

RACHEL NEWCOMBE

Inducing Psychic Sleep While Writing Analytically: Why We Write

Why do writers write? Because it isn't there.- Thomas Berger

**Question: Why do psychoanalysts write? Simple answer: To be read
Not so simple answer: To stay alive**

Psychoanalytic writing has the power to revolutionize or constrict the way we think, the way we practice, the way we supervise and analyze. In order to understand the power of writing, both positively and negatively, it helps to ponder the question of why and how we write.

Intersecting with the ideas in the companion paper, *Writing Analytically Without Inducing Psychic Sleep*, this paper will play with the idea that inducing psychic sleep can help a person wake up to new ways of writing.

Spending just a few hours randomly surveying articles on PEP (Psychoanalytic Electronic Publishing) demonstrates that writing styles are wildly varied. There are theoretical articles without any case material and there are articles packed with case material with little to no theory. There are articles written with a revengeful tone and there are articles written with an exhibitionist tone. What is the template for psychoanalytic writing?

There are numerous elements influencing a writer: imaginary criticism from readers, competitive authors, critical editors, and envious colleagues. This paper will describe the various ways internal and external forces need to be battled in order to simply write.

Using excerpts from contemporary (1980-current) and older (1900-1945) psychoanalytic journal articles, I will encourage audience members to discuss what puts them to sleep and what wakes them up.

Rachel Newcombe has a private practice in psychoanalytic psychotherapy. She is a Board member of the International Federation for Psychoanalytic Education. She also serves as the Co-Chair of the History Committee.