

# Design Writing Criticism: Five Things to Remember \*

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\* If only it was this easy.

\*\* Compiled by Anna Gerber and Teal Triggs, based on their experiences of teaching (and in the case of Triggs, leading) the MA Design Writing Criticism course at the London College of Communication, University of the Arts London, the first course of its kind in the UK.  
[www.lcc.arts.ac.uk](http://www.lcc.arts.ac.uk) / [www.designwritingcriticism.co.uk](http://www.designwritingcriticism.co.uk)

## 1. WHY I WRITE

George Orwell and later, Joan Didion and Paul Auster asked themselves the question: Why I Write. For Orwell, this involved the ego as much as it had to do with politics.

## 2. WHAT I WRITE

Students from MA DWC curated an event called Why I Write at the Design Council in 2009. John Walters, editor of *Eye*, asked the students to consider what they write, not why they do it.

## 3. WRITING AS PRACTICE

A majority of MA DWC students have a background as design practitioners. We think of writing as a dynamic, rigorous practice, much like the practice of design (be it graphic, product, fashion or architecture).

## 4. THE WRITER'S VOICE

It could be loud, clear, bold. Or: soft, quiet, polite. The writer's voice could be accessible and easy to follow, much like Ralph Caplan. Or it could be Gonzo-style: blurring fact with fiction. So long as that voice is critical, original and distinctive.

## 5. AND NOT FORGETTING THE READER

Writers write to be read. Some write to entertain their readers (as British food critic, Jay Rayner, told students over lunch), while others leave their readers feeling bewildered, challenged and confused. Either way, the reader plays an active role in the creative and intellectual pursuit we call writing.