

STORY TROUBLE

with Kim David Bots

This document is conceived of as a resource, listing the exercises developed for the three-part workshop "Story Trouble" at Louise Dany, Oslo, along with material shown and discussed as part of the workshop.

Presentation:

- (video) Lydia Davis: Reading 'Goodbye Louise'
(from 0:00 to 3:35)
- (video) Excerpt from Donna Haraway: Story Telling for Earthly Survival, Fabrizio Terranova, 2016
- (video) A Bit of Fry and Laurie - Flexibility of Language

Exercises:

- One small paragraph is chosen in advance and a sentence is isolated from the paragraph.
- (1 min) Participants are given first the singular sentence and asked to circle the word that immediately grabs their attention.
- Discuss the words (What are they? Why did they trigger your interest? What hides inside the word?)
- (3 mins) Participants are then given the paragraph and asked to use a marker to blank out words until they have created a new text from the paragraph.
- Read out loud and discuss the results (Which forms emerge? What informs that form? How can the form be broken?)

Homework:

Find a text (no longer than 100 words) that:

- You love
- You hate
- "Works"
- Doesn't "work"

Lydia Davis

Lydia Davis

STORY TROUBLE

- Each person shows one of their Love/Hate texts on a screen/projection, but is not allowed to reveal which one it is. The others try to figure it out by asking questions about the content of the text only (i.e whether the feeling of love/hate is strengthened by a specific word, or whether the love/hate comes from the situation the text was first encountered, etc.)

Each participant have only one chance to guess “You love/hate this text because...” until the person in question accept.

- Discuss

- (video) [Lydia Davis: Reading ‘Jane and the Cane’](#)

- (video) [Untitled \(Heat Up the Nickle\)](#), Peter Wächtler, 2013

- (30 mins) Each person reads the left over love/hate text out loud, while the listeners write down one word for what they hear and give it to the one who reads. Each of the words are to be exhausted of their meaning 6 times in private.

- As we come back together, each person reads one of their exhaustions out loud, before reading the full text again.

- Discuss

Homework:

Randomly assign one of the works/doesn't work texts to someone else. Write a sentence that comes immediately before and after it, without altering the original text.

STORY TROUBLE

- Start the session with a recap of session 2, focusing on the last exercise.
- Present and Discuss the homework assignment (What was the impression of the original text on first glance? How did the person approach it by adding new text? Did the person follow the style of the original text? How does the owner of the original text feel about it now?)
- Analyse in plenum how each participant approached the text formally.
- (video) *The Girl Chewing Gum*, John Smith, 1976
- (video) *Atoll, bay, beach*, Ayatgali Tulleubek, 2018
- (30 mins) Choose one short text that you like or think “works” because of its style or form.
- Discuss
- (30 mins) Try to destroy/contradict/break the “magic” of that form without dismissing your engagement in what you “like” or think “works”.
- Read the results and discuss.

repetition

The following list of text and video was the material that emerged during the workshop at Louise Dany, Oslo, and constitutes a suggested, expanded resource list for “Story Trouble”

2

- (sound) Gertrude Stein, *If I Told Him A Completed Portrait of Picasso*, 1923 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FJEIAGULmPQ>
- (sound) Adrian Piper talking on the track *Artists Ought to be Writing* by Jason Moran <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ieEEFs23PTw>

Note: I realised when showing this clip <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x-uliYOgtEuY> adjacent to the above one, the music functions somewhat like the ‘exhausting a word’ exercise. By using spoken text as direct basis for music/ composition, the text is emptied out through its usage. It becomes background.

- (recitation) from *Citizen: An American Lyric*, Claudia Rankine, 2014

3

- Susan Hiller
Lost and Found (2016)
http://www.susanhiller.org/installations/lost_and_found_more.html
 - (video) Excerpt from “*The Analyst, the researcher, the screenwriter, the cgi tech and the lawyer*”, Neil Beloufa, 2011
<https://vimeo.com/29319349>
 - (video) Mette Edvardsen <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6SZs--Js0uA>
- Note: Regarding repetition of words and how they become form.

louise
dany