

Preface: 序言

第00篇：[序言]：6/30/2002[7] 文席謀

於洛杉磯

這散文創作集是今(2002)年3月13日起、參加洛杉磯阿罕布布市老年人中心筆會時，練習英文寫作的成果。每星期一篇，到五月底共完成11篇。以後特別增加一篇為12篇。六、七、八月暑期休息例不開會。九月再開始。預計以後我儘可能仍將參加7d會，使文章篇數將不斷加多。三年之內可能超過百篇。這會的正式名稱為“作家圓桌會”(WRITER'S ROUNDTABLE)。由本市一資深年長女作家金裴(JANE PIEWE)女士主持。共有會員十餘人。多為附近對寫作興趣的耆年人士。婦女佔多數。每星期三上午九時半到中心一特定會議室集合開會。至十一時許、寫作討論和事務交待終結，可以自由離席、也可留在會中聊天到十二時。

到會者先簽到。隨後由主持人就印發有關寫作技巧的文章或資料作說明解釋。其次到會者每人提出一篇上次會中先規定要寫的文章，輪流自己宣讀。每讀完一篇大家批評討論，或提出問題。隨後議定下週要交作品的題目。題目的選定是從一包括多數題材的長單中挑選。可由與會者輪流建議，或由主持人指定。據說這樣‘題目單’可在多種網絡上找到而‘下載’。若與中國傳統作文命題相比、將發現這筆會中的題目字數可能相當長、範圍靈活而廣泛、多具有廣闊想像及發揮空間。作者能就個人經歷、專業、想像融合而寫成散文或詩歌。無猷板呆滯拘泥之弊。多能使寫的、讀的、聽的、甚至閱稿或改稿人感興趣。會中著重寫作技巧的討論。不涉及宗教及政治敏感問題的爭論。

會員寫好的文稿以宣讀和討論為主。也可請主持人改稿，多數人都無此需要。我的入會是以參與當地有意義活動同時練習英文寫作技巧為主。提出請主持人改稿。她欣然同意。而且對我多作口頭鼓勵。或寫上好的評語。或認為我所寫的內容有價值，宜向報刊投稿。

我曾參加洛杉磯華人寫作協會。那與這會大不相同。這會人數較少、不限人種、不收會費、每週集會、討論寫作實務、每週交作品相互觀摩討論、開會時不吃飯、場所在當地老年人中心、環境幽雅清靜，等等。華人的寫作會人數較多、多在餐廳開會、人聲嘈雜、或請名人演講、開會次數較少。兩者文化背景不同，客觀環境和條件也不一樣。

關於寫作技巧、我因金裴女士核稿的提示發現時下美國行文對文法不如我想像中拘泥，以簡明達意、近乎口語、自然而具邏輯性為主。我從前在校學英文時不曾見過洋人，卻曾學過‘文法’而且非常重視。現發現前置詞常被省略，或用的和前所學的不同。我以往寫過技術性文章。和現在所寫散文風格有異。我偶然在網絡用“writer”這字來“搜尋”發現其有關內容廣博無比，寫作專業學習機會非常多。我僅是以寫作為消閑而不是專業。面對美國社會對‘寫作’如此重視。不覺‘望洋興嘆！’自認祇能‘淺嚐即止。’

附：初步完成十二篇文稿目錄：

- 01 電梯驚魂記。
- 02 駕車違規遇警記。
- 03 悔不當初。
- 04 寵物(狗)的設身處地。
- 05 談迷信。
- 06 略述生平及喜愛的住處。
- 07 “雪”的感受。
- 08 “島”字引發的思維。
- 09 神仙故事中‘壞蛋’自白。
- 10 設想和某名人餐敘時所作詢問。

11 寫給上帝的一封信，談你對宗教的看法。12 不用冷氣機 的祛暑方法。

[7/27/2002 文席謀於加洛杉磯阿罕布拉市住宅]

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00 PREFACE

These 12 short English prose are my creative writing after I joined the ALHAMBRA WRITER'S ROUNDTABE, which is located at and supported by the Alhambra city's Jocelyn Senior Citizen Center. From March 13, 2002 to the end of May, this resulted in 11 articles of assignment with an additional out of special arrangement. This ROUNDTABLE recesses in June, July and August for summer vacation and is supposed to resume in September. I plan to continue my participation, if possible, in September, in order to keep my writings increasing in number, hopefully reaching one hundred in three years to come.

The ROUNDTABLE is headed and dedicatedly managed on a volunteer basis by a local famous senior writer, Ms. Jane Piewe. It has nearly twenty senior citizen members - ladies in majority, most of whom reside in the Alhambra city and all of whom have a common interest in writing. Normally the teacher and the fellow members gather at 9:30 AM every Wednesday, discussing writing and homework assignments for about one and one-half hours. Afterwards, members are free to leave or stay to chat freely until noon.

Members who arrive at the meeting have to sign-in first. Then the chairperson and the teacher, Ms. Pieve, calls attention and begins the interpretation of handouts that have been distributed regarding writing skills and other relevant information. This is sometimes mixed with discussions lasting about 30 minutes in all. Then the attendants, one by one, begin to present their writings they havedone at home on the subject assigned in the last week's meeting. After each reading there is a few minutes reserved for listeners to possibly raise questions and/or comments. When all the presentations are over, there is time for the group or the teacher to pick a topic for the next homework assignment. The topic selection is from a long list of subjects, which is said could be downloaded from some writer's magazine.

The content of these subjects is mostly of broad and versatile coverage and provides stimulus for thinking and imagination. Writers assigned with such listed subjects are apt to compose writings based on their own background, experiences, profession and imagination, interesting to writers themselves and possibly readers or listeners. The discussions in the meeting focus on writing matters, avoiding touching on politics or religion.

I have had a chance to be a member of the Chinese Writer's Association in Los Angeles for many years. Now I find some radical differences between the Chinese Writer's society and an American one. Usually Chinese Writer's Associations hold meetings in noisy restaurants with banquet and famous people speaking, leaving little time for participants to discuss and practice writing skills. The consequential differences are evident. From the distributed materials and the verbal instructions of the teacher, I have the impression that the American contemporary writings are not confined to the stereotype grammar rules such as being logical, simple, verbal, accustomed, easily understood, and vividly presented. In the past I had experience in writing some technical documents; now I find the present writing of short prose is quite different in style. In drafting these prose, I made use of the computer to solve a part of the grammar and spelling problems. For easier reading and reviewing I have tried to keep my writing as short as possible.

I once supplied the word "writer" in my PC web site "search engine" to find out something to my interest and got a tremendous amount of relevant information regarding writing skill and learning opportunities. In the US there is an abundance of newspapers, magazines, and books covering all conceivable

topics. They are so amazing. American people not only like sports, games and many kind of weird things, but they also profoundly like reading and writing.

Briefly translated topics of the 12 short writings are as follows:

(01) Elevator Entrapment, (02) Kindhearted Cops, (03) Remorse, (04) Fate of Dogs, (05) On Superstitions, (06) Most Liked Dwelling Place in my Life, (07) Snow and its Associations (08) Writing Setting from ISLAND, (09) Confection of a Villain in a Fairy Story, (10). An Imaginary Question to Ask to a Famous Person, (11) Assumed Letter to the God to Express Your Religion Viewpoint. (12) Methods to Keep Cool in summer without Air-conditioner.