to fill but rather an intention to  
6  
7 challenge prevailing conceptions of academic writing and to call for change in the way we  
8  
9 think of and relate to it. In this creative process, we open our bodies to make space for an  
10  
11 ethical connection with our readers and the subjects that we write about (Fotaki et al., 2014).  
12  
13 We use our writing to speak, to connect, to challenge, and to resist. Together. We use our  
14  
15 writing to overturn the higher order pedagogies that suppress our ‘un-disciplined’ bodies in  
16  
17 the context of academic practices, writing amongst them (Bell & King, 2010; Thanem &  
18  
19 Knights, 2019).  
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26 We know that challenging academic practices and conventions of writing will be a long  
27  
28 process, a long journey, a battle that may be lost. But we do not stop. We continue... We take  
29  
30 the freedom to do it differently, without asking permission. We just do it... *differently!* And  
31  
32 we do it for the ‘I’, for the ‘you,’ and for the ‘us.’  
33  
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37

38 For your benefit, Dear Reader, here is a guide for navigating our text. In what follows, we  
39  
40 first reflect on silence in academia and extend our reflection to the tensions surrounding  
41  
42 ‘giving voice’ and keeping silent. We explore the importance of recognizing and valuing  
43  
44 moments of silence and offer discuss silent subjectivities and silence as resistance. Second,  
45  
46 we move onto blindness in academia, and discuss its different causes, forms, and sometimes  
47  
48 unnerving consequences. Third, we raise the question of writing as a form of collective  
49  
50 resistance. We share some of our anxieties and use them to question prevailing forms of  
51  
52 academic writing. We talk about love in writing and think about writing as an invitation to a  
53  
54 dance. Fourth, we pause to reflect. We take stock of our own experiences in the writing  
55  
56 workshop, and share our thoughts on why these experiences matter from the point of view of  
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3 solidarity and sensitivity. Fifth, we gather on our academic picket line and elucidate what it  
4 means to resist 'Authorship' through collective writing. Finally, we offer our joint text a  
5  
6 coda, which is a response to the generous and constructive comments we received from  
7  
8 reviewers in GWO, reflecting on resistance, and resistance to resistance.  
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## 14 **Silence and silencing**

### 15 *Beginning*

16  
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21 The group assignment starts. We sit at a round table. Six of us. In silence. People waiting for  
22 someone to express their thoughts. Silence. The conversation begins slowly. It is about  
23 silence. It is about trust, equality and care that slowly builds around us. It is about writing,  
24 listening and agency. Passive and active voices. About personal and collective struggles.  
25  
26 About vulnerability. Being exposed, available, open. A rupture. The space that breaking apart  
27 creates for building a community, and for writing that enables us to challenge the status quo  
28 of the standards of academic writing. But we keep returning to silence. Our own silence and  
29 the silence of others. Through our writing. How can silence be resistance? Written in the  
30 unspoken spirit of love, here is our joint endeavor to understand the power(s) of silence  
31 through embodied writing.  
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### 47 *Incomplete*

48  
49 Words through my body.

50  
51 Text without pre-reflection, against everything I've been taught in academia.

52  
53 Can I resist the urge to modify?

54  
55 To add?

56  
57 To make it complete?  
58  
59  
60

1  
2  
3 Rational, neat and nicely structured.  
4

5 Complete for who? Reviewers? Editors?  
6

7  
8 For an audience.  
9

10 Complete in format or in message?  
11

12 The audience will notice that the text is incomplete.  
13

14 They will notice I am incomplete.  
15  
16  
17  
18

### 19 *Exploring the power of silence* 20

21  
22 As academics, we enjoy the privilege of empowering others by ‘giving voice to the  
23 marginalized.’ Yet, what we rarely talk about is the moments when we either choose to or  
24 feel compelled to keep silent. In the workshop, when we began to discuss this notion of  
25 silence, relating to our identity as women in a male dominated industry, to being non-native  
26 English speakers but feeling the pressure of publishing in English... we decided to dig deeper  
27 into the notion of silence and to explore the power of silence.  
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37 Buddhist philosophy gives a lot of insight about silence. In Buddhism, the goal of life is the  
38 act of living it. On the one hand, silence is regarded as the expression of knowing and the  
39 inaudible manifestation of frailty of words. On the other hand, the language of silence is  
40 capable of dispelling one’s inner darkness, anxiety and void. Hence, silence, in Buddhism, is  
41 an inherently powerful action for pursuing the Truth. It is itself the Truth. Truth cannot be  
42 defined or explicitly described but can only be experienced. Truth cannot be communicated  
43 with words, but only be shared with people who are willing and capable to embrace it into  
44 their own beings.  
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55 Recognition of moments of silence is central to our collective project. By deliberately  
56 elaborating the emotional and embodied experience hidden behind these moments of silence,  
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3 through fleshing out the unspoken words interwoven in silence, we want to connect, relate  
4 and affect each other. In this writing, we give silent moments voice. The inaudible voices  
5 shall pass on important messages which many times we would like to cry out, but there is fear  
6 to be heard. I believe that we can forge a collective resistance to this highly masculinized  
7 culture in academia where control, competitiveness, aggression, power and success are over-  
8 rated, and any sign of vulnerability is strictly repressed.  
9

10  
11 The silence that is known to most of us is its exterior absence of words. Although in such  
12 moments, words are not used yet, our minds are unquiet. They are filled with emotions, ideas,  
13 frustrations, desires, creativities and doubts. We choose or are compelled to keep silent when  
14 we realize we are the only woman in 'men's space,' and being foreign in a country where we  
15 are always identified as a member of different others, when we are put up as a token of the  
16 marginalized group, when we feel overwhelmed by senses of insecurity:  
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*I sometimes choose to keep silent in academic conferences when I am not sure about the climate in which the discussions are taken. I guess I am unsure of whether it is a space in which my thoughts and arguments will be appreciated, understood and how others will react. Maybe it is personal insecurities. As said, sometimes I fear others' reactions, because, in my experience, they are not always friendly. I might feel frustrated as I already know that I do not have anything to contribute to a discussion if it takes a certain track and tone. I might feel an urge to voice my thoughts, even if I know the risks of how it might be received, depending on my own state of mind and strength, a question arises: do I open my mouth? What do I think about? The things that should be said. The things that should be challenged. The things that have not changed. But what do people think of me saying those things out loud? Who I am to say so?*



1  
2  
3 *I am a person with a lot of words. I enjoy expressing myself, my feelings, and*  
4 *opinions. But I have learnt to keep silent. I choose silence when I realize I*  
5 *am fighting a hopeless war where important decisions are made for me and*  
6 *others. I have learnt that silence is my safeguard. I think when I do not*  
7 *speak...*

8  
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10  
11  
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14  
15 *I'm not sure I ever really choose to keep silent, but rather feel compelled to*  
16 *by outside forces. Lots of times I am thinking about so many other things that*  
17 *I can't fully participate in the conversation. Sometimes I am silent because I*  
18 *have nothing to contribute, because I am opposed to the topic or the line of*  
19 *inquiry or the analytical frame, but I don't have the position or status to*  
20 *challenge those who lead the discourse. What do I think about when I am*  
21 *silent? Everything else. My body, the air, escaping. I imagine other people,*  
22 *other places, the dead. Things that smell nice. Food. I often think of eating*  
23 *and drinking. How I feel when I am silent? Private, and attending to my own*  
24 *self. When I speak, I feel as if I am floating and often that my voice is coming*  
25 *from another body. In silence I connect to that voice, and I can hear it in*  
26 *various ways.*

### ***Relating in silence***

47  
48 Academia is full of useless noise and meaningless words.

49  
50 Everyday it's getting harder to breathe.

51  
52 Silence is a scream for pause.

53  
54  
55  
56  
57 Silence is harmony.

58  
59  
60 Silence is respect.

1  
2  
3 Silence is beauty and wisdom.  
4  
5  
6

7  
8 In silence, we open up and become more sensitive to others' vulnerabilities.  
9

10 In silence, we relate.  
11  
12  
13

### 14 *Sounds of silence*

15  
16  
17 The music flows around you, echoing between the stone walls of the church. The voices of  
18  
19 the singers of the excellent choir following the gentle instructions given by the aging  
20  
21 conductor. The singers individually performing the ancient texts, their bodies breathing  
22  
23 together, and sounds intertwined. Listening tentatively, ready to be moved, touched, to  
24  
25 engage in the music. Then the music suddenly, unexpectedly stops. The conductor suspends  
26  
27 her hands mid-air. The silence happens. A rupture in the flow of music. And we wait,  
28  
29 listening to the silence. And just when we cannot bare the silence any longer, the hands of the  
30  
31 conductor shift and the sounds of the human voices return. This indefinite rest in the music is  
32  
33 called a general pause or a grand pause. This silence in the middle of the flow of music is a  
34  
35 powerful tool to mark a change, a shift in the temporality of the music. It is, in particular, its  
36  
37 unexpected nature and the non-defined length of this suspension that makes the experience so  
38  
39 powerful. Sometime the musicians hold the pause 'too long' and someone in the audience  
40  
41 will think that the piece has ended and starts to applaud. Perhaps we would need to think  
42  
43 more carefully about the person who applauds, breaking the silence. What is it in the  
44  
45 prolonged silence that forces us to take action?  
46  
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48  
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51  
52  
53 Or in the words of Paul Simon:  
54  
55

56  
57  
58 'Fools,' said I, 'You do not know  
59  
60

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3 Silence, like a cancer, grows  
4  
5 Hear my words that I might teach you  
6  
7 Take my arms that I might reach you'  
8  
9  
10 But my words, like silent raindrops fell  
11  
12 And echoed in the wells, of silence  
13  
14  
15  
16

### 17 *Subjectivities*

18  
19 Please excuse my silence, which is not meant to be a slight. And I fear you will interpret it as  
20  
21 laziness, flightiness, artlessness. But really, I was just existing as my other self, the one who  
22  
23 attends constantly to the needs of my children, husband, family, friends, home, dirt, dust,  
24  
25 items, empty tummies. Last week, when I met you, I was the self who thinks deeply about  
26  
27 what's wrong with the world and why. That self who has time to ponder big questions, and  
28  
29 can't shut up once the mouth gets going, with ideas overlapping, feeding each other, getting  
30  
31 tangled and complex and so very interesting. The self with capacity to collaborate. But, too  
32  
33 much time being that one has consequences - coming home to a messy house, everything and  
34  
35 everyone needing attention, straightening up, making proper food, helping with homework,  
36  
37 driving them around. Just the routine stuff, but there is so much of it, and it takes time. And  
38  
39 hence the silence from my academic self - no time to sit down and let the words flow - until  
40  
41 it's so late that I am half asleep. Then, my eyes droop and I can hardly even move my fingers  
42  
43 over the computer keys.  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49

50  
51 So, although my academic self, far away from home, can acknowledge the strength of:  
52  
53

54  
55  
56 Silence in words, resistance for agency

57  
58 Amongst dominant forces, withholding secrets, subject to misinterpretation  
59  
60

1  
2  
3 Absent presences  
4

5 What is unsaid still permeates the air, it is  
6

7 something that haunts and it connects us to histories of being oppressed  
8  
9

10  
11  
12 What comes out when I am at home is this notion of being silenced by the second shift, being  
13  
14 silenced by my expectations for myself as a mother, a partner, a domestic laborer and by their  
15  
16 reliance on my having those expectations so they can exist in an orderly and pleasant home.  
17  
18

19  
20  
21 Together, in Helsinki, we talked about the power in silence, opting out, not participating. My  
22  
23 silence today is not voluntary, it is done to me and holds me back. But, as someone who loves  
24  
25 me says to me: 'you chose this.' At the time, it did feel like a choice – to get married, to have  
26  
27 babies... but everything that comes with it is a requirement. Then, tracing back to the original  
28  
29 'choice's: every time my child self, pictured my adult self, I saw a nice house, a nice kitchen,  
30  
31 nice garden, nice children, me waiting for him to come home from work. I saw my self, in  
32  
33 what I saw, every woman around me doing, when I saw the right way to be woman.  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39

40 'Why do you want to be a scientist? How about a nice little kindergarten teacher?'

41  
42 'You are such a cute little scientist. Do you want to go out on a date? Do you want to get  
43  
44 married and help me with my science?'

45  
46  
47  
48  
49 (STOP writing, look up)  
50

51  
52  
53 'Mom can you help my friend with a math problem?' And again, I am silenced, listening to  
54  
55 the voices in my head that I can't find the time or place to let out. Please excuse my silence, I  
56  
57 think (I was listening) to myself.  
58  
59  
60

1  
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4  
5  
6 *Silence/voice*  
7

8 Who do we silence in the current academic writing practices?  
9

10 Our embodied voices through review processes, self-censorship and the strict conventions  
11 that we follow while constructing ourselves as ‘scientific’.  
12

13 Our struggles as academic scholars, as neatly functioning parts of the publishing machine.  
14

15 (Be careful, do not let anything leak out!)  
16

17 What about other experiences?  
18

19 The ones we do not often write about?  
20

21 The ones who’s texts we do not read.  
22

23 The ones who do not write.  
24

25 The ones who are not taking part in these conversations, as in this room on June 7<sup>th</sup> in  
26 Helsinki.  
27

28 Writing as a form of collective resistance. Silence as a form of collective resistance. Politics  
29 of representation and the question of who speaks for whom. Play of voices and silence in the  
30 classroom.  
31

32 Silence can be used strategically as resistance.  
33

34 But you need to have possessed a voice before you can use silence as resistance?  
35

36 If you are absent and silent in a conversation, are you there to resist?  
37

38 Questions of voice and silence.  
39

40 Questions of production and consumption.  
41

42 Of knowledge.  
43

44 Of representations.  
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1  
2  
3 I consume and produce. Consume and produce. Consume and produce..  
4

5 Where does my responsibility lie?  
6  
7  
8  
9

10 In my production. In my consumption.  
11

12 Of I and the Other.  
13

14 Quite obviously.  
15

16 In the text.  
17  
18

19 In the silences of the text.  
20  
21  
22

23  
24 But how to enact it? How to be responsible?  
25

26 How can I write and listen in a form that emphasizes the agency of others?  
27  
28  
29  
30

31 Staying attuned to multiple struggles, flows across, shows the different faces of silence.  
32

33 Coming from yourself – empowering, comforting, joyful, sacred.  
34

35 Coming from others – unjust, oppressive, disabling, lonely.  
36  
37  
38  
39

40 Strength and vulnerability of embodied silence.  
41

42 Consumed and produced. Consumed and produced.  
43

44 Unequally.  
45  
46  
47  
48

49 How do we come together, and from multiple local struggles, form a collective resistance?  
50

51 Has also the collective solution become silenced? No. Yesterday we started a process of  
52 dialogue and exchange as a foundation for this, based on our individual voices and the  
53 physical act of writing. Midst of the voices in the classroom, I sense, it is the fleeting moment  
54 of picking up a pen or starting to type – in awareness of our interconnection with others –  
55  
56  
57  
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60

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2  
3 from where the moment of ethical action rises and we can see how some struggles might be  
4  
5 silent, but others are loud, if we only know how to write them.  
6  
7  
8  
9

10 ***Silence, again***  
11

12  
13 Years spent mute.  
14

15  
16 Grounded to the chair, only fear.  
17

18  
19 Fear of what may surface, if I speak.  
20

21  
22 Contained in thought and body,  
23

24  
25 It is the way for women.  
26

27  
28  
29  
30 Years passed, words appeared one-at-a-time.  
31

32  
33 Observing the silent cast adrift, and often drowning, in a sea of dominant male voices,  
34

35  
36 My voice, trembling and embodied, became more articulate,  
37

38  
39 But, how, can I stop? I fear that if I stop, I may never speak again.  
40

41  
42 These lips of mine, in their plurality, have stories to tell.  
43

44  
45  
46  
47 Now others listen, cite and act on my words,  
48

49  
50 Fear of being quoted, reduced to a part of my being.  
51

52  
53 Controlled and contained, again.  
54

55  
56  
57 Can women ever speak freely?  
58  
59  
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3 Lips enable connection, care and relationships – and resistance.  
4  
5  
6  
7

8  
9 Silence ruptures male spaces.  
10

11  
12 Listening as a politics of care, of resistance.  
13

14  
15 Academia privileges those articulate subjects.  
16

17  
18 Time to hear the silence, hearing through the skin.  
19

20  
21 If we listen, what collective resistance is possible?  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26

27 Every so often, silent bodies connect, words whisper, resonate with others, and I become  
28 me... this is the power of the masses. Sometimes these whispers connect, subversive, and the  
29 rage becomes her.  
30  
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### 37 **Blindness**

38  
39  
40  
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42

43 Love is blind, or so they say. Violence is often blind, too, and that is what's so scary about it.

44  
45 The system of academic writing is based on blindness. Its review processes are a  
46  
47 smokescreen for politicking, an illusion, a lie. From the shadows, the chosen few are elevated  
48  
49 into the light and the rest of us are left behind and forgotten.  
50

51  
52 Let's have some names then! After each review process, accept or reject, let's have some  
53  
54 names! Let those wonderful and generous people who help and support others come forward,  
55  
56 into the light. And let the violent ones be named, too.  
57  
58  
59  
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1  
2  
3 ***Blindness around us***  
4

5 Part I – Attack  
6

7 Sometimes *I* just shut up  
8

9  
10  
11 Not talk, not write, but I always think...  
12

13  
14 It was a vertical moment  
15

16  
17 Blindness around us  
18

19  
20 A silently brutal stab  
21

22  
23 towards our work, us  
24

25  
26 – dangers of researching differently  
27

28  
29 Stupidity of  
30

31  
32 simple-minded thinking  
33

34  
35 kind of blindness, too  
36

37  
38 feminists, childbirth,  
39

40  
41 *profit* of researching certain topics  
42

43  
44 HAHA!  
45

46  
47 Could you *please* shut up?  
48

49  
50 Sometimes  
51

52  
53 silence is sophisticated wisdom  
54

55  
56 Hiljaisuus  
57

58  
59 ...miten kaunis sana ja tila!  
60

1  
2  
3 Feeling empowered

4  
5  
6 by the pathetic attack

7  
8  
9 This is who I am

10  
11  
12 our writing is us

13  
14  
15 Vulnerability

16  
17  
18 and sensitivity towards life around me

19  
20  
21 are my strengths

22  
23  
24 my inspiration

25  
26  
27 and my sources of

28  
29  
30 researching differently

31  
32  
33  
34  
35 Part II – Aftermath

36  
37  
38  
39 Tears,

40  
41  
42 keep coming. Let them flow, flow, flow

43  
44  
45 I've created a scene

46  
47  
48 anyway

49  
50  
51 Exposing my vulnerable

52  
53  
54 leaky

55  
56  
57 *crying-like-a-little-child-kind-of* body

58  
59  
60 to others

1  
2  
3 But crying is healing  
4

5  
6 *écriture féminine*  
7

8  
9 remains a tricky project  
10

11  
12 blind academia  
13

14  
15 with its 'neutrality' and narrow frameworks  
16

17  
18 dislikes disruptive, destabilizing  
19

20  
21 transgressive  
22

23  
24 *écriture féminine*  
25

26  
27 as a way to  
28

29  
30 confuse boundaries  
31

32  
33 or liberate our work from the standard research practices  
34

35  
36 Kind eyes, warm hugs  
37

38  
39 mobilize collective affects  
40

41  
42 *Action! #snaptivism*  
43

44  
45 Solidarity. Care.  
46

47  
48 We're in this space, together  
49

50  
51 Strength to keep writing  
52

53  
54 While academia continues  
55

56  
57 to limit my research  
58

59  
60 as well as 'free' it

1  
2  
3 and the ways in which the gendered body writes  
4  
5  
6  
7

8 Coda – Healing by *writing together*  
9

10 Tilltufsad fjäderskrud  
11  
12

13 Hetkellinen siipirikko, lamaantuminen  
14  
15

16 *Vai sittenkin jotain muuta?*  
17  
18

19 Sara Ahmed, Hélène Cixous, Veena Das, Elspeth Probyn,  
20  
21

22 *Tack skall ni ha!*  
23  
24

25 Injurious norms, interrupted  
26  
27

28 Kvinnor som lyfter andra kvinnor  
29  
30

31 acknowledging our male allies, too  
32  
33

34 Freedom, flexibility, provocativity  
35  
36

37 without hurting  
38  
39

40 *Rakastan akateemista työtä*  
41  
42

43 Kindness  
44  
45

46 Generosity  
47  
48

49 Care  
50  
51

52 Nei momenti complicati  
53  
54

55 è bello guardare dentro un armadio  
56  
57

58 pieno di sogni.  
59  
60

1  
2  
3 Ga je mee?  
4

5  
6 Affective suffering as  
7

8  
9 a pivotal moment  
10

11  
12 for *transformation*  
13

14  
15 Siamo insieme  
16

17  
18 tässä hetkessä  
19

20  
21 Vis-à-vis, allons-y!  
22

23  
24  
25  
26 What if our *writing*  
27

28  
29 makes the contribution (*sic*), that disrupts the  
30

31  
32 twisted, dull, gloomy  
33

34  
35 thinking and writing  
36

37  
38 in academia  
39

40  
41 reaching beyond seemingly narrow topics  
42

43  
44 carefully scratching the polished surfaces  
45

46  
47 getting our feet dirty  
48

49  
50 appreciating the mundane rhythms  
51

52  
53 experiencing our sensory,  
54

55  
56 more-than-human life worlds  
57

58  
59 which, in fact, touch e v e r y t h i n g around us?  
60

1  
2  
3 We keep writing together.  
4  
5

6 We rise by lifting each other.  
7  
8  
9

10  
11 Writing  
12

13 as a beautiful form of  
14

15  
16 collaborative resistance  
17

18  
19 towards mental violence  
20

21  
22 and disembodied  
23

24  
25 detached  
26

27  
28 rigid  
29

30  
31 research  
32

33  
34 in academia  
35  
36  
37  
38

39 ***Epilogue***  
40

41  
42  
43 The two of us have written together for some eight years. It was an instant ‘click’ between us,  
44  
45 a sense of meeting another researcher and woman who *feels* you, understands you and  
46  
47 respects you. Sisters in academia. Support. Genuine goodwill. Our collaboration builds on  
48  
49 both mental and kinaesthetic empathy. For us, writing together works as a collaborative  
50  
51 resistance against blindness in academia. Blindness which, for us, materializes in cynical  
52  
53 thinking and denigrating attitudes towards ‘marginal’ research topics, complicated and  
54  
55 sometimes irrational review processes, and the inability to see worth in other than cleaned-up  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60

1  
2  
3 writing that so firmly believes in objectivity, rationality and abstraction. We resist this  
4  
5 blindness by keeping our writing simple, direct and vulnerably alive.  
6  
7  
8  
9

10  
11  
12 [INSERT PICTURE 1 HERE: A POST-IT NOTE THAT MATTERS]  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17

18 A picture of a post-it note from the whiteboard at the workshop, captured by one of us. None  
19  
20 of us wrote it and its writer remains a mystery to us, but we can thoroughly relate to it. These  
21  
22 words resonate with the various sensations that writing evokes in our bodies, and foregrounds  
23  
24 the aspects of ‘wanting to communicate, to talk, to share, to interact’ at the very focus, as we  
25  
26 do in our academic work.  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31

32 We are using writing as a collective means to resist the illusion of blindness in academia.

33  
34 With the concept of blindness we refer to a variety of academic practices aiming at  
35  
36 anonymity and impersonality. They exist for good reasons: first, to emphasize that what is  
37  
38 being argued is more important than who is making the claims and second, to assure fair and  
39  
40 equal treatment of scholars and their texts. Despite good intentions, the blindness is an  
41  
42 illusion, even a lie.  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48

49 This blindness of practices means that the authority, expertise, gender or position of the  
50  
51 author should not influence the assessment of the manuscript and the related decisions.

52  
53 However, in reality everybody, who has worked in academia for some time, has experiences  
54  
55 that make one doubt the objectivity or anonymity of the processes. Humans as we are, we  
56  
57 continuously search for cues of who the ‘anonymous’ are and make interpretations of the  
58  
59  
60

1  
2  
3 people we are dealing with. Many of us play on a rather small sand box, which makes it  
4  
5 difficult *not* to know, who the other players are and what they do. In many cases, the  
6  
7 processes are not blind; they only narrow down the number of potential people. Whether that  
8  
9 is a problem or something to sustain is hard to say, but if the idea of ‘blind review’ indicates  
10  
11 that anonymity is necessary for us academics to make fair and ethical assessments and  
12  
13 decisions, is it credible to claim we are fair and ethical behind the curtain of anonymity?  
14  
15 Rather, the blindness of academic practices acts as a script that makes the political games less  
16  
17 obvious and difficult to trace down.  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23

24 In academic writing, the tradition of neutrality and impersonality has led to writing becoming  
25  
26 a non-contextual, impersonal and universal practice, in which the author has to hide  
27  
28 him/herself and his/her personality, mother tongue, context, history and body. We are  
29  
30 expected to write as a universal academic – supposedly a white male from an Anglo-Saxon  
31  
32 country. Thus, writing as a blind practice not only causes all academic texts to be alike and  
33  
34 restricts freedom of expression, but also disconnects the readers from the actual process of  
35  
36 producing texts and the person doing it. It enforces the appearance of objectivity, expertise  
37  
38 and truthfulness, while making academic texts clinical, often formulaic and empty of any  
39  
40 deeper meaning.  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48

### 49 ***Unblinding an aspiring scholar***

50  
51 In case you are expecting to join the Temple of Knowledge: *wake up!* If you yearn to meet  
52  
53 Wisdom in people who would sell their soul to devil to know-it-all and to find a miracle in a  
54  
55 falling apple: *unblind yourself!* You are likely to become a basic unit of production in a  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60



1  
2  
3 sloppily managed factory that will turn your natural inclination for curiosity and  
4  
5 experimentation into process waste.  
6  
7  
8  
9

10  
11 On the factory floor, people who tend to think, act and write alike establish rank and  
12  
13 superiority by competing to see who can piss the farthest. The great task is to determine who  
14  
15 publishes the most in places some obscure parties with power and vested interests have  
16  
17 defined as 'best' and others have accepted as 'mandatory.' For sure, one can win because one  
18  
19 is hardworking and talented but also because one is skilled at all sorts of misbehavior or eager  
20  
21 to massage the fragile egos of the members of the ruling party.  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28

29 This is a ruthless hunger game that is dominated by a conservative establishment against  
30  
31 which the other groups, including the self-proclaimed critical ones, timidly position  
32  
33 themselves. Dissidents say 'the system,' 'patriarchy,' 'neoliberal university,' or 'western  
34  
35 hegemony' *makes them* and nothing can be done. Slowly, you may start believing in this,  
36  
37 citing Foucault or something else sophisticated to exempt you from personal responsibility.  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43

44 Becoming a PhD-student means low levels of autonomy. The precarious employment  
45  
46 conditions would cause an uprising anywhere else. Whether you receive a position or a grant  
47  
48 or support of *any* kind, depends almost entirely on the whims and competence of your  
49  
50 supervisor– or any other patron you may find who happens to like you. Many fall into  
51  
52 oblivion or predatory, abusive relations. Some are left spinning alone, some drift away  
53  
54 fighting severe depression.  
55  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60

1  
2  
3 With time the imagined Temple inevitably crumbles down – and may become a labyrinth you  
4 cannot exit as your mind is trapped inside. You will find some genuinely intellectual  
5 individuals, and that is when light shines onto the factory floor. However, they may not take  
6 interest in your magnificent drafts, philosophical insights and brilliant ideas – they have their  
7 own battles to fight and demons to face. Your likely destiny is either exit or becoming a unit  
8 of production like most other technician-researchers on the factory floor.  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20

21 I am still here because despite all this, academia can be an addictive, fascinating place if one  
22 can develop a somewhat functional existence in it. Many won't. I must have some  
23 undiagnosed obsessive-compulsive disorder and want to be part of *something* that is  
24 important to me that I want to defend and that I cannot define with words.  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32

### 33 **Writing is a form of collective resistance**

34  
35  
36  
37

38 *I knew that I was not for this. I didn't just want to choose for myself a spacious*  
39 *cell in a comfortable prison. I preferred a slam in the open air, feeling the sun*  
40 *and the rain nourishing my skin and then writing about it. To let my body breath*  
41 *more fully, to take the air down to feel my belly moving, to fill my lungs with the*  
42 *oxygen that I need to be able to continue living... and thus writing...or is it the*  
43 *other way around?*  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50  
51  
52  
53

54 Writing is personal. It begins with a person and it ends with a person. You can call one a  
55 writer and the other a reader, but it may not be so.  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60

1  
2  
3 Writing is collective. It begins as a relationship between people and it ends as a relationship  
4 between people. You may call one a text and the other understanding, but it may not be so.  
5  
6  
7

8  
9  
10 Writing is political; it produces knowledge. Writing is political; it challenges knowledge.  
11

12 Writing as resistance is personal; you object, refuse, insist. Writing as resistance is collective;  
13 you examine, influence, organize.  
14  
15  
16

17  
18  
19 Sometimes it is important to resist writing, when the politics of writing are such that the text  
20 is no longer the purpose of writing, when writing has become divorced from the text and only  
21 the mere existence of the text is its purpose.  
22  
23  
24  
25

26  
27  
28 Writing is a form of collective resistance. Writing as a form of collective resistance is writing  
29 that examines, also, itself, is suspicious of itself, examine its own assumptions without  
30 turning on itself and without turning in on itself. Writing as a form of collective resistance  
31 cannot be about itself.  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37

38  
39  
40 Academia is no longer what it used to be. We are operating during a time where the ability to  
41 predict consequences and possible results of research projects are decisive for managing the  
42 academic everyday, including the possibility of attaining research funding. To make sure we  
43 are not hit by surprise we can never lose control of our direction, or force forwards. To that  
44 aim we have to write from that which we already know, turning writing into a machinery  
45 practice as we write in under publication pressure. Writing becomes fragmented, flat,  
46 disembodied, and it is lacking depth just as the horizontal arrow that symbolizes this view on  
47 time.  
48  
49  
50  
51  
52  
53  
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56  
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58  
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60

1  
2  
3 At its worst this work hurts me, this work makes me cynical and angry. It makes me not want  
4 to write anymore. It makes me want to resist it.  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9

## 10 11 **Questioning** 12

13  
14  
15  
16 What is the power that writing resists? Is it more writing, other writing, competing  
17 knowledges? How does writing resist? What is the principle with which it resists? With new  
18 words, with new voices, with new forms, with new languages. Can those be heard?  
19  
20  
21  
22

23  
24  
25 *Ok. At least writing does not kill, does it?*  
26  
27

28  
29  
30 I get distracted by a message from Facebook and start surfing. There has been another  
31 unfounded arrest of an investigative journalist in Moscow. A picture of protesters catches my  
32 eyes. People are standing in line in order to hold a single picket. One by one. Unsanctioned  
33 collective political rallies are forbidden in Russia, and concerning this case, there is no  
34 chance a permit would be issued. A single picket is the only legal way to resist. Therefore, all  
35 these persons are waiting for their turn to hold the poster with a call to free the journalist.  
36  
37 They are together, but, at the same time, each one adds her or his own voice to the common  
38 cause.  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49

50  
51 The pen is heavy.

52  
53 The screen is blank.

54  
55 Is there space for me here?  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60

1  
2  
3 Am I experienced enough? Am I legitimate enough? Am I powerful enough? Do I need  
4 permission for this? From whom? For what? Where am I (hidden)? Where is my body?  
5  
6 Where is my sensuality, my affect, my rigidity, my fragility, the messiness that I carry? Why  
7  
8 do I do this and for whom?  
9  
10  
11  
12

13  
14 Should I first learn to publish more traditionally before beginning to resist it? I'd rather still  
15 write differently, because it's more fun, more lively, more something I want to do, but will I  
16  
17 succeed to publish by doing so?  
18  
19  
20  
21

### 22 23 24 ***Resisting prevailing forms of academic writing and resisting that resistance***

25  
26 I am joining the line of those who are determined to write differently, 'acknowledging the  
27 risk of embarrassment, of not being understood, of being dismissed or ridiculed, of being  
28  
29 considered self-indulgent, or of being rejected' (Kiriakos & Tienari, 2018: 266). While  
30  
31 staying in the line, I am summing up what seems important to me in writing and formulating  
32  
33 it as a manifesto, as suggested by Jenny Helin at the GWO workshop.  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41

42 *I intend*

43  
44 *to be honest to myself in writing;*

45  
46 *to lean on, but not to hide behind stronger others and to be supportive myself;*

47  
48 *to allow myself to write slowly, but to keep on moving, stretching higher and deeper;*

49  
50  
51 *I will try to find the strength to write through being weak, shamefully imperfect and*  
52  
53 *vulnerable, but to save and protect the vulnerability*

54  
55  
56 *Just because there,*

57  
58 *on the other side of a journal,*  
59  
60

1  
2  
3 *probably, there is Someone.*

4  
5 *A One who waits for my text,*

6  
7 *needs it the way I needed*

8  
9  
10 *Academic Writing as Love*

11  
12 *by Carol and Janne.*

13  
14  
15  
16  
17 *No, no, I will not. I will not participate in this collective resistance thing. I am*  
18 *not yet there; I have not yet learned to fill the gaps properly. Besides, they all are*  
19 *so cool, and experienced, and 'vertical' in writing, and so poetic.*

20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26 I keep staring at Carol Kiriakos and Janne Tienari's article 'Academic Writing as Love'. I see  
27 writing as a long-term relationship, in contrast to writing as passion and competition. I do not  
28 like the idea of participating in the race. It does not inspire me, this race, which suggests no  
29 space and time for dealing with being weak and vulnerable, being attentive and protective to  
30 others.  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39

40 *"You see. Love has been conceptualized for you personally. Have you not been*  
41 *looking for it? Just take it".*

42  
43  
44  
45  
46 *I find it difficult to find the balance between peaceful me and collective*  
47 *resistance. As I see it, the 'battle, fight, protest, resistance' -rhetoric is about*  
48 *looking for courage in myself to oppose dominating power. However, opposing*  
49 *is not the aim in itself.*  
50  
51  
52  
53  
54  
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57  
58  
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60

1  
2  
3 *All these are questions that have been circulating in my head since the early years*  
4 *of my PhD, unsettling my few hours of rest, the endless nights that I spent alone*  
5 *after long days of developing rigorous argumentations and deductions of*  
6 *'counter-intuitive' (but otherwise soulless) hypotheses for my academic texts.*  
7  
8 *What a word! Counter-intuitive! it has to be so to 'sell' ... just doing the intuitive*  
9 *is not enough.*

10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19 *Just writing is not enough! ... for what really matters!*

20  
21  
22  
23  
24 *For years, I kept my body constrained; limiting it from its potential to express*  
25 *what inherently inhabited it... ideas, dreams, sensations, pleasure, pain, worries,*  
26 *confidence or lack of it...I held back from writing a language that touches, to*  
27 *write about a topic that touches, to write about writing itself. I kept all of this for*  
28 *my personal scripts, which I had very little time to care about. And I was afraid*  
29 *of sharing these concerns with my supervisors or colleagues, in fears of being*  
30 *seen as the crazy one.*

31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41 *Vulnerability in academic criticism... In fear of being rejected...Yet another time!*

42  
43  
44  
45  
46 *I wish I could be brave enough.*

47  
48  
49  
50  
51 I suppose people hurt people in academia. In purpose or accidentally. During the workshop, I  
52 heard about the power game that is ongoing in academia. This game makes even the most  
53 experienced and highly respected professors to be afraid to speak out so that they would not  
54 sound stupid! I did not want to sound stupid or ignorant. I did not want to be 'revealed' as a  
55 person, who really does not have a right to be here with such a short history in the academic  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60

1  
2  
3 world. I noticed the vulnerability there, where I expected to see stable self-confidence. This  
4 was a relief to me because it made the academic world look more human to me. Is showing  
5 our vulnerability through experimenting different styles of academic writing a threat to us?  
6  
7  
8  
9

10  
11  
12 According to my observations during my short experience in the academic world, there is  
13 something hurtful in the appreciation of criticism. Although critical thinking is, in my  
14 opinion, a necessary practice to produce any new understandings and therefore new  
15 knowledge through research, it can be used in very harmful ways in the academic world  
16 between people. After listening to more experienced colleagues, it seems to me that criticality  
17 is too often used as a form of oppression or to support the individuals' place in the hierarchy.  
18 That is the opposite thing to what critical thinking tradition, in theory, was supposed to do  
19 (Duncum, 2008). The critical theory aims to break free from the prevailing and 'taken for  
20 granted truths,' but it is itself taken for granted in education literature (Duncum, 2008) and in  
21 academic practices in general.  
22  
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38 *'We honor others by challenging them when we think they are wrong, and by*  
39 *thoughtfully taking their criticisms of us. To do so is to take them seriously; to do any*  
40 *less is to dismiss them as unworthy of serious consideration, which is to say, to treat*  
41 *them with disrespect. Respect means the willingness to listen, openness to the*  
42 *possibility of learning from, responsiveness, criticizing when necessary. ---Respect*  
43 *does not mean that everything they do is "fine for them" or beyond the pale of critical*  
44 *judgment. Emphasis on the acceptance of difference is meant to express and*  
45 *encourage tolerance. Sometimes it succeeds in this. But sometimes it can have the*  
46 *opposite effect. Valorized differences can harden into Difference.'* (Fay, 1996, 239)  
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3 ‘Critical theory tends to operate from within the binary terms of dominance and a liberating  
4 counterpoint in which a singular truth is opposed by a singular alternative’ (Duncum, 2008,  
5 253). I think that this kind of confrontation as an accepted truth in academia does its silent  
6 work in us. It puts us to the position of self defence, and makes us to focus on fighting for our  
7 existence in academia instead of creating a fruitful conversation. ‘One truth colliding with  
8 another does not necessarily lead to enlightenment but to retreat, not to synthesis or  
9 compromise but to an endgame’ (Duncum, 2008, 250). So how to criticize without hurting?  
10 How to take critic and avoid cutting vulnerability out of it?  
11  
12  
13  
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16  
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18  
19  
20  
21  
22

### 23 *Resistance as a fight or invitation to a dance?*

24  
25 Gilmore et al. (2019) are calling us to arms towards the positivist and normalized  
26 understandings of the only right way to do research. But is the war as a form of collective  
27 resistance that can really make space for difference and multiplicity in writing that Gilmore et  
28 al. (2019) want to achieve? I agree that fighting and defending oneself is sometimes  
29 necessary, but are there some other ways to create space for different forms of academic  
30 writing?  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41

42 I might be naive and childish by saying this, but cannot we just do it? Write differently and  
43 by doing so, be the examples of how many kinds of forms of expressions in academic texts  
44 can create more understanding of the complex world we are living in? And with those texts  
45 invite the others, that might not accept this kind of writing as academic, to the dialogue? Are  
46 we, who want to defend the ‘polyphony’ of different ways of expressing research (Bakhtin,  
47 1981 according to Duncum, 2008), able to understand or at least give space to the others that  
48 do not want to allow this plurality?  
49  
50  
51  
52  
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3 Could we somehow go beyond that attack-defence practice that is apparently experienced as  
4 hurtful in the academic world? Could we somehow just ask or persuade the partner, who  
5 thinks differently than us to join the common dance with us, get in the dialogue (Duncum,  
6 2008) with us? Can we give space for the other who might want to stay still and not to dance  
7 with us? After all, we are all in the same ‘academic ballroom’ and any kind of expressions of  
8 movements in that space should be allowed.  
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18

19 I know your rules. I tried to play by your rules. Let's just try to play by different (my) rules.  
20 And then we will discuss it and agree on common rules. And I promise I will respect your  
21 choice.  
22  
23  
24  
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26  
27

28 This text is *y-ours*.  
29  
30  
31

32 Being at this workshop in Helsinki, among colleagues who persist to ask the difficult  
33 questions even though there are no immediate answers, who understand and embody the need  
34 for safe inquiry spaces to emerge, and who create the moment where we can have  
35 conversations “for real”, offers resistance in solidarity. It is pockets like this that give hope  
36 for another future in academia.  
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45

46 And thus share, and thus resist...  
47

48 And finally here I am, with all of you...not alone anymore...  
49  
50  
51

52  
53 I now feel that I know the answer:  
54

55 I write to relate. I write to share. I write to live and to continue to live...  
56  
57

58 I write for me and for you ... with you...  
59  
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3 Just add your voice. Free yourself. You are not alone. There are others to support you.  
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6

## 7 **Reflecting**

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11  
12 During the GWO workshop I noticed more clearly, how those who have been in academia for  
13 long have a kind of hard message for me who is just starting in this field: ‘This work hurts  
14 me, this work makes me cynical and angry. It makes me not want to write anymore. It makes  
15 me want to resist it.’ I did not have enough time to ask the questions: ‘Why this work makes  
16 you angry? What things in academia make you cynical?’ I guess that writing academic papers  
17 is sometimes so hard that it makes you want to quit, but I don’t think that it is the reason that  
18 makes people cynical, angry and raises resistance against their work.  
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30  
31 I noticed that on the first day it was not easy for me to talk about my thoughts among the  
32 more experienced colleagues. I think this happened, because of the respect that I felt for the  
33 experienced colleagues. I did not want to be ‘revealed’ as a person, who really does not have  
34 a right to be here with so short history in the academic world. At the time this happened, I did  
35 not really know why I felt this way. That’s how I got caught in the practice that values highly  
36 the appreciation of the experience and some sort of hierarchy that is embedded in academic  
37 culture.  
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## 51 ***Experiment survivor***

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54 I decided to participate in a writing workshop organized by GWO and hosted by the  
55 GODESS Institute (Gender, organization, diversity, equality and social sustainability in  
56 transnational times) at Hanken in Helsinki. I entered the workshop with the ‘standard’  
57  
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1  
2  
3 expectation of improving my writing, and in particular, writing of academic journal articles. I  
4  
5 left the workshop realizing that I have started a new journey during the process of battling  
6  
7 with the uncertainty and my own inertia through writing. We were quickly grouped with  
8  
9 participants who haven't met before. My group is quite diverse in terms of academic  
10  
11 background. It wasn't easy to produce a coherent idea for a small piece of writing given that  
12  
13 we all have just met.  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18

19 We discussed in our small group what we were resisting collectively in writing. Resistance  
20  
21 against the dominant publishing regime, against Authorship with the capital A? Towards the  
22  
23 end of the workshop, I came to realize that I was resisting my "old" self! No one has forced  
24  
25 me to write for a particular journal, with a particular group of scholars, or even just to  
26  
27 continue with the same way of writing. It has always been me who is not receiving all the  
28  
29 other possibilities of writing. It's not easy to move out of the comfort zone that one has built.  
30  
31 And this is just me in my 4<sup>th</sup> year of academic job. What a terrifying thought to think what if I  
32  
33 am just going on like a publishing machine.  
34  
35  
36  
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38  
39

40 I also learnt how to write through vulnerability. As an Asian female, I have always tried to  
41  
42 keep my head down. I blame Confucius for the bad influence of the 中庸philosophy (The  
43  
44 Doctrine of the Golden Mean). I have learnt to just take on whatever comes to me and try not  
45  
46 to talk about the negative, the challenging and most importantly the painful experiences.  
47  
48

49 What a liberating moment for me to know that one can seek to heal by writing about these  
50  
51 vulnerabilities in academia too. Reflecting on my research journey on the topic of gender, it  
52  
53 suddenly became clear to me that I am strong enough now to face this issue straight on  
54  
55 finally. I have been hiding behind the excuse that it would be too painful for me to research  
56  
57 gender particularly in my country of origin. My academic father, a gender sociologist, has  
58  
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1  
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3 been so awfully gentle and kind to me when I continuously discarded gender by listing it as  
4 limitations in my PhD thesis, my articles (written mostly for job with as much of me in them  
5 as possible), and in my book (written for my interviewees who I didn't think would know  
6 how to care for gender). At this stage of my career, I am truly glad that I came to the  
7 realization that researching gender won't cause me more pain than the gendered phenomena  
8 around me have already caused it themselves. Instead it will be a way for me to heal my long  
9 term wound regarding gender since probably birth.  
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21 I heartfully thank the workshop organizers for their unconditioned authentic love in educating  
22 junior academics. As much as I felt like an animal being experimented on during the 1,5 day  
23 workshop, I have rediscovered so many important things not just for work, but also for life. I  
24 can now also joyfully claim that I understand the power and meaning of education.  
25  
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### 33 ***Solidarity***

34  
35 Joining in and contributing to a workshop on collective writing left me with a sense of  
36 academic solidarity which still exists in today's academia dressed in a plethora of  
37 competition and pressure for productivity. Like Jenny Helin proposed in her presentation  
38 about the valuation, and recognition, of vertical time, so was the workshop a pause in the  
39 seemingly chronological timeline of academic work where junior researchers aim to one day  
40 become recognized senior researchers, perhaps professors, that are cited more, more and  
41 MORE, in order to be someone, to EXIST. The workshop embodied scarcity and  
42 unfinishedness, in its beauty – showing its participants how we are not alone in our struggles  
43 in the neoliberal academia.  
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3 Not only did it leave us with a sense of solidarity, it made us act: Alison's suggestion of  
4 becoming involved in a collective act of resistance through writing made us to activate our  
5 hands, our minds, mouths, pens, laptop buttons – for a joint effort. While we started to work  
6 collaboratively to achieve a goal of sorts (an outcome submitted to GWO), I dare to argue  
7 that it was more about being HERE and NOW. It was vertical time that we experienced –  
8 and, I suggest – we keep on experiencing, as we open our joint writing documents of our own  
9 group, carrying on writing. Carrying on, carrying on, pausing, pausing. To work as a  
10 collective cannot stand infinite carrying on *without* a time to pause, even it would manifest  
11 through our very own comprehension of it, and that is one of the reasons why collective  
12 writing is so powerful. It invites, perhaps forces, us to solidarity.  
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### 28 *Sensitivity*

29 Working on sensitive issues together is, well, sensitive. I believe in letting everyone speak,  
30 even if they speak against the grain. Then I see some others being offended and hurt.  
31  
32

33 Sometimes I do not even see this, but I am reminded about it later. I know I should know  
34 better, and see, but time and again I am caught in this dilemma. When someone pours their  
35 heart out and there may be collateral damage, I am blind and clueless... because who am I to  
36 police others?  
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47 Perhaps time is again the great healer. Perhaps we need time. Writing, and writing together, is  
48 one way to heal; to bring multiple voices into the open, to converse, perhaps. We do not have  
49 to agree, but let's listen to each other and care. Even if we sometimes end up hurting each  
50 other. Because those who hurt have themselves been hurt.  
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### 58 **The academic picket line – or resisting 'Authorship' through collective writing**

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5 Two interrelated themes emerged when exploring ‘collective writing as a form of resistance.’  
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7  
8 First, we see collective writing as a resistance strategy against the prevalence of hierarchical  
9 articulations of academic Authorship and certain institutionalized discourses and interests.  
10

11  
12 This resistance takes the form of collective writing as a form of *picketing*, a demonstration of  
13 solidarity through which writing becomes an embodied practice, and our writing-together  
14 marks an assemblage of bodies in solidarity. Second, by drawing upon tensions, power  
15 struggles and ambivalence within collective resistance, we suggest that collective writing  
16 may be considered a form of ‘unionizing’ that could help scholars better advocate  
17 marginalized issues, challenge dominant norms, rules and customs and promote care, respect  
18 and community within academia.  
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31 The following paragraphs are a collection of reflections and responses grounded in our  
32 experiences as early-career scholars with different disciplinary backgrounds, coming together  
33 in a workshop on writing, assembled to speak to and with each other. By mixing our voices,  
34 we explore possible strategies for a collective resistance against hierarchical articulations of  
35 individualized academic Authorship and knowledge production. Our focus is placed on  
36 discussing the challenges and possibilities in the collective construction of resistance against  
37 an Authorship, that is, the contemporary competitive logic of scholarly work, which has  
38 turned academic publishing into an individualized production line.  
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### 51 ***One Authorship, One Academia?***

52  
53 What is the soul of the text? Maybe a discussion around Authorship and the redistribution of  
54 academic capital – is that playing into and reproducing a capitalistic logic? There is  
55 something about a paradox; the horizontal and vertical that actually each serve purposes; we  
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3 do not need to choose one. But by engaging with one, at a certain point in time (!), there is  
4  
5 also a need for full, honest, true commitment to the cause; that is why we draw on the  
6  
7 metaphor of picketing and the picket line that one collectively ensures is not crossed. Not by  
8  
9 people who are, who belong to, who oppose, or just randomly walks by. It works to disrupt  
10  
11 very concretely, but also takes up space, calls to it attention to spread, in the minds and in the  
12  
13 practices of organizations that share similarities.  
14  
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18

19 Already in this writing process, our voices start to mix. I read you, you read me, who are you,  
20  
21 who am I? What remains a topic of uncertainty is the actual error in the current scene of  
22  
23 academic publishing. What is so wrong about it that we want to stand in the picket line? It is  
24  
25 a crucial question, as we probably all have been publishing and been excited to see our own  
26  
27 names as authors of a particular piece of research and writing. It is a piece that embodies so  
28  
29 much more effort that can be guessed from reading the typed words from a, usually  
30  
31 electronic, paper. But when ready, who cares to protest or rebel? Can we not just adjust? Our  
32  
33 answer is no, not really. To write collectively also speaks against the drawback of who  
34  
35 actually benefits from an academic outcome. To write alone, or with two, three, or four  
36  
37 colleagues – especially if you are not a big name in your ‘field’ and thus you are most  
38  
39 assumedly insecure of whether your work will actually be read and, yes, cited – requires an  
40  
41 effort that does not equal to the ‘price’ one gets when the work is eventually published.  
42  
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48

49 We do not get direct compensation for our efforts. Our work is fueled by long temporalities  
50  
51 and a wish that our work is recognized sometime in the future by our ‘colleagues,’ or  
52  
53 strangers, who might be able to find our work from the jungle of academic publications (all  
54  
55 of which nobody ever has the chance to go through in peace as we, at least many of us, are  
56  
57 obliged to produce, produce, produce). Our work is fueled by a third-party benefit as well, as  
58  
59  
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1  
2  
3 we feed the journals that feed us indirectly, and get their compensation for doing that. Yet,  
4  
5 there is more complexity: our universities might form a block to this author → editor(s) of  
6  
7 journal → reviewers → editor(s) → author → journal (x 1,2,3,4) → money to the  
8  
9 journal through subscribers → possible reputation through citations to the author /  
10  
11 significant merit in the CV to get an academic position, by not allowing (cannot afford?)  
12  
13 access to journals in which our work is published, thus blocking the distribution of our efforts  
14  
15 to our own communities. So, the question “can we not just adjust?” is crucial: we simply  
16  
17 cannot, even though we have to be part of the system to be alive as academics.  
18  
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23

24 We need to be bold and brave. This means that we need to be ready to face the criticism  
25  
26 regarding our statements as well. This is far easier to do when we write together – when we  
27  
28 stand together – when we write as a collective. This does not mean hegemony. This means  
29  
30 diversity and its embracement. This means multidisciplinary in its fundamental sense. Why?  
31  
32 Why to write as a collective? What are our motivations to stand in the picket line? In a  
33  
34 neoliberal world of academia, academic publishing counts as a quest and competition of  
35  
36 individual academic capital. This is the enforcement and feeding of An Authorship. The big  
37  
38 A.  
39  
40  
41  
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44

45 Our first suggestion is to give away authorship by signing it over to anonymity. But that is  
46  
47 nothing, it is not generative of academic capital, it does not resist the dominant discourse  
48  
49 around Authorship, it just rejects it and take the conversation to a different space. One where  
50  
51 authorship does not exist. A similar idea, that insists staying with, resisting or challenging  
52  
53 dominant discourses on authorship, is one that does not turn over authorship to anonymity,  
54  
55 but which turns it over to a collective, defined by individuals who turn over authorship. That  
56  
57 is the union. Would it be possible to unionize; have one writing union that publishes, but still  
58  
59  
60

1  
2  
3 keeps track of authors. Allow the union to negotiate terms of publications, but also to  
4  
5 redistribute capital among the members. By, for example, publishing member lists which  
6  
7 shows the number of publications each member has published; or contributed through,  
8  
9 through reviews, proofing or otherwise. Maybe citations are shared; maybe a reviewer is  
10  
11 allowed a share in citations in terms of h-index; impact and so on.  
12  
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16

17 In the case of writing in academia, we can form different fortresses by choosing with whom  
18  
19 we write, to which journals we write, and advocate for the meaning in the texts that we  
20  
21 produce as opposed to those produced by the 'other'. However, there is just one academia. It  
22  
23 is a paradoxical Yin-Yang relationship because all the different kinds of writings co-exist  
24  
25 together. With a white dot in the black half and a black dot in the white half, the collective  
26  
27 whole of writings in academia are balanced.  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32

33 While we pick our own picket line, we must also look beyond the line. As we march forward  
34  
35 in the line, we do not forget that there is a bigger world out there.  
36  
37  
38  
39

40 ***We write. United.***

41  
42 A picket line is a shared embodied space, where workers stake out common grounds to signal  
43  
44 their needs for change and working conditions. It is a safe and protected space for individuals  
45  
46 to advocate for things that matters to them. In a similar vein, academics need a safe haven to  
47  
48 feel that we can write authentically what we think about issues. And this applies especially to  
49  
50 academics who work on less dominant topics from marginalized perspectives. Collectively by  
51  
52 standing in the picket line, we can resist towards the powerful established discourse of  
53  
54  
55  
56 Authorship.  
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3 To stand in the picket line is not to try to destroy the system altogether at once – even though  
4  
5 it can be an effort towards such aim. It is more about disrupting what is problematically  
6  
7 normalized. It is about chewing one part of a bread and putting it back to the bag. Communal  
8  
9 chewing! To stand in the picket line evokes communality which encourages academics, be  
10  
11 they junior, senior, whatsoever, to take part in discussions possibly not one's 'specialty.' It  
12  
13 gives room for learning from each other meanwhile it forms a united voice. A united voice  
14  
15 that is multivocal at the same time. Paradoxical, yet necessary. A rainbow-colored, non-  
16  
17 hegemonic voice of the union, affectively engaging with writing as picketing.  
18  
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23

### 24 **Together**

25  
26  
27  
28 As bell hooks reminds us: 'feminist theory is complex ... it is less the individual practice that  
29  
30 we often think and usually emerges from engagement with collective sources' (1991, p. 3). In  
31  
32 this spirit, we are writing resistance together. Co-writing is a practice shared with others to  
33  
34 craft a message. Writing with others, with others in mind calls for negotiation, respect, and  
35  
36 care. At times, it is necessary to set aside individual aims to accomplish this for the sake of  
37  
38 clarity, to be coherent individuals have to conform, but within compromise and negotiation  
39  
40 there is possibility for building on each other's ideas. Collective writing, as a resistance,  
41  
42 enables us to produce something together, the 22 of us, to face these challenges, both  
43  
44 temporal, content-wise, and 'expertise'-bounded. It does not mean we would only write  
45  
46 whatever comes to our minds – no. This piece of writing we are now producing together may  
47  
48 not fulfil the requirements of a 'proper academic paper,' if you wish, entailing sections  
49  
50 considering empirical fieldwork (if existing), analysis, positioning to a particular field of  
51  
52 research, review of earlier work done, unfolding of the theoretical framework, discussion and  
53  
54 conclusion. Nevertheless, it is a piece of writing that has enabled us to learn from each other,  
55  
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3 to affect each other, and hopefully also to affect others. This piece of writing is about  
4  
5 suppressed thoughts and feelings that our collective picket line of many authors allows us to  
6  
7 express without revealing ourselves as individuals.  
8  
9

## 10 11 12 **Coda** 13

14  
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16  
17 The reviewers for this paper were wonderfully supportive of our initiative. They did,  
18  
19 however, encourage us to reflect more on what resistance means to us, and what resistances  
20  
21 to resistance came up when we engaged with the concept of the 'collective.' This last section  
22  
23 of the paper consists of ideas that many of the authors shared as a response to the reviewers'  
24  
25 comments. Importantly, this response whilst processual enabled 'resistance' to be  
26  
27 problematized to remind us of the diversity of resistance, and the potential epistemic and  
28  
29 material violence that may emerge from proposing a collective resistance that avoids  
30  
31 individual differences to the conceptualization and practice of resistance. Like the preceding  
32  
33 text, there is no one way to approach resistance, or resistance to resistance. In the text that  
34  
35 follows we intentionally avoid attributing the text to an individual, so that text and voice is  
36  
37 read in multiplicity through the connection with the reader, rather than an attribution of  
38  
39 identity politics. This method supports the openness desired before we engaged in collective  
40  
41 writing. In this way, the writing is suspended.  
42  
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49 It was almost as if we did not have to define resistance, neither what it meant or  
50  
51 what it could be. Perhaps, because we somehow assumed that we originated  
52  
53 from similar positions because we already were there together, envisioning this  
54  
55 form of collective work. I am still not sure whether this is an issue, or just a  
56  
57 reflection of contemporary diffusion of structures. What can become of  
58  
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3 resistance when what you are 'supposed to' oppose is everywhere and nowhere  
4  
5 at once? And when that something cannot be clearly represented but rather  
6  
7 function as a lingering sense or anxious trace.  
8  
9

10  
11  
12 Resistance, in our view, materializes in an ability to allow for interconnected  
13  
14 and shared vulnerability, continuously question existing thinking patterns, and  
15  
16 still appreciate the various opinions and ways of living around us. We initially  
17  
18 felt that everyone in the workshop would be like-minded and that the workshop  
19  
20 would allow all of us participants to be and express our vulnerable selves.  
21  
22 However, this was an illusion. We experienced a surprising emotional attack on  
23  
24 our research and thoughts. We received warm encouragement from many  
25  
26 others. The collective existed and, in this way, the collectivity endured beyond  
27  
28 the confines of the workshop. Writing about the experience together worked as  
29  
30 a powerful way of processing what we had experienced. Writing together  
31  
32 worked as a way of allowing and not suppressing all kind of sensations,  
33  
34 exposing our vulnerable selves and 'letting go' of some of the pain and  
35  
36 insecurity.  
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44  
45 This is resistance that strives for freedom. Freedom to write. Freedom to engage  
46  
47 with the world through an embodied text, which is not contained by the author  
48  
49 or words it is formed by. It comes to life in its relationality. Voices in the  
50  
51 workshop were not unitary, nor were they meant to be. *This writing experiment*  
52  
53 *does not form a unitary voice, it forms a collective voice.* From the beginning of  
54  
55 the writing process, preserving and respecting different voices, I's, in the  
56  
57 classroom and text was important for us. Nevertheless, bursts of resistance  
58  
59  
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2  
3 (perhaps resistance to our collective resistance) were noted, some of them  
4  
5 unexpected. Sudden and personal, hurtful and disruptive as they were, they  
6  
7 brought up vulnerabilities, solidarity and care on which we could further build  
8  
9 as a collective. This text is part of what allows this collectivity to transcend the  
10  
11 confines of the workshop. Collectivity endures and is shared in this text and in  
12  
13 the relationships it creates.  
14  
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18

19 I resist the concept of the collective, but I also use the collective to hide my  
20  
21 silence. I resist being individualized in my struggle for time, space, and voice  
22  
23 because I know these struggles are not unique; that they are shared by many  
24  
25 others. To me resistance in this case means waking up. It requires me to stop  
26  
27 trying to fit in, as well as to stop waiting when others take responsibility and  
28  
29 solve problems for me. It means joining those people who are strong enough  
30  
31 together to act following their true beliefs.  
32  
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38 A strong joint force is definitely required and only a relatively large number of  
39  
40 people who shared the same conviction can make it. I do love to be part of and  
41  
42 contribute to the 'collective resistance' process, an approach that I consider can  
43  
44 work for change and challenge the ingrained patriarchal system for  
45  
46 'newcomers' in academia. But still, I have to reflect that there's probably  
47  
48 resistances to resistance that came up. I hesitate, even now, to have the  
49  
50 confidence and most importantly I think, power, to stand up against the  
51  
52 mainstream domination since the system seems to always work for the  
53  
54 privileged.  
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3 It is clear that the understanding of resistance put forth in this paper may have  
4  
5 been very different for each one of us individually. However, it feels like we are  
6  
7 able to combine individual understandings to create a whole, which unveils a  
8  
9 shared approach to resistance that emerged inter-subjectively through our  
10  
11 collaboration and writing. This feels like it is going beyond the mere  
12  
13 combination of the sum of our different understandings of it, or a clearly  
14  
15 defined decision that we made upfront. It is not only about what is said but also  
16  
17 about what is not said but felt while writing, or what is often compromised. It is  
18  
19 enhanced in our conversations and through it, as our voices intermingle. This is  
20  
21 what we also want our readers to do while reading our text; to reflect and  
22  
23 challenge their 'decisions' or pre-conceptions about what academic writing has  
24  
25 to look like or about what resistance might be or how it can be manifested. The  
26  
27 idea is to be open to resistance as an idea, from wherever it comes because only  
28  
29 like this we can be open to different voices and work for meaningful change  
30  
31 together.  
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40 Resistance to resistance may have been experienced in different fronts. To some  
41  
42 extent we all had to make do with the fact that our 'dear' texts may have been  
43  
44 touched, altered or even deleted from the final paper, and we may have wanted  
45  
46 to resist this. However, we realize that here it is not about what you or I wrote,  
47  
48 but about what we all wrote. This is an important realization for junior and  
49  
50 senior academics alike. Our individual 'narcissism' is lost in a creative  
51  
52 polyphony. We tried to include all voices in this text, but it was perhaps  
53  
54 inevitable that some specific resistant voices were lost. How wonderful that  
55  
56 none of us resisted by walking out on this exercise! Some of us can hide in a  
57  
58  
59  
60

1  
2  
3 crowd, to be part of a collective of like-minded people who we trust even  
4  
5 though we do not know them... and be able to say safely and without the usual  
6  
7 fear of (much) expected retaliation something valuable about ONE of the many  
8  
9 things that makes us sad, angry and hurt in academia. Writing. Saying  
10  
11 something that matters.  
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16

17 I think what is to be considered resistance towards resistance itself, and  
18  
19 resistance towards the collective formation (as a form of resistance) are very  
20  
21 different things here. There were definitely some initial tensions towards  
22  
23 coming together, perhaps because we are so used to be evaluated by, and form  
24  
25 our academic understanding of ourselves, around our possible contributions. As  
26  
27 if it was something individual, which of course is absurd, for are we not  
28  
29 supposed to build on the work of others?  
30  
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34

35 Something happens when one continuously is being molded into setting oneself  
36  
37 apart from others... There was a trace of this when we began to discuss this in  
38  
39 groups, as if we partially could reflect upon a perceived, harsh condition of  
40  
41 individualization (which we sought to resist) while at the same time negotiating  
42  
43 boundaries through differentiation among us. What could possibly be left of  
44  
45 'me' under the umbrella term of 'you'? Was this a resistance towards resistance  
46  
47 though? Not sure. Perhaps, rather a reflection of why this collective expression  
48  
49 felt so urgent at times: a response to communality becoming strange.  
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55  
56 There is a limit to how long we can stay silent or our resistance will turn on us  
57  
58 and our space will be diminished. Words matter. We matter. Meeting silence  
59  
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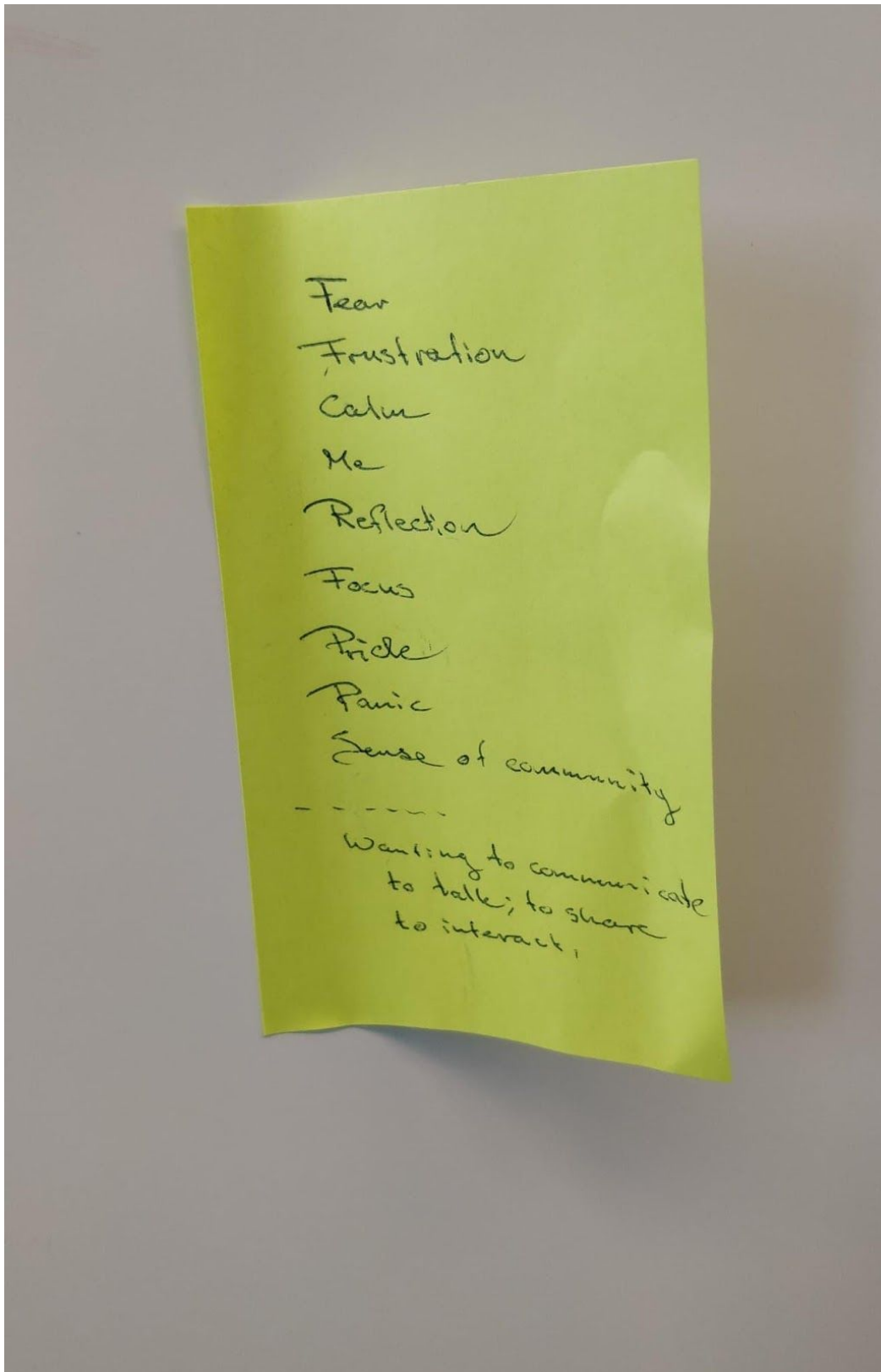
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3 with silence can make us all just feel unmoved, untouched, unnoticed. Perhaps  
4  
5 there is a rhythm to this game we need to embody.  
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Picture 1: A post-it note that matters



## Writing resistance together

### Abstract

This piece of writing is a joint initiative by participants in the Gender, Work and Organization writing workshop organized at Hanken School of Economics in Helsinki, Finland, in June 2019. This is a particular form of writing differently. We engage in collective writing and embody what it means to write resistance to established academic practices and conventions together. This is a form of emancipatory initiative where we care for each other as writers and as human beings. There are many author voices and we aim to keep the text open and dialogical. As such, this piece of writing is about suppressed thoughts and feelings that our collective picket line allows us to express. In order to maintain the open-ended nature of the text, and perhaps also to retain some ‘dirtiness’ that is essential to writing, the paper has not been language checked throughout by a native speaker of English.

*Key words:* writing, co-writing, resistance, feminism

### Where to begin?

‘Writing is a form of collective resistance for Gender, Work and Organization.’ This sentence was given to us, a group of junior, mid-career and senior academics, as an inspiration for developing a collective piece to reflect on our writing practices as academics. Sitting in a room in Hanken School of Economics in Helsinki in the frame of a ‘Writing differently’ workshop, we use the space of our round-table discussions and the materiality of it to rethink

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3 academic writing as a form of collective resistance (cf. Grey & Sinclair, 2006; Gilmore,  
4 Harding, Helin & Pullen, 2019; Helin, Harding & Pullen, 2020). We intend to challenge  
5 patriarchal standards – academic jargon, stiff paper formats, narrow fields, quant focus,  
6 publishing cartels, formulaic research, gendered review processes and so on – that shape  
7 academia and constrain our ability to write meaningfully as academics. After a short round-  
8 table discussion, the point was clear: we desperately need a space to breathe, to move beyond  
9 the boundaries imposed on us by the disembodied metrics that are put into place to evaluate  
10 our ‘intellectual’ abilities as academics. These favor quantity devoid of meaning in our  
11 academic production as opposed to impactful, meaningful knowledge.  
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26 The approach to writing we took is experimental, collective and emerging. The idea for the  
27 piece came from Alison, a Joint-Editor of GWO, during our two-day workshop: bottom up,  
28 using our voices as authors in a large group of scholars of different nationalities in different  
29 career stages. First, we divided our group of 22 participants into four smaller groups where  
30 we discussed our broad theme ‘Writing as a form of resistance’ for about an hour. Each group  
31 identified their own focal themes (silence, blindness, the five senses and so on) which they  
32 then developed further. We returned to the small groups the next day when each participant  
33 had had a chance to experiment with the theme, think and pen down a sample of writing, and  
34 we continued the discussion that was more like brainstorming where we shared our writings.  
35 Then, each group shared their ideas with the larger group. Before breaking up, we decided  
36 that all participants would write a short text of their own. Each group chose a person  
37 responsible for collecting the texts, and one person volunteered to create a structure in google  
38 doc for all the groups where we could all see the collective work that is like a quilt of  
39 different styles and musings. What are we as critical scholars ‘resisting’ and how does our  
40 collective thinking and writing reflect it? This is what we are going to discover.  
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5 By writing this piece collectively, we embody and convert our individual struggles and  
6 blockages to words. We put our women's and men's bodies in our texts: hairy, raw, stinky  
7 and leaky as they are (Pullen, 2018), to create a common language and through this engage in  
8 collective action. We use our individual 'I's and subjectivities with all the peculiarities,  
9 emotions, messiness, fragility and vulnerability that they carry to construct a sense of *weness*  
10 and togetherness. We do not only write *for* each other but also *with* each other experiencing  
11 our ontologies processually and becoming together in connection (Ettinger, 2006; Kenny &  
12 Fotaki, 2015). We relate, we care, we take care, we make space for our differences, we  
13 connect...we dialogue. We agree and disagree.  
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28 As Helene Cixous said, we just need to write. And write about writing, we add... we just  
29 need to write from our women's (and men's) bodies and for them... We are women and men  
30 but allow our feminine sides to emerge. By feminine we denote not the materiality of our  
31 bodies but our ability to shake the symbolic order by crying and laughing where silence 'has  
32 to be' respected, as Cixous calls for in the 'Laugh of the Medusa.' We are 'bi-sexual' and we  
33 write as such: *bi-sexually* to find a common voice and raise it (Cixous, 1976; see Phillips,  
34 Pullen & Rhodes 2014).  
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47 We join in academic accounts calling for the need to rethink writing as a creative process,  
48 and accounting for the embodied, affective, and reflexive experiences of the author/s (Pullen  
49 & Rhodes, 2008; Helin, 2019; Pullen, 2018; Kiriakos & Tienari, 2018). This is a process that  
50 is about what we feel, not only about what we know or think (Rhodes, 2015; Amrouche,  
51 Breckenridge, Brewis, Burchiellaro, Breiding Hansen, Hee Pedersen, Plotnikof & Pullen,  
52 2018). It is not a literature gap that our text intends to fill but rather an intention to challenge  
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3 prevailing conceptions of academic writing and call for changing the way we think of and  
4 relate to it. In this creative process, we open up our bodies to make space for an ethical  
5 connection with our readers and the subjects that we write about (Fotaki et al., 2014). We use  
6 our writing to speak, to connect, to challenge, and to resist together. We use our writing to  
7 overturn the higher order pedagogies that suppress our ‘un-disciplined’ bodies in the context  
8 of academic practices (Bell & King, 2010; Thanem & Knights, 2019).  
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19 We know that challenging academic practices and conventions of writing will be a long  
20 process, a long journey, a battle that may be lost. But we do not stop. We continue... We take  
21 the freedom to do it differently, without asking permission for this anymore. Just doing  
22 it...*differently!* And we do it for the ‘I’, for the ‘you’ and the ‘us.’  
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### 30 **Silence and silencing**

#### 31 *Beginning*

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37 The group assignment starts. We sit at a round table. Six of us. In silence. People waiting for  
38 someone to express their thoughts. Silence. The conversation begins slowly. It is about  
39 silence. It is about trust, equality and care that slowly builds around us. It is about writing,  
40 listening and agency. Passive and active voices. About personal and collective struggles.  
41  
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47 About vulnerability. Being exposed, available, open. A rupture. The space that breaking apart  
48 creates for building a community, and for writing that enables us to challenge the status quo  
49 of the standards of academic writing. But we keep returning to silence. Our own silence and  
50 the silence of others through our writing. How can silence be resistance? Written in the  
51 unspoken spirit of love, here is our joint endeavor to understand the power(s) of silence  
52 through embodied writing.  
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6 ***Incomplete***  
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8 Words through my body.  
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10 Text without pre-reflection, against everything I've been taught in academia.  
11

12 Can I resist the urge to modify?  
13

14 To add?  
15

16 To make it complete?  
17

18 Rational, neat and nicely structured.  
19

20 Complete for who? Reviewers? Editors?  
21

22 For an audience.  
23

24 Complete in format or in message?  
25

26 The audience will notice that the text is incomplete.  
27

28 They will notice I am incomplete.  
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35 ***Exploring the power of silence***  
36

37  
38 As academics, we enjoy the privilege of empowering others by 'giving voice to the  
39 marginalized.' Yet, what we rarely talk about is the moments when we either choose to or  
40 feel compelled to keep silent. In the workshop, when we began to discuss this notion of  
41 silence, relating to our identity as women in a male dominated industry, to being non-native  
42 English speakers but feeling the pressure of publishing in English... we decided to dig deeper  
43 into the notion of silence and to explore the power of silence.  
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51  
52 Buddhist philosophy gives a lot of insight about silence. In Buddhism, the goal of life is the  
53 act of living it. On the one hand, silence is regarded as the expression of knowing and the  
54 inaudible manifestation of frailty of words. On the other hand, the language of silence is  
55 capable of dispelling one's inner darkness, anxiety and void. Hence, silence, in Buddhism, is  
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3 an inherently powerful action for pursuing the Truth. It is itself the Truth. Truth cannot be  
4 defined or explicitly described but can only be experienced. Truth cannot be communicated  
5 with words, but only be shared with people who are willing and capable to embrace it into  
6 their own beings.  
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13 Recognition of moments of silence is central to our collective project. By deliberately  
14 elaborating the emotional and embodied experience hidden behind these moments of silence,  
15 through flashing out the unspoken words interwoven in silence, we want to connect, relate  
16 and affect each other. In this writing, we give silent moments voice. The inaudible voices  
17 shall pass on important messages which many times we would like to cry out, but there is fear  
18 to be heard. I believe that we can forge a collective resistance to this highly masculinized  
19 culture in academia where control, competitiveness, aggression, power and success are over-  
20 rated, and any sign of vulnerability is strictly repressed.  
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32 The silence that is known to most of us is its exterior absence of words. Although in such  
33 moments, words are not used yet, our minds are unquiet. They are filled with emotions, ideas,  
34 frustrations, desires, creativities and doubts. We choose or are compelled to keep silent when  
35 we realize we are the only woman in 'men's space,' and being foreign in a country where we  
36 are always identified as a member of different others, when we are put up as a token of the  
37 marginalized group, when we feel overwhelmed by senses of insecurity:  
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47 *I sometimes choose to keep silent in academic conferences when I am not*  
48 *sure about the climate in which the discussions are taken. I guess I am unsure*  
49 *of whether it is a space in which my thoughts and arguments will be*  
50 *appreciated, understood and how others will react. Maybe it is personal*  
51 *insecurities. As said, sometimes I fear others' reactions, because, in my*  
52 *experience, they are not always friendly. I might feel frustrated as I already*  
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3 *know that I do not have anything to contribute to a discussion if it takes a*  
4 *certain track and tone. I might feel an urge to voice my thoughts, even if I*  
5 *know the risks of how it might be received, depending on my own state of*  
6 *mind and strength, a question arises: do I open my mouth? What do I think*  
7 *about? The things that should be said. The things that should be challenged.*  
8 *The things that have not changed. But what do people think of me saying*  
9 *those things out loud? Who I am to say so?*

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20 *I am a person with a lot of words. I enjoy expressing myself, my feelings, and*  
21 *opinions. But I have learnt to keep silent. I choose silence when I realize I*  
22 *am fighting a hopeless war where important decisions are made for me and*  
23 *others. I have learnt that silence is my safeguard. I think when I do not*  
24 *speak...*

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31  
32 *I'm not sure I ever really choose to keep silent, but rather feel compelled to*  
33 *by outside forces. Lots of times I am thinking about so many other things that*  
34 *I can't fully participate in the conversation. Sometimes I am silent because I*  
35 *have nothing to contribute, because I am opposed to the topic or the line of*  
36 *inquiry or the analytical frame, but I don't have the position or status to*  
37 *challenge those who lead the discourse. What do I think about when I am*  
38 *silent? Everything else. My body, the air, escaping. I imagine other people,*  
39 *other places, the dead. Things that smell nice. Food. I often think of eating*  
40 *and drinking. How I feel when I am silent? Private, and attending to my own*  
41 *self. When I speak, I feel as if I am floating and often that my voice is coming*  
42 *from another body. In silence I connect to that voice, and I can hear it in*  
43 *various ways.*  
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6 ***Relating***  
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8 Academia is full of useless noise and meaningless words.  
9

10 Everyday it's getting harder to breathe.  
11

12 Silence is a scream for pause.  
13  
14  
15

16  
17 Silence is harmony.  
18

19 Silence is respect.  
20

21 Silence is beauty and wisdom.  
22  
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25

26 In silence, we open up and become more sensitive to others' vulnerabilities.  
27

28 In silence, we relate.  
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32

33 ***Sounds of silence***  
34

35 The music flows around you, echoing between the stone walls of the church. The voices of  
36 the singers of the excellent choir following the gentle instructions given by the aging  
37 conductor. The singers individually performing the ancient texts, their bodies breathing  
38 together, and sounds intertwined. Listening tentatively, ready to be moved, touched, to  
39 engage in the music. Then the music suddenly, unexpectedly stops. The conductor suspends  
40 her hands mid-air. The silence happens. A rupture in the flow of music. And we wait,  
41 listening to the silence. And just when we cannot bare the silence any longer, the hands of the  
42 conductor shift and the sounds of the human voices return. This indefinite rest in the music is  
43 called a general pause or a grand pause. This silence in the middle of the flow of music is a  
44 powerful tool to mark a change, a shift in the temporality of the music. It is, in particular, its  
45 unexpected nature and the non-defined length of this suspension that makes the experience so  
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3 powerful. Sometime the musicians hold the pause 'too long' and someone in the audience  
4  
5 will think that the piece has ended and starts to applaud. Perhaps we would need to think  
6  
7 more carefully about the person who applauds, breaking the silence. What is it in the  
8  
9 prolonged silence that forces us to take action?  
10  
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13

14 Or in the words of Paul Simon:  
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19 'Fools,' said I, 'You do not know  
20  
21 Silence, like a cancer, grows  
22  
23 Hear my words that I might teach you  
24  
25 Take my arms that I might reach you'  
26  
27 But my words, like silent raindrops fell  
28  
29 And echoed in the wells, of silence  
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### 35 *Subjectivities* 36

37 Please excuse my silence, which is not meant to be a slight. And I fear you will interpret it as  
38  
39 laziness, flightiness, artlessness. But really, I was just existing as my other self, the one who  
40  
41 attends constantly to the needs of my children, husband, family, friends, home, dirt, dust,  
42  
43 items, empty tummies. Last week, when I met you, I was the self who thinks deeply about  
44  
45 what's wrong with the world and why. That self who has time to ponder big questions, and  
46  
47 can't shut up once the mouth gets going, with ideas overlapping, feeding each other, getting  
48  
49 tangled and complex and so very interesting. The self with capacity to collaborate. But, too  
50  
51 much time being that one has consequences - coming home to a messy house, everything and  
52  
53 everyone needing attention, straightening up, making proper food, helping with homework,  
54  
55 driving them around. Just the routine stuff, but there is so much of it, and it takes time. And  
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3 hence the silence from my academic self - no time to sit down and let the words flow - until  
4  
5 it's so late that I am half asleep. Then, my eyes droop and I can hardly even move my fingers  
6  
7 over the computer keys.  
8  
9

10  
11  
12 So, although my academic self, far away from home, can acknowledge the strength of:  
13  
14

15  
16  
17 Silence in words, resistance for agency  
18

19 Amongst dominant forces, withholding secrets, subject to misinterpretation  
20

21 Absent presences  
22

23  
24 What is unsaid still permeates the air, it is  
25

26 something that haunts and it connects us to histories of being oppressed  
27  
28

29  
30  
31 What comes out when I am at home is this notion of being silenced by the second shift, being  
32  
33 silenced by my expectations for myself as a mother, a partner, a domestic laborer and by their  
34  
35 reliance on my having those expectations so they can exist in an orderly and pleasant home.  
36  
37

38  
39  
40 Together, in Helsinki, we talked about the power in silence, opting out, not participating. My  
41  
42 silence today is not voluntary, it is done to me and holds me back. But, as someone who loves  
43  
44 me says to me: 'you chose this.' At the time, it did feel like a choice – to get married, to have  
45  
46 babies... but everything that comes with it is a requirement. Then, tracing back to the original  
47  
48 'choice's: every time my child self, pictured my adult self, I saw a nice house, a nice kitchen,  
49  
50 nice garden, nice children, me waiting for him to come home from work. I saw my self, in  
51  
52 what I saw, every woman around me doing, when I saw the right way to be woman.  
53  
54

55  
56  
57  
58 'Why do you want to be a scientist? How about a nice little kindergarten teacher?'  
59  
60

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2  
3 'You are such a cute little scientist. Do you want to go out on a date? Do you want to get  
4  
5 married and help me with my science?'

6  
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9  
10 (STOP writing, look up)

11  
12  
13  
14 'Mom can you help my friend with a math problem?' And again, I am silenced, listening to  
15  
16 the voices in my head that I can't find the time or place to let out. Please excuse my silence, I  
17  
18 think (I was listening) to myself.  
19  
20  
21

### 22 23 24 *Silence/voice*

25  
26 Who do we silence in the current academic writing practices?

27  
28 Our embodied voices through review processes, self-censorship and the strict conventions  
29  
30 that we follow while constructing ourselves as 'scientific'.

31  
32 Our struggles as academic scholars, as neatly functioning parts of the publishing machine.

33  
34 (Be careful, do not let anything leak out!)

35  
36 What about other experiences?

37  
38 The ones we do not often write about?

39  
40 The ones who's texts we do not read.

41  
42 The ones who do not write.

43  
44 The ones who are not taking part in these conversations, as in this room on June 7<sup>th</sup> in  
45  
46 Helsinki.  
47  
48  
49

50  
51  
52  
53 Writing as a form of collective resistance. Silence as a form of collective resistance. Politics  
54  
55 of representation and the question of who speaks for whom. Play of voices and silence in the  
56  
57 classroom.  
58  
59  
60

1  
2  
3  
4  
5 Silence can be used strategically as resistance.  
6

7  
8 But you need to have possessed a voice before you can use silence as resistance?  
9

10 If you are absent and silent in a conversation, are you there to resist?  
11

12 Questions of voice and silence.  
13

14 Questions of production and consumption.  
15

16  
17 Of knowledge.  
18

19 Of representations.  
20

21 I consume and produce. Consume and produce. Consume and produce..  
22

23  
24 Where does my responsibility lie?  
25

26  
27  
28 In my production. In my consumption.  
29

30 Of I and the Other.  
31

32 Quite obviously.  
33

34  
35 In the text.  
36

37 In the silences of the text.  
38  
39

40  
41  
42 But how to enact it? How to be responsible?  
43

44 How can I write and listen in a form that emphasizes the agency of others?  
45  
46

47  
48  
49 Staying attuned to multiple struggles, flows across, shows the different faces of silence.  
50

51 Coming from yourself – empowering, comforting, joyful, sacred.  
52

53 Coming from others – unjust, oppressive, disabling, lonely.  
54  
55

56  
57  
58 Strength and vulnerability of embodied silence.  
59  
60

1  
2  
3 Consumed and produced. Consumed and produced.  
4

5 Unequally.  
6  
7  
8  
9

10 How do we come together, and from multiple local struggles, form a collective resistance?  
11

12 Has also the collective solution become silenced? No. Yesterday we started a process of  
13 dialogue and exchange as a foundation for this, based on our individual voices and the  
14 physical act of writing. Midst of the voices in the classroom, I sense, it is the fleeting moment  
15 of picking up a pen or starting to type – in awareness of our interconnection with others –  
16 from where the moment of ethical action rises and we can see how some struggles might be  
17 silent, but others are loud, if we only know how to write them.  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27

28 *Silence, again*  
29

30 Years spent mute.  
31  
32

33 Grounded to the chair, only fear.  
34  
35

36 Fear of what may surface, if I speak.  
37  
38

39 Contained in thought and body,  
40  
41

42 It is the way for women.  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48

49 Years passed, words appeared one-at-a-time.  
50  
51

52 Observing the silent cast adrift, and often drowning, in a sea of dominant male voices,  
53  
54

55 My voice, trembling and embodied, became more articulate,  
56  
57

58 But, how, can I stop? I fear that if I stop, I may never speak again.  
59  
60



1  
2  
3 These lips of mine, in their plurality, have stories to tell.  
4  
5  
6  
7

8  
9 Now others listen, cite and act on my words,  
10  
11

12 Fear of being quoted, reduced to a part of my being.  
13  
14

15 Controlled and contained, again.  
16  
17

18 Can women ever speak freely?  
19  
20

21 Lips enable connection, care and relationships – and resistance.  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26

27 Silence ruptures male spaces.  
28  
29

30 Listening as a politics of care, of resistance.  
31  
32

33 Academia privileges those articulate subjects.  
34  
35

36 Time to hear the silence, hearing through the skin.  
37  
38

39 If we listen, what collective resistance is possible?  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44

45 Every so often, silent bodies connect, words whisper, resonate with others, and I become  
46 me... this is the power of the masses. Sometimes these whispers connect, subversive, and the  
47 rage becomes her.  
48  
49  
50

51  
52  
53  
54 **Blindness**  
55  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60

1  
2  
3 Love is blind, or so they say. Violence is often blind, too, and that is what's so scary about it.

4  
5 The system of academic writing is based on blindness. Its review processes are a  
6  
7  
8 smokescreen for politicking, an illusion, a lie. From the shadows, the chosen few are elevated  
9  
10 into the light and the rest of us are left behind and forgotten.

11  
12  
13 Let's have some names then! After each review process, accept or reject, let's have some  
14  
15 names! Let those wonderful and generous people who help and support others come forward,  
16  
17 into the light. And let the violent ones be named, too.

18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23 ***Blindness around us***

24  
25 Part I – Attack

26  
27 Sometimes *I* just shut up

28  
29  
30 Not talk, not write, but I always think...

31  
32  
33 It was a vertical moment

34  
35  
36 Blindness around us

37  
38  
39 A silently brutal stab

40  
41  
42 towards our work, us

43  
44  
45 – dangers of researching differently

46  
47  
48 Stupidity of

49  
50  
51 simple-minded thinking

52  
53  
54 kind of blindness, too

55  
56  
57 feminists, childbirth,

58  
59  
60 *profit* of researching certain topics

1  
2  
3 Haha!

4  
5  
6 Could you *please* shut up?

7  
8  
9 Sometimes

10  
11  
12 silence is sophisticated wisdom

13  
14  
15 Hiljaisuus

16  
17  
18 ...miten kaunis sana ja tila!

19  
20  
21 Feeling empowered

22  
23  
24 by the pathetic attack

25  
26  
27 This is who I am

28  
29  
30 our writing is us

31  
32  
33 Vulnerability

34  
35  
36 and sensitivity towards life around me

37  
38  
39 are my strengths

40  
41  
42 my inspiration

43  
44  
45 and my sources of

46  
47  
48 researching differently

49  
50  
51  
52  
53 Part II – Aftermath

54  
55  
56  
57 Tears,

58  
59  
60 keep coming. Let them flow, flow, flow

1  
2  
3 I've created a scene

4  
5  
6 anyway

7  
8  
9 Exposing my vulnerable

10  
11  
12 leaky

13  
14  
15 *crying-like-a-little-child-kind-of* body

16  
17  
18 to others

19  
20  
21 But crying is healing

22  
23  
24 *écriture féminine*

25  
26  
27 remains a tricky project

28  
29  
30 blind academia

31  
32  
33 with its 'neutrality' and narrow frameworks

34  
35  
36 dislikes disruptive, destabilizing

37  
38  
39 transgressive

40  
41  
42 *écriture féminine*

43  
44  
45 as a way to

46  
47  
48 confuse boundaries

49  
50  
51 or liberate our work from the standard research practices

52  
53  
54 Kind eyes, warm hugs

55  
56  
57 mobilize collective affects

58  
59  
60 *Action! #snaptivism*

1  
2  
3 Solidarity. Care.  
4

5  
6 We're in this space, together  
7

8  
9 Strength to keep writing  
10

11  
12 While academia continues  
13

14  
15 to limit my research  
16

17  
18 as well as 'free' it  
19

20  
21 and the ways in which the gendered body writes  
22

23  
24  
25  
26 Coda – Healing by *writing together*  
27

28  
29 Tilltufsad fjäderskrud  
30

31  
32 Hetkellinen siipirikko, lamaantuminen  
33

34  
35 *Vai sittenkin jotain muuta?*  
36

37  
38 Sara Ahmed, Hélène Cixous, Veena Das, Elspeth Probyn,  
39

40  
41 *Tack skall ni ha!*  
42

43  
44 Injurious norms, interrupted  
45

46  
47 Kvinnor som lyfter andra kvinnor  
48

49  
50 acknowledging our male allies, too  
51

52  
53 Freedom, flexibility, provocativity  
54

55  
56 without hurting  
57

58  
59 *Rakastan akateemista työtä*  
60

1  
2  
3 Kindness

4  
5  
6 Generosity

7  
8  
9 Care

10  
11  
12 Nei momenti complicati

13  
14  
15 è bello guardare dentro un armadio

16  
17  
18 pieno di sogni.

19  
20  
21 Ga je mee?

22  
23  
24 Affective suffering as

25  
26  
27 a pivotal moment

28  
29  
30 for *transformation*

31  
32  
33 Siamo insieme

34  
35  
36 tässä hetkessä

37  
38  
39 Vis-à-vis, allons-y!

40  
41  
42  
43  
44 What if our *writing*

45  
46  
47 makes the contribution (*sic*), that disrupts the

48  
49  
50 twisted, dull, gloomy

51  
52  
53 thinking and writing

54  
55  
56 in academia

57  
58  
59 reaching beyond seemingly narrow topics

1  
2  
3 carefully scratching the polished surfaces  
4

5  
6 getting our feet dirty  
7

8  
9 appreciating the mundane rhythms  
10

11  
12 experiencing our sensory,  
13

14  
15 more-than-human life worlds  
16

17  
18 which, in fact, touch e v e r y t h i n g around us?  
19

20  
21 We keep writing together.  
22

23  
24 We rise by lifting each other.  
25

26  
27  
28  
29 Writing

30  
31 as a beautiful form of  
32

33  
34 collaborative resistance  
35

36  
37 towards mental violence  
38

39  
40 and disembodied  
41

42  
43 detached  
44

45  
46 rigid  
47

48  
49 research  
50

51  
52 in academia  
53

54  
55  
56  
57 *Epilogue*  
58  
59  
60

1  
2  
3 The two of us have written together for eight years. It was an instant ‘click’ between us, a  
4 sense of meeting another researcher and woman who *feels* you, understands you and respects  
5 you. Sisters in academia. Support. Genuine goodwill. Our collaboration builds on both mental  
6 and kinaesthetic empathy. For us, writing together works as a collaborative resistance against  
7 blindness in academia. Blindness which, for us, materializes in cynical thinking and  
8 denigrating attitudes towards ‘marginal’ research topics, complicated and sometimes  
9 irrational review processes, and the inability to see worth in other than cleaned-up writing  
10 that so firmly believes in objectivity, rationality and abstraction. We resist this blindness by  
11 keeping our writing simple, direct and vulnerably alive.  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
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22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27

28 [INSERT PICTURE 1 HERE: A POST-IT NOTE THAT MATTERS]  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33

34 A picture of a post-it note from the whiteboard at the workshop, captured by one of us. None  
35 of us wrote it and its writer remains a mystery to us, but we can thoroughly relate to it. These  
36 words resonate with the various sensations that writing evoke in our bodies, and foregrounds  
37 the aspects of ‘wanting to communicate, to talk, to share, to interact’ at the very focus, as we  
38 do in our academic work.  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48

49 We are using writing as a collective means to resist the illusion of blindness in academia.

50  
51 With the concept of blindness we refer to a variety of academic practices aiming at  
52 anonymity and impersonality. They exist for good reasons: first, to emphasize that what is  
53 being argued is more important than who is making the claims and second, to assure fair and  
54  
55  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60



1  
2  
3 equal treatment of scholars and their texts. Despite good intentions, the blindness is an  
4  
5 illusion, even a lie.  
6  
7  
8  
9

10 This blindness of practices means that the authority, expertise, gender or position of the  
11 author should not influence the assessment of the manuscript and the related decisions.  
12  
13

14 However, in reality everybody, who has worked in academia for some time, has experiences  
15 that make one doubt the objectivity or anonymity of the processes. Humans as we are, we  
16 continuously search for cues of who the ‘anonymous’ are and make interpretations of the  
17 people we are dealing with. Many of us play on a rather small sand box, which makes it  
18 difficult *not* to know, who the other players are and what they do. In many cases, the  
19 processes are not blind; they only narrow down the number of potential people. Whether that  
20 is a problem or something to sustain is hard to say, but if the idea of ‘blind review’ indicates  
21 that anonymity is necessary for us academics to make fair and ethical assessments and  
22 decisions, is it credible to claim we are fair and ethical behind the curtain of anonymity?  
23  
24 Rather, the blindness of academic practices acts as a script that makes the political games less  
25 obvious and difficult to trace down.  
26  
27  
28  
29  
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31  
32  
33  
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35  
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39  
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41  
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43

44 In academic writing, the tradition of neutrality and impersonality has led to writing becoming  
45 a non-contextual, impersonal and universal practice, in which the author has to hide  
46 him/herself and his/her personality, mother tongue, context, history and body. We are  
47 expected to write as a universal academic – supposedly a white male from an Anglo-Saxon  
48 country. Thus, writing as a blind practice not only causes all academic texts to be alike and  
49 restricts freedom of expression, but also disconnects the readers from the actual process of  
50 producing texts and the person doing it. It enforces the appearance of objectivity, expertise  
51  
52  
53  
54  
55  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60

1  
2  
3 and truthfulness, while making academic texts clinical, often formulaic and empty of any  
4  
5 deeper meaning.  
6  
7  
8  
9

### 10 11 ***Unblinding an aspiring scholar*** 12

13  
14 In case you are expecting to join the Temple of Knowledge: *wake up!* If you yearn to meet  
15  
16 Wisdom in people who would sell their soul to devil to know-it-all and to find a miracle in a  
17  
18 falling apple: *unblind yourself!* You are likely to become a basic unit of production in a  
19  
20 sloppily managed factory that will turn your natural inclination for curiosity and  
21  
22 experimentation into process waste.  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29

30 On the factory floor, people who tend to think, act and write alike establish rank and  
31  
32 superiority by competing to see who can piss the farthest. The great task is to determine who  
33  
34 publishes the most in places some obscure parties with power and vested interests have  
35  
36 defined as ‘best’ and others have accepted as ‘mandatory.’ For sure, one can win because one  
37  
38 is hardworking and talented but also because one is skilled at all sorts of misbehavior or eager  
39  
40 to massage the fragile egos of the members of the ruling party.  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46

47 This is a ruthless hunger game that is dominated by a conservative establishment against  
48  
49 which the other groups, including the self-proclaimed critical ones, timidly position  
50  
51 themselves. Dissidents say ‘the system,’ ‘patriarchy,’ ‘neoliberal university,’ or ‘western  
52  
53 hegemony’ *makes them* and nothing can be done. Slowly, you may start believing in this,  
54  
55 citing Foucault or something else sophisticated to exempt you from personal responsibility.  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60

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Becoming a PhD-student means low levels of autonomy. The precarious employment conditions would cause an uprising anywhere else. Whether you receive a position or a grant or support of *any* kind, depends almost entirely on the whims and competence of your supervisor– or any other patron you may find who happens to like you. Many fall into oblivion or predatory, abusive relations. Some are left spinning alone, some drift away fighting severe depression.

With time the imagined Temple inevitably crumbles down – and may become a labyrinth you cannot exit as your mind is trapped inside. You will find some genuinely intellectual individuals, and that is when light shines onto the factory floor. However, they may not take interest in your magnificent drafts, philosophical insights and brilliant ideas – they have their own battles to fight and demons to face. Your likely destiny is either exit or becoming a unit of production like most other technician-researchers on the factory floor.

I am still here because despite all this, academia can be an addictive, fascinating place if one can develop a somewhat functional existence in it. Many won't. I must have some undiagnosed obsessive-compulsive disorder and want to be part of *something* that is important to me that I want to defend and that I cannot define with words.

### **Writing is a form of collective resistance**

*I knew that I was not for this. I didn't just want to choose for myself a spacious cell in a comfortable prison. I preferred a slam in the open air, feeling the sun*

1  
2  
3 *and the rain nourishing my skin and then writing about it. To let my body breath*  
4  
5 *more fully, to take the air down to feel my belly moving, to fill my lungs with the*  
6  
7 *oxygen that I need to be able to continue living... and thus writing...or is it the*  
8  
9 *other way around?*  
10  
11  
12  
13

14 Writing is personal. It begins with a person and it ends with a person. You can call one a  
15  
16 writer and the other a reader, but it may not be so.  
17  
18  
19

20  
21 Writing is collective. It begins as a relationship between people and it ends as a relationship  
22  
23 between people. You may call one a text and the other understanding, but it may not be so.  
24  
25  
26

27  
28 Writing is political; it produces knowledge. Writing is political; it challenges knowledge.  
29

30 Writing as resistance is personal; you object, refuse, insist. Writing as resistance is collective;  
31  
32 you examine, influence, organize.  
33  
34

35  
36  
37 Sometimes it is important to resist writing, when the politics of writing are such that the text  
38  
39 is no longer the purpose of writing, when writing has become divorced from the text and only  
40  
41 the mere existence of the text is its purpose.  
42  
43  
44

45  
46 Writing is a form of collective resistance. Writing as a form of collective resistance is writing  
47  
48 that examines, also, itself, is suspicious of itself, examine its own assumptions without  
49  
50 turning on itself and without turning in on itself. Writing as a form of collective resistance  
51  
52 cannot be about itself.  
53  
54  
55  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60

1  
2  
3 Academia is no longer what it used to be. We are operating during a time where the ability to  
4 predict consequences and possible results of research projects are decisive for managing the  
5 academic everyday, including the possibility of attaining research funding. To make sure we  
6 are not hit by surprise we can never lose control of our direction, or force forwards. To that  
7 aim we have to write from that which we already know, turning writing into a machinery  
8 practice as we write in under publication pressure. Writing becomes fragmented, flat,  
9 disembodied, and it is lacking depth just as the horizontal arrow that symbolizes this view on  
10 time.  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
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19  
20  
21  
22  
23

24 At its worst this work hurts me, this work makes me cynical and angry. It makes me not want  
25 to write anymore. It makes me want to resist it.  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31

### 32 Questioning 33 34 35 36

37 What is the power that writing resists? Is it more writing, other writing, competing  
38 knowledges? How does writing resist? What is the principle with which it resists? With new  
39 words, with new voices, with new forms, with new languages. Can those be heard?  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45

46 *Ok. At least writing does not kill, does it?*  
47  
48  
49  
50

51 I get distracted by a message from Facebook and start surfing. There has been another  
52 unfounded arrest of an investigative journalist in Moscow. A picture of protesters catches my  
53 eyes. People are standing in line in order to hold a single picket. One by one. Unsanctioned  
54 collective political rallies are forbidden in Russia, and concerning this case, there is no  
55 chance a permit would be issued. A single picket is the only legal way to resist. Therefore, all  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60

1  
2  
3 these persons are waiting for their turn to hold the poster with a call to free the journalist.  
4

5 They are together, but, at the same time, each one adds her or his own voice to the common  
6  
7  
8 cause.  
9

10  
11  
12 The pen is heavy.  
13

14 The screen is blank.  
15

16  
17 Is there space for me here?  
18  
19

20  
21 Am I experienced enough? Am I legitimate enough? Am I powerful enough? Do I need  
22

23 permission for this? From whom? For what? Where am I (hidden)? Where is my body?  
24

25  
26 Where is my sensuality, my affect, my rigidity, my fragility, the messiness that I carry? Why  
27  
28 do I do this and for whom?  
29

30  
31  
32  
33 Should I first learn to publish more traditionally before beginning to resist it? I'd rather still  
34

35 write differently, because it's more fun, more lively, more something I want to do, but will I  
36  
37 succeed to publish by doing so?  
38  
39

#### 40 41 42 ***Resisting prevailing forms of academic writing and resisting that resistance*** 43

44  
45 I am joining the line of those who are determined to write differently, 'acknowledging the  
46  
47 risk of embarrassment, of not being understood, of being dismissed or ridiculed, of being  
48

49 considered self-indulgent, or of being rejected' (Kiriakos & Tienari, 2018: 266). While  
50

51 staying in the line, I am summing up what seems important to me in writing and formulating  
52  
53 it as a manifesto, as suggested by Jenny Helin at the GWO workshop.  
54  
55  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60

1  
2  
3 *I intend*

4  
5 *to be honest to myself in writing;*

6  
7 *to lean on, but not to hide behind stronger others and to be supportive myself;*

8  
9 *to allow myself to write slowly, but to keep on moving, stretching higher and deeper;*

10  
11  
12 *I will try to find the strength to write through being weak, shamefully imperfect and*  
13  
14 *vulnerable, but to save and protect the vulnerability*

15  
16  
17 *Just because there,*

18  
19 *on the other side of a journal,*

20  
21 *probably, there is Someone.*

22  
23 *A One who waits for my text,*

24  
25 *needs it the way I needed*

26  
27 *Academic Writing as Love*

28  
29 *by Carol and Janne.*

30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35 *No, no, I will not. I will not participate in this collective resistance thing. I am*  
36  
37 *not yet there; I have not yet learned to fill the gaps properly. Besides, they all are*  
38  
39 *so cool, and experienced, and 'vertical' in writing, and so poetic.*

40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45 I keep staring at Carol Kiriakos and Janne Tienari's article 'Academic Writing as Love'. I see  
46  
47 writing as a long-term relationship, in contrast to writing as passion and competition. I do not  
48  
49 like the idea of participating in the race. It does not inspire me, this race, which suggests no  
50  
51 space and time for dealing with being weak and vulnerable, being attentive and protective to  
52  
53 others.  
54  
55  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60

1  
2  
3 *“You see. Love has been conceptualized for you personally. Have you not been*  
4 *looking for it? Just take it”.*  
5  
6  
7

8  
9  
10 *I find it difficult to find the balance between peaceful me and collective*  
11 *resistance. As I see it, the 'battle, fight, protest, resistance' -rhetoric is about*  
12 *looking for courage in myself to oppose dominating power. However, opposing*  
13 *is not the aim in itself.*  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18

19  
20  
21 *All these are questions that have been circulating in my head since the early years*  
22 *of my PhD, unsettling my few hours of rest, the endless nights that I spent alone*  
23 *after long days of developing rigorous argumentations and deductions of*  
24 *'counter-intuitive' (but otherwise soulless) hypotheses for my academic texts.*  
25 *What a word! Counter-intuitive! it has to be so to 'sell' ... just doing the intuitive*  
26 *is not enough.*  
27  
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36  
37 *Just writing is not enough! ... for what really matters!*  
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42 *For years, I kept my body constrained; limiting it from its potential to express*  
43 *what inherently inhabited it... ideas, dreams, sensations, pleasure, pain, worries,*  
44 *confidence or lack of it...I held back from writing a language that touches, to*  
45 *write about a topic that touches, to write about writing itself. I kept all of this for*  
46 *my personal scripts, which I had very little time to care about. And I was afraid*  
47 *of sharing these concerns with my supervisors or colleagues, in fears of being*  
48 *seen as the crazy one.*  
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58  
59 *Vulnerability in academic criticism... In fear of being rejected... Yet another time!*  
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*I wish I could be brave enough.*

I suppose people hurt people in academia. In purpose or accidentally. During the workshop, I heard about the power game that is ongoing in academia. This game makes even the most experienced and highly respected professors to be afraid to speak out so that they would not sound stupid! I did not want to sound stupid or ignorant. I did not want to be 'revealed' as a person, who really does not have a right to be here with such a short history in the academic world. I noticed the vulnerability there, where I expected to see stable self-confidence. This was a relief to me because it made the academic world look more human to me. Is showing our vulnerability through experimenting different styles of academic writing a threat to us?

According to my observations during my short experience in the academic world, there is something hurtful in the appreciation of criticism. Although critical thinking is, in my opinion, a necessary practice to produce any new understandings and therefore new knowledge through research, it can be used in very harmful ways in the academic world between people. After listening to more experienced colleagues, it seems to me that criticality is too often used as a form of oppression or to support the individuals' place in the hierarchy. That is the opposite thing to what critical thinking tradition, in theory, was supposed to do (Duncum, 2008). The critical theory aims to break free from the prevailing and 'taken for granted truths,' but it is itself taken for granted in education literature (Duncum, 2008) and in academic practices in general.

*'We honor others by challenging them when we think they are wrong, and by thoughtfully taking their criticisms of us. To do so is to take them seriously; to do any*

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3 *less is to dismiss them as unworthy of serious consideration, which is to say, to treat*  
4 *them with disrespect. Respect means the willingness to listen, openness to the*  
5 *possibility of learning from, responsiveness, criticizing when necessary. ---Respect*  
6 *does not mean that everything they do is “fine for them” or beyond the pale of critical*  
7 *judgment. Emphasis on the acceptance of difference is meant to express and*  
8 *encourage tolerance. Sometimes it succeeds in this. But sometimes it can have the*  
9 *opposite effect. Valorized differences can harden into Difference.’ (Fay, 1996, 239)*  
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21  
22 ‘Critical theory tends to operate from within the binary terms of dominance and a liberating  
23 counterpoint in which a singular truth is opposed by a singular alternative’ (Duncum, 2008,  
24 253). I think that this kind of confrontation as an accepted truth in academia does its silent  
25 work in us. It puts us to the positions of self-defence and makes us to focus on fighting for  
26 our existence in academia instead of creating a fruitful conversation. ‘One truth colliding with  
27 another does not necessarily lead to enlightenment but to retreat, not to synthesis or  
28 compromise but to an endgame’ (Duncum, 2008, 250). So how to criticize without hurting?  
29 How to take critic and avoid cutting vulnerability out of it?  
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#### 41 *Resistance as a fight or invitation to a dance?*

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43  
44 Gilmore et al. (2019) are calling us to arms towards the positivist and normalized  
45 understandings of the only right way to do research. But is the war as a form of collective  
46 resistance that can really make space for difference and multiplicity in writing that Gilmore et  
47 al. (2019) want to achieve? I agree that fighting and defending oneself is sometimes  
48 necessary, but are there some other ways to create space for different forms of academic  
49 writing?  
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3 I might be naive and childish by saying this, but cannot we just do it? Write differently and  
4  
5 by doing so, be the examples of how many kinds of forms of expressions in academic texts  
6  
7 can create more understanding of the complex world we are living in? And with those texts  
8  
9 invite the others, that might not accept this kind of writing as academic, to the dialogue? Are  
10  
11 we, who want to defend the 'polyphony' of different ways of expressing research (Bakhtin,  
12  
13 1981 according to Duncum, 2008), able to understand or at least give space to the others that  
14  
15 do not want to allow this plurality?  
16  
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20  
21  
22 Could we somehow go beyond that attack-defence practice that is apparently experienced as  
23  
24 hurtful in the academic world? Could we somehow just ask or persuade the partner, who  
25  
26 thinks differently than us to join the common dance with us, get in the dialogue (Duncum,  
27  
28 2008) with us? Can we give space for the other who might want to stay still and not to dance  
29  
30 with us? After all, we are all in the same 'academic ballroom' and any kind of expressions of  
31  
32 movements in that space should be allowed.  
33  
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36

37 I know your rules. I tried to play by your rules. Let's just try to play by different (my) rules.  
38  
39 And then we will discuss it and agree on common rules. And I promise I will respect your  
40  
41 choice.  
42  
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45

46 This text is *y-ours*.  
47  
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50  
51 Being at this workshop in Helsinki, among colleagues who persist to ask the difficult  
52  
53 questions even though there are no immediate answers, who understand and embody the need  
54  
55 for safe inquiry spaces to emerge, and who create the moment where we can have  
56  
57 conversations "for real", offers resistance in solidarity. It is pockets like this that give hope  
58  
59 for another future in academia.  
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6 And thus share, and thus resist...

7  
8 And finally here I am, with all of you...not alone anymore...

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11  
12 I now feel that I know the answer:

13  
14 I write to relate. I write to share. I write to live and to continue to live...

15  
16 I write for me and for you ... with you...

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21 Just add your voice. Free yourself. You are not alone. There are others to support you.

## 22 23 24 25 26 **Reflecting**

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31 During the GWO workshop I noticed more clearly, how those who have been in academia for  
32 long have a kind of hard message for me who is just starting in this field: 'This work hurts  
33 me, this work makes me cynical and angry. It makes me not want to write anymore. It makes  
34 me want to resist it.' I did not have enough time to ask the questions: 'Why this work makes  
35 you angry? What things in academia make you cynical?' I guess that writing academic papers  
36 is sometimes so hard that it makes you want to quit, but I don't think that it is the reason that  
37 makes people cynical, angry and raises resistance against their work.

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48  
49 I noticed that on the first day it was not easy for me to talk about my thoughts among the  
50 more experienced colleagues. I think this happened, because of the respect that I felt for the  
51 experienced colleagues. I did not want to be 'revealed' as a person, who really does not have  
52 a right to be here with so short history in the academic world. At the time this happened, I did  
53 not really know why I felt this way. That's how I got caught in the practice that values highly  
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2  
3 the appreciation of the experience and some sort of hierarchy that is embedded in academic  
4  
5 culture.  
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### 11 *Experiment survivor*

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14 I decided to participate in a writing workshop organized by GWO and hosted by the  
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I decided to participate in a writing workshop organized by GWO and hosted by the  
GODESS Institute (Gender, organization, diversity, equality and social sustainability in  
transnational times) at Hanken in Helsinki. I entered the workshop with the ‘standard’  
expectation of improving my writing, and in particular, writing of academic journal articles. I  
left the workshop realizing that I have started a new journey during the process of battling  
with the uncertainty and my own inertia through writing. We were quickly grouped with  
participants who haven’t met before. My group is quite diverse in terms of academic  
background. It wasn’t easy to produce a coherent idea for a small piece of writing given that  
we all have just met.

We discussed in our small group what we were resisting collectively in writing. Resistance  
against the dominant publishing regime, against Authorship with the capital A? Towards the  
end of the workshop, I came to realize that I was resisting my “old” self! No one has forced  
me to write for a particular journal, with a particular group of scholars, or even just to  
continue with the same way of writing. It has always been me who is not receiving all the  
other possibilities of writing. It’s not easy to move out of the comfort zone that one has built.  
And this is just me in my 4<sup>th</sup> year of academic job. What a terrifying thought to think what if I  
am just going on like a publishing machine.

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2  
3 I also learnt how to write through vulnerability. As an Asian female, I have always tried to  
4  
5 keep my head down. I blame Confucius for the bad influence of the 中庸philosophy (The  
6  
7 Doctrine of the Golden Mean). I have learnt to just take on whatever comes to me and try not  
8  
9 to talk about the negative, the challenging and most importantly the painful experiences.  
10  
11  
12 What a liberating moment for me to know that one can seek to heal by writing about these  
13  
14 vulnerabilities in academia too. Reflecting on my research journey on the topic of gender, it  
15  
16 suddenly became clear to me that I am strong enough now to face this issue straight on  
17  
18 finally. I have been hiding behind the excuse that it would be too painful for me to research  
19  
20 gender particularly in my country of origin. My academic father, a gender sociologist, has  
21  
22 been so awfully gentle and kind to me when I continuously discarded gender by listing it as  
23  
24 limitations in my PhD thesis, my articles (written mostly for job with as much of me in them  
25  
26 as possible), and in my book (written for my interviewees who I didn't think would know  
27  
28 how to care for gender). At this stage of my career, I am truly glad that I came to the  
29  
30 realization that researching gender won't cause me more pain than the gendered phenomena  
31  
32 around me have already caused it themselves. Instead it will be a way for me to heal my long  
33  
34 term wound regarding gender since probably birth.  
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43 I heartfully thank the workshop organizers for their unconditioned authentic love in educating  
44  
45 junior academics. As much as I felt like an animal being experimented on during the 1,5 day  
46  
47 workshop, I have rediscovered so many important things not just for work, but also for life. I  
48  
49 can now also joyfully claim that I understand the power and meaning of education.  
50  
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### 54 ***Solidarity***

55  
56 Joining in and contributing to a workshop on collective writing left me with a sense of  
57  
58 academic solidarity which still exists in today's academia dressed in a plethora of  
59  
60

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3 competition and pressure for productivity. Like Jenny Helin proposed in her presentation  
4  
5 about the valuation, and recognition, of vertical time, so was the workshop a pause in the  
6  
7 seemingly chronological timeline of academic work where junior researchers aim to one day  
8  
9 become recognized senior researchers, perhaps professors, that are cited more, more and  
10  
11 MORE, in order to be someone, to EXIST. The workshop embodied scarcity and  
12  
13 unfinishedness, in its beauty – showing its participants how we are not alone in our struggles  
14  
15 in the neoliberal academia.  
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21  
22 Not only did it leave us with a sense of solidarity, it made us act: Alison Pullen's suggestion  
23  
24 of actually becoming involved in collective act of resistance through writing made us to  
25  
26 activate our hands, our minds, mouths, pens, laptop buttons – for a joint effort. While we  
27  
28 started to work collaboratively to achieve a goal of sorts (an outcome to be sent for  
29  
30 publishing in GWO), I dare to argue that it was more about being HERE and NOW. It was  
31  
32 vertical time that we experienced – and, I suggest – we keep on experiencing, as we open our  
33  
34 joint writing documents of our own group, carrying on writing. Carrying on, carrying on,  
35  
36 pausing, pausing. To work as a collective cannot stand infinite carrying on *without* a time to  
37  
38 pause, even it would manifest through our very own comprehension of it, and that is one of  
39  
40 the reasons why collective writing is so powerful. It invites, perhaps forces, us to solidarity.  
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### 47 *Sensitivity*

48  
49 Working on sensitive issues together is, well, sensitive. I believe in letting everyone speak,  
50  
51 even if they speak against the grain. Then I see some others being offended and hurt.  
52  
53 Sometimes I do not even see this, but I am reminded about it later. I know I should know  
54  
55 better, and see, but time and again I am caught in this dilemma. When someone pours their  
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3 heart out and there may be collateral damage, I am blind and clueless... because who am I to  
4 police others?  
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10 Perhaps time is again the great healer. Perhaps we need time. Writing, and writing together, is  
11 one way to heal; to bring multiple voices into the open, to converse, perhaps. We do not have  
12 to agree, but let's listen to each other and care. Even if we sometimes end up hurting each  
13 other. Because those who hurt have themselves been hurt.  
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### 21 **The academic picket line – or resisting ‘Authorship’ through collective writing**

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26 Two interrelated themes emerged when exploring ‘collective writing as a form of resistance.’  
27 First, we see collective writing as a resistance strategy against the prevalence of hierarchical  
28 articulations of academic Authorship and certain institutionalized discourses and interests.  
29 This resistance takes the form of collective writing as a form of *picketing*, a demonstration of  
30 solidarity through which writing becomes an embodied practice, and our writing-together  
31 marks an assemblage of bodies in solidarity. Second, by drawing upon tensions, power  
32 struggles and ambivalence within collective resistance, we suggest that collective writing  
33 may be considered a form of ‘unionizing’ that could help scholars better advocate  
34 marginalized issues, challenge dominant norms, rules and customs and promote care, respect  
35 and community within academia.  
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51 The following paragraphs are a collection of reflections and responses grounded in our  
52 experiences as early-career scholars with different disciplinary backgrounds, coming together  
53 in a workshop on writing, assembled to speak to and with each other. By mixing our voices,  
54 we explore possible strategies for a collective resistance against hierarchical articulations of  
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3 individualized academic Authorship and knowledge production. Our focus is placed on  
4  
5 discussing the challenges and possibilities in the collective construction of resistance against  
6  
7 an Authorship, that is, the contemporary competitive logic of scholarly work, which has  
8  
9 turned academic publishing into an individualized production line.  
10  
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12  
13

### 14 ***One Authorship, One Academia?***

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16  
17 What is the soul of the text? Maybe a discussion around Authorship and the redistribution of  
18  
19 academic capital – is that playing into and reproducing a capitalistic logic? There is  
20  
21 something about a paradox; the horizontal and vertical that actually each serve purposes; we  
22  
23 do not need to choose one. But by engaging with one, at a certain point in time (!), there is  
24  
25 also a need for full, honest, true commitment to the cause; that is why we draw on the  
26  
27 metaphor of picketing and the picket line that one collectively ensures is not crossed. Not by  
28  
29 people who are, who belong to, who oppose, or just randomly walks by. It works to disrupt  
30  
31 very concretely, but also takes up space, calls to it attention to spread, in the minds and in the  
32  
33 practices of organizations that share similarities.  
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40  
41 Already in this writing process, our voices start to mix. I read you, you read me, who are you,  
42  
43 who am I? What remains a topic of uncertainty is the actual error in the current scene of  
44  
45 academic publishing. What is so wrong about it that we want to stand in the picket line? It is  
46  
47 a crucial question, as we probably all have been publishing and been excited to see our own  
48  
49 names as authors of a particular piece of research and writing. It is a piece that embodies so  
50  
51 much more effort that can be guessed from reading the typed words from a, usually  
52  
53 electronic, paper. But when ready, who cares to protest or rebel? Can we not just adjust? Our  
54  
55 answer is no, not really. To write collectively also speaks against the drawback of who  
56  
57 actually benefits from an academic outcome. To write alone, or with two, three, or four  
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3 colleagues – especially if you are not a big name in your ‘field’ and thus you are most  
4  
5 assumedly insecure of whether your work will actually be read and, yes, cited – requires an  
6  
7 effort that does not equal to the ‘price’ one gets when the work is eventually published.  
8  
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10  
11  
12 We do not get direct compensation for our efforts. Our work is fueled by long temporalities  
13  
14 and a wish of our works’ recognition sometime in the future by our ‘colleagues,’ or strangers,  
15  
16 who might be able to find our work from the jungle of academic publications (all of which  
17  
18 nobody ever has the chance to go through in peace as we, at least many of us, are obliged to  
19  
20 produce, produce, produce). Our work is fueled by a third-party benefit as well, as we feed  
21  
22 the journals that feed us indirectly, and get their compensation for doing that. Yet, there is  
23  
24 more complexity: our universities might form a block to this author → editor(s) of journal  
25  
26 → reviewers → editor(s) → author → journal (x 1,2,3,4) → money to the journal  
27  
28 through subscribers → possible reputation through citations to the author / significant merit  
29  
30 in the CV to get an academic position, by not allowing (cannot afford?) access to journals in  
31  
32 which our work is published, thus blocking the distribution of our efforts to our own  
33  
34 communities. So, the question “can we not just adjust?” is crucial: we simply cannot, even  
35  
36 though we have to be part of the system to be alive as academics.  
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45 We need to be bold and brave. This means that we need to be ready to face the criticism  
46  
47 regarding our statements as well. This is far easier to do when we write together – when we  
48  
49 stand together – when we write as a collective. This does not mean hegemony. This means  
50  
51 diversity and its embracement. This means multidisciplinary in its fundamental sense. Why?  
52  
53 Why to write as a collective? What are our motivations to stand in the picket line? In a  
54  
55 neoliberal world of academia, academic publishing counts as a quest and competition of  
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3 individual academic capital. This is the enforcement and feeding of An Authorship. The big  
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5 A.

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10 Our first suggestion is to give away authorship by signing it over to anonymity. But that is  
11  
12 nothing, it is not generative of academic capital, it does not resist the dominant discourse  
13  
14 around Authorship, it just rejects it and take the conversation to a different space. One where  
15  
16 authorship does not exist. A similar idea, that insists staying with, resisting or challenging  
17  
18 dominant discourses on authorship, is one that does not turn over authorship to anonymity,  
19  
20 but which turns it over to a collective, defined by individuals who turn over authorship. That  
21  
22 is the union. Would it be possible to unionize; have one writing union that publishes, but still  
23  
24 keeps track of authors. Allow the union to negotiate terms of publications, but also to  
25  
26 redistribute capital among the members. By, for example, publishing member lists which  
27  
28 shows the number of publications each member has published; or contributed through,  
29  
30 through reviews, proofing or otherwise. Maybe citations are shared; maybe a reviewer is  
31  
32 allowed a share in citations in terms of h-index; impact and so on.  
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40 In the case of writing in academia, we can form different fortresses by choosing with whom  
41  
42 we write, to which journals we write, and advocate for the meaning in the texts that we  
43  
44 produce as opposed to those produced by the 'other'. However, there is just one academia. It  
45  
46 is a paradoxical Yin-Yang relationship because all the different kinds of writings co-exist  
47  
48 together. With a white dot in the black half and a black dot in the white half, the collective  
49  
50 whole of writings in academia are balanced.  
51  
52  
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56 While we pick our own picket line, we must also look beyond the line. As we march forward  
57  
58 in the line, we do not forget that there is a bigger world out there.  
59  
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3 ***We write. United.***  
4

5  
6 A picket line is a shared embodied space, where workers stake out common grounds to signal  
7  
8 their needs for change and working conditions. It is a safe and protected space for individuals  
9  
10 to advocate for things that matters to them. In a similar vein, academics need a safe haven to  
11  
12 feel that we can write authentically what we think about issues. And this applies especially to  
13  
14 academics who work on less dominant topics from marginalized perspectives. Collectively by  
15  
16 standing in the picket line, we can resist towards the powerful established discourse of  
17  
18  
19  
20 Authorship.  
21

22  
23  
24 To stand in the picket line is not to try to destroy the system altogether at once – even though  
25  
26 it can be an effort towards such aim. It is more about disrupting what is problematically  
27  
28 normalized. It is about chewing one part of a bread and putting it back to the bag. Communal  
29  
30 chewing! To stand in the picket line evokes communality which encourages academics, be  
31  
32 they junior, senior, whatsoever, to take part in discussions possibly not one's 'specialty.' It  
33  
34 gives room for learning from each other meanwhile it forms a united voice. A united voice  
35  
36 that is multivocal at the same time. Paradoxical, yet necessary. A rainbow-colored, non-  
37  
38 hegemonic voice of the union, affectively engaging with writing as picketing.  
39  
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44

45 **Together**  
46  
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49  
50 As bell hooks reminds us: 'feminist theory is complex ... it is less the individual practice that  
51  
52 we often think and usually emerges from engagement with collective sources' (1991, p. 3). In  
53  
54 this spirit, we are writing resistance together. Co-writing is a practice shared with others to  
55  
56 craft a message. Writing with others, with others in mind calls for negotiation, respect, and  
57  
58 care. At times, it is necessary to set aside individual aims to accomplish this for the sake of  
59  
60

1  
2  
3 clarity, to be coherent individuals have to conform, but within compromise and negotiation  
4  
5 there is possibility for building on each other's ideas. Collective writing, as a resistance,  
6  
7 enables us to produce something together, to face these challenges, both temporal, content-  
8  
9 wise, and 'expertise'-bounded. It does not mean we would only write whatever comes to our  
10  
11 minds – no. This piece of writing we are now producing together may not fulfil the  
12  
13 requirements of a 'proper academic paper,' if you wish, entailing sections considering  
14  
15 empirical fieldwork (if existing), analysis, positioning to a particular field of research, review  
16  
17 of earlier work done, unfolding of the theoretical framework, discussion and conclusion.  
18  
19 Nevertheless, it is a piece of writing that has enabled us to learn from each other, to affect  
20  
21 each other, and hopefully also to affect others. This piece of writing is about suppressed  
22  
23 thoughts and feelings that our collective picket line of many authors allows us to express  
24  
25 without revealing ourselves as individuals.  
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