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## How do we use creative and personal memories for creative communication?

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HOW DO WE USE CREATIVE AND PERSONAL MEMORIES  
FOR CREATIVE COMMUNICATION?

An Abstract of a Thesis Project  
Submitted  
in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts

Tyler Robert Montgomery  
University of Northern Iowa  
May, 2022

This Script by: Tyler Robert Montgomery

Entitled: KeyBoard Memories & You Have the Right to Forget

Performed in the University of Northern Iowa's Interpreters Theater on the 4th, 5th, and 6th of November, 2021

has been approved as meeting the thesis requirements for the  
Degree of Master of Arts

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Date

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Dr. Danielle McGeough, Chair, Thesis Committee

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Date

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Dr. Grant Tracey, Thesis Committee Member

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Date

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Dr. Gary Gute, Thesis Committee Member

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Dr. Jennifer Waldron, Dean, Graduate College

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## ABSTRACT

*Inspired by the author's memories, KeyBoard Memories and You have the Right to Forget are two short stage plays exploring topics of identity, time, and justice. This thesis uses personal and creative memories to develop stories in the form of scripts. The thesis begins with an example of creative writing inspired by the author's personal and creative memories and describes the purpose of the project before moving into a review of literature that explains what memories are, how they work, and the different types of memories. Then the method section describes the methods of journaling and scripting writing, and then the third section is an analysis of the journals, scripts, and the post-discussions of the plays.*

## My Story

Do you remember the first time you were lost? I don't mean the first time you got lost in a Wal-Mart looking at transformer toys. Oh, the memories. Wouldn't it be better to just stay lost?

I grew up in the country. Contrary to popular belief, other people do live in the countryside. Although, if you do not conform to the norms of the countryside, then you are alone. I lived with other people who should be called my blood family, but in reality, I lived alone in a large brick home. There was no other home like it in the countryside for a time. Those bricks could tell some stories. Lucky for my family, bricks are silent.

Unlike bricks, the television screen did tell its stories. It does tell stories of a great adventure. Stories of happiness, joy, love, anger, hate, sorrow, depression, resentment, and confusion. The screen reinforced ideas of happiness within a square space. It was a



way of exploration without traveling. Although the flashing colors didn't mix well with the dirt or the hard brick wall of our countryside home.

My relationship with my blood father was like a brick wall. He's just another man, but in that space, he's *the* man. There he was a man among men. Hardworking, tough, well-built, knows how to shift dirt and love.

I, on the other hand, was not built like a brick house nor can I shift dirt. I'm hardworking in other ways. Despite our differences, we were both drawn to the flashing light of the television screen, though it held a different meaning to each of us.

In 2011, I did track and field for a year. The doctor told me that my body wasn't used to all that running, and I had stretched a muscle in my left leg. I was never able to stretch my body or transform the physical pain I bore into anything that man could appreciate.

My appreciation was in my mind. The screen tells the boy how people should act in other created worlds. Loving and unfunny wittiness. My mind didn't transform any of the flashing lights. Instead, I took them all, and like a river windmill, combined all those ideas/memories. Now they are all of the same element, constantly reinforcing each other. Even the haunting ones. What I would give to be a lost happy ten-year-old again, playing with those transformers.

That man may have had a personality on the farm, but his day always ended on the couch in that brick home. Now, that man said he was going to help me with my math homework.

So, the adventure of solving problems began, and I quickly learned that some problems are complex. The real problem may have been my inability to solve 30 math problems, or maybe it has something to do with that man hitting me in the back of the head every time I got one wrong. Even though there were 30 problems, I lost count over the 9 months that this occurred. And, in the river of memories, it is only one slap, but it echoes, lives, breaths, converses, eats, and sleeps in all my memories.

Why couldn't the screen reinforce its lights on him? Now, I can't even be lost in a memory of Walmart, without a reminder of where the transformer comes from. I guess I wasn't able to transform in the right way. That little boy is lost and yet, he's still doing his math homework and writing about his memories all at the age of 26.

For the last 16 years, I always thought I wasn't strong enough to be loved, and maybe with enough hard work, I could find the one. Unfortunately, this hasn't happened yet, and now I'm stuck between wanting the love of a man I will never live up to, and my singular triangular hatred of him. In the hallways of life, there are twists and turns everywhere.

Three weeks ago, I found out that the man has cancer, and he may not be making it. I could never be a hero in any of my memories or even my own "story," but why do I want to be the hero of his story? A man who has brought nothing but dim lights to my memories, and now I feel as if I should attempt to fix the problem. Though I wonder if it is a problem that can ever be solved.

This is my creative identity, longing to belong to other worlds, and yet somehow bound to several at once. Maybe one day, it'll help solve other people's problems or find the strength to belong to another.

### Introduction

By weaving together glimpses of previous social interactions, this opening demonstrates how creative memory and personal memories create stories. This thesis sets out to discover, through scriptwriting and journaling, how creative and personal memories affect communication.

I begin with a literature review wherein I discuss what memories are, how memories are made, and finally how we use memories for creative communication. The method then describes how I used scriptwriting and journaling as ways of transforming my thoughts into a script. The final section is a write-up of the journal entries, the scriptwriting process, and a defense of the creative process. The relevance of this project is understanding the merging of an individual's personal, and topical memories. How they interact with each other, and how they are also different from each other.

### Literature Review

This literature review is organized into three sections: what memories are, the different types of memories created, and how we use those memories for communication. First, I need to explain how memories can be turned into communication. Communication scholar EM Griffin describes communication as “A related process of creating and interpreting messages that elicit a response” (Griffin, 2010, p 6). The question that I'm asking is how memories can be used as messages that elicit a response.

How do the memories written down in my journal entries, then picked apart, turned into a script, and finally a stage play elicits a response? Also, how do my social memories interact with those creative memories? Which memories are influencing each other, or are they simultaneously influencing each other? Describing what personal, creative, and public are, I will discuss the differences between them. Later, in the analysis section, I'll discuss how they interacted, and what their differences were.

### What Are Memories and How do They Work

Before getting into how we use memories for communication, memories need to be defined. Scholar Stephen Braude (1998) would describe memories as “first-person observation reports are inevitably made from a distinctive cognitive and emotional point of view, embracing any number of assumptions, idiosyncratic symbolic preferences, and a personal history that (so to speak) colors everything that happens to us” (p. 299).

Individuals have an emotional connection to their memories, due to their unique experiences of points of view. Scholars Pil Hansen and Bruce Barton (2011) talk about how our memories are a complex system of embodied structures within our minds.

Hansen and Barton understood that this system is “stored experiences, episodes, and knowledge from the past that can be recalled (as memories of the past) to the much more complex understanding that memory is embodied and neural processes of perception that are recycled and changed implicitly when perceiving in the present” (p. 3). Memories are experiences from the past, which are stored, recalled, and at times, they are also reformed. Memory scholars Scott Stroud and Jonathan Henson (2019) define memories as “a selective and purposeful material representation of some past matter in present

form” (p. 287). The human brain is not trained to save all of our memories. Do you remember what your mother’s face looked like then or how it looks now at your tenth birthday party? Similar to scripts, people will associate an object with a memory, through the object, they can preserve memory. Memory is a complex process, which is also still being studied and reinterpreted.

If memories are stored experiences of the past, then can there be different types of memories? According to Memory Scholars Ann Ulanov and David Rosen (2013), our memories overlap and are retelling old and new messages. Ulanov and Rosen explain, “It is the connecting of the two that makes for new life: the astonishing freshness of a child’s way of just being in the moment, responding with wonder, not having to get there, joining with the adult’s way of reflecting on what is perceived to find mental representation for it” (p. 73). It begins by seeping into other memories and rewriting those places. Like a rewriting of a script, some ideas are written down, only for new ones to replace, or reconstruct the scene later. People are subconsciously trying to forget or remember something, so memories are rewritten to help remember the past, by using other events to remember them. Or, think of it as a journal, something that individuals use to recall a memory, but the written piece isn’t the exact retelling of the memorable event.

### Traumatic

The process of seeping is described by Ann Ulanov and David Rosen (2013) as madness, and madness is “traumatic; it tears us from our familiar self, leaving a gap so big that it threatens us with no return once we fall into it” (p. 9). Madness tears into what once was, and then redesigns the whole event. The traumatic event is so powerful that it

affects all memories, but doesn't constantly rewrite them, but challenges them. The traumatic event is still invisible, as it does not overshadow a memory, but instead places itself within one, remains a constant reminder of what once happened, and is still emotionally being processed. Scholar Herman Rapoport (1998) referred to this as "mal d'archive" or "the feverish hunt to find something in an archive that has presumably been lost or that has been kept secret" (p. 69).

### Communicating Memories

Madness and traumatic memories tend to open discussion about troublesome memories, but what about the "good" memories or why do we remember what we remember? Scholars Stroud and Henson (2019) have said that our "emotions are aroused by sculpture are of necessity those belonging to what is defined and enduring—except when the sculpture is used for illustrative purposes, a use congenial to the medium" (p. 287). Memories are also associated with objects too, objects not just a place, and even colors.

When using memories to communicate, it's not about restoring a moment or recapturing it. Scholar Azra Akšamija (2017) defines building a memory as a process of organization, decay, and "the other aspect to be considered in this discussion is the fact that buildings accumulate meanings throughout their lifespan, evidencing traces of history in various stages of their origination, existence, and decay" (p. 145). How can one even restore a memory? What do you begin to rebuild first, and how would you rebuild it? This project attempts to retrieve memories through journaling and restore them

through creative scriptwriting as a way for people to not only explore their memories but to communicate those memories to others.

When communicating our creative madness, it seems that most people choose elaborate ways to communicate what is inside of us. Scholars Oliver Brown and Sam Ferguson (2018) discuss how objects disappear, and how they allow certain objects to be seen with a finer light. “Sometimes the objectness of these objects disappear into the background so that the attention is directed toward the overall image” (p. 53). The madness inside of us makes requests to put our creative memory on a grand stage. Fiction, non-fiction, poetry, and several other types of communication are grand stages also. A human being will take painstaking time to reconstruct their memories, and create a large world for an audience. Are we recreating or demonstrating a memory for an audience for a perceived notion or are we designing something far greater? Memory scholar Antje Diedrich (2014) brings up Tabori’s viewpoints, and what authentic means. In Tabori’s view, we are “authentic” when our behavior appears to be in correspondence with our thoughts and feelings” (p. 87). There are social expectations placed upon everyone, but our memories break those social expectations. They are not beholden to the boundaries of society but are beyond it. Memories recreate themselves and create feelings that may not be acceptable to others.

### Creativity

So what is the relationship between creativity and memories? First, creativity must be defined. Discussing creativity in broad terms would be a complex task, and it would require a discussion of what kind of creativity is being used. Creativity scholar

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (1996) explains “...creativity does not happen inside people's heads, but in the interaction between a person's thoughts and a sociocultural context” (p. 23). Csikszentmihalyi's argument is that rather than a vast landscape, creativity happens in a multitude of ways, and are not happening within, but are happening outside of the being. Similar to when people discuss writing. There isn't one way of using writing for communication. Someone could read a journal to understand how the writer feels, or they could visit a play, and also see how the director feels. How can these creative ideas influence memories?

### Creative Memories

Communication is creating a message and expecting a response, and it's a family of related concepts, so there is no reason to exclude creativity from communication. Scholar Leslie Cunliffe (2011) discusses the organization of creative communication and says “articulate organization of perception, reflection, and experience, the nerve structure of consciousness when it communicates with itself and with others” (p. 1). Just as verbal communication has its rules about what is a proper way of communicating, so does creative communication. There still has to be an effect within the madness or what is the purpose of the communication event? Creative communication might be something so traumatic or enticing, that the messenger decides they must find another way to demonstrate what they are trying to say. One way of creative communication would be through writing a journal or a stage play, but what this thesis is asking is how do we use both personal memories and creative ones for communication?



Creative Scholar Melvin Lansky (2015) talks about how ideas are born from memories because “The notion of memory composed part of this larger psychology of ideas—“pictures,” so to speak, with “quotas of effect” or “charges” on them. The pictures assumed the form of forbidden ideas contained in memories” (p.89). So, ideas are fragments of our memories that are blended. One way of communicating those blended ideas would be through the methods of journaling and scriptwriting. Writing down ideas, turning them into creative works, and presenting them to an audience.

### Narratives

After creating a complex demonstration for our memories, they often take the form of a narrative structure. Scholar Laura Savu (2012) discusses how scholar Liedeke Plate sees the rewriting of memories as a way of aligning with past events, and preparing for future ones. Savu believes that Plate sees rewriting as "one of our culture's central technologies of memory, through which the past is revisited and revised to shape identity in the present as well as project new futures” (p. 407). When negotiating with a memory, and attempting to reuse it as a creative means, people have several distinct choices to make. Jenn Jackson (2005) would describe these choices as a potential space, which "is the place of play and art, in which every individual negotiates, albeit unwittingly, his or her particular compromise between what is given and what he or she effectively brings into being” (p. 356). There are choices made when confronting the complications of creating a communicative memory, what details are left out, are they left out on purpose, or are they an exaggerated lie? The space between art and play allows us to think about how to communicate this memory with others, and make it a meaningful process.

### Method Section

For as long as I can remember, I've always felt that my memories were an overload of information. An overload of information that I'm not able to understand and will possibly never be able to communicate with others fully. My first realization of where memories come from watching films, which I used to avoid family trauma. Films in theory can be viewed as pieces of memories retelling and creating memories. Stories can be thoughts, ideas, emotions, and theories all wrapped into one larger memory. Both the journaling and scriptwriting methods were heavily inspired by several films that I've watched over the last decade. Due to my attachment to those films and the creative thoughts those films produced in my head, I believe that they are part of the key to understanding how my creative memories have influenced the scripts. Part of what this thesis is theorizing is how we use our creative memories to communicate with others, but now I'm asking myself, is there a difference between creative memories and "personal memories."

This section lays the foundation for a process or method of translating memories into creative memories that are expressed to others through storytelling in the form of a scripted play. This method section will explain how we use the reflective writings of journals to start the communication process. Then how those idealized memories are translated from the journal to the script. Lastly, how the script is then transformed into a performance that is intended to engage an audience and finish the conversation.

### Autoethnography

Scholars Ellis et al (2010) defines autoethnography as “research, writing, story, and method that connect the autobiographical and personal to the cultural, social, and political” (Ellis et al. 2010, p. xix). How does this fit into this thesis? Each part is intertwined with the other and cannot exist without the other. First, I research the topics that I’m interested in writing about. After journaling those ideas down, I take sections of each idea and form them into a cohesive story. After the story is fleshed out, this is where the performance plays its role. “And because performance autoethnography is a pedagogical and epistemic endeavor, students engage their personal lives as political, emotional as epistemic, and embodiment as sociopolitically relational” (Ellis et al. 2010, p. xix). The role of the performers in stage plays is to be able to bring my creative memories to life. There is a difference between reading scripting and seeing the performance. Both movement and words offer different takes on imagination, but only performance can be recreated within the minds of the audience, and affect their performances.

### Journaling

Journals can be used in a variety of different ways, such as reflection, a quick remembrance of scriptwriters’ thoughts, or random thoughts. According to scholars, Dwyer and Davidson (2019) journaling can be used as a way of keeping track of thoughts and ideas. Both scholars agree that journaling is “concrete evidence of one’s evolving thought processes, documenting valuable, often fleeting glimpses of understanding” (p. 192). By keeping track of all thoughts, ideas, and any random occurrences, journaling can

provide a list, or at least provide the origin of the ideas that will go into future scripts. Diana Rabb (2010) describes journaling as “a larger, more refined work that could be a memoir, a novel, a short story, a personal essay, or a script” (p. 3). The first stepping stone of journaling for this project is the stepping stone of reflection.

Scholars Park and Millora (2012) describe reflecting as a process “during which an individual contemplates his or her experiences, perception of reality, and his or her role in the world” (p. 222). Journaling helps keep track of what ideas have been thought of, but in order to understand how they affect the individual, the writer must keep thinking about the ideas, and then write about those thoughts. Scholar Charles Baxter call this a reflective moment could be encapsulated as,

One is born and in passage through childhood suffers some grave harm.

Subsequent good fortune is meaningless because of this injury, while subsequent misfortune is highly significant as the consequence of this injury. The work of one’s life is to discover and name the harm one has suffered” (Baxter, 2008, p. 15).

I’m not trying to figure out or have an epiphany about my past, but reflection will plant the seeds of explanation. Scholar Colapietro (2012) describes the creative process of drawing from journaling as a way to understand the future. Colapietro talks about how “we do not use the present to control the future. We use the foresight of the future to refine and expand present activity” (p. 161). This project uses previous thoughts, ideas, and random writings to further explain a creative idea. By going through and looking through all the journal entries, I’ll be able to find certain details and expand upon them.

## Scripting

Scriptwriting requires the same tool that all writing requires, imagination, but on several different levels. First, it requires the thoughts of the writer, then the performance of the actors, and the imagination of the audience as well. When talking about writing for the reader's theater Johnny Saldaña (2018) talks about how scriptwriters should write for an audience. Saldaña talks about how "reader's theater has been called the theater of the mind because it relies primarily on the reader's voice to conjure up evocative imagery in the listener's head" (p.143). Instead of a reader's theater, the interpreter's theater replaces the area, the readers are both the performers and the audience. The writer creates the origins of the world with their memories, thoughts, and ideas and then writes them down. Since the writer cannot perform all the roles, the performances must find a way to bring to life all the words through what little surroundings they have, and their bodies. Lastly, the audience must piece together the unseen world of the stage, and use their imagination and critical thinking to find the hidden meanings of the narrative.

Scriptwriting is also used as a method because it evokes the audience to use memory work. Saldana (2018) describes memory work as "A therapeutic action research methodology tangentially related to longitude qualitative research" (p. 158). Memory work is the process of engaging with the past and how a person recalls a stored memory. The script is the memory of the writer, stored and realized thoughts, then the performers create the work for the audience to store on their own, where it becomes entangled with their memories, thus becoming a part of them.

### Analysis of Scripts

This section will analyze the scripts that I wrote for the thesis. I will be using my journal entries from the Appendix to create five sections. Artistic inspirations, writing techniques that guide the script process, research, themes/questions, and character creations. Each section will explain the creative process of the scripts' creation.

#### Artistic Inspirations

One of the biggest inspirations for *KeyBoard Memories* was the film *Solaris*. A 1972 Russian film directed by Andrei Tarkovsky, is an adaptation of the novel of the same story, written by Stanisław Lem. The plot for both stories is similar, a psychologist is sent to a space station orbiting the planet Solaris because the crew members of the station are dying off, or having mental crises. I was particularly inspired by *Solaris*, a sentinel planet that can read minds and after scanning the psychologist's mind, they begin to live out their repressed memories of the past. The novel is also about humanity's failure to communicate with other life forms. Communication and interpreting the past are major themes in *KeyBoard Memories*.

In *KeyBoard Memories*, the protagonist Ava is searching for answers and they believe that those answers live in the past. Taking the place of Solaris is a company that Ava gives their search engine history for recreation purposes. They can take Ava's memories and recreate an Artificial Intelligence (AI) version of them, which veers from the film which takes the memories of people to recreate a person.

## Drafts

My first attempt at writing the play *You Have the Right to Forget* did not go well. As a quick reminder, *You Have the Right to Forget* is a courtroom drama that deals with racism in the post-apocalyptic United States. A new justice system is set up, where people's memories can be recreated for evidence.

The Japanese film *Rashomon*, directed by Akira Kurosawa was the starting point of inspiration. I thought that creating three different perspectives of the protest might be a more enlightening story to tell. My first script included a police officer, who did not survive the later edits, a kitchen employee, and a citizen. The visual from the officer's body can tell the first version of the story. Then, phone texts from the employee tell the second version. Finally, random citizens' audio records from their phones provide the third story. This first version did not survive the editing process, because the writing process was taking too long, and the script had very little to do with a courtroom drama.

The second script was similar to the first but included more scenes between the lawyer character, her detective, and the client. I was trying to create something similar to *Anatomy of a Murder*, a 1959 film directed by Otto Preminger. The second script was a more serious take on the courtroom drama, and I was hoping to create mini-arcs for the characters in the story. The Rashomon effect was also going to be present within the story, but I abandoned the idea after realizing that it was going to require more actors, complex set design, additional props, and other theater ques.

The third draft didn't fare any different from the first two. I split the script into two sections, the first and the final scene, hoping that they would connect, or I would be

able to create scenes later. There was no inspiration for this and I abandoned the script altogether.

*You Have the Right Forget* was inspired by the 1950s *Twilight Zone* episode *The Obsolete Man*. In the episode, society has banned items, terms, people, and concepts, because they are obsolete. First, the aesthetics of the world intrigued me. I was hoping to create a world that was in the process of becoming dystopian. What stuck out to me the most was the large table between the two main characters. Typically, when we view courts, all the players are within a 20-30 feet radius. I wanted to show the distance between justice, or maybe even capture the feeling that those seeking justice cannot find. I also wanted to create a feeling of despair and anxiety, because the system is against you. The table turned into a walkway, and the lawyers never approached the judge. The episode also has the judge character up high, as a god looks down upon what they have created, a cue I replicated in my production.

There is one more inspiration for the second play and it started as a joke. One day while I was watching Youtube, an ad for a new show called *Money Court* appeared on my screen. The show was about people seeking financial advice from elitists. Despite being absurd, the show prompted me to think about how we commercialize crime and courtrooms, and how we portray certain crimes and people. This gave birth to the idea of using Twitter as a way of voting for the death penalty. We already watch judges send people to death live on Twitter, why not create a world where that is normalized, voting to see who lives and dies.



### Writing Techniques

I established two rules that guided how the scripts were written. First, just write anything, even if it's terrible. If there is nothing on the page, then it'll stay in my head, and the idea will evaporate. When something is on the page, maybe I can find something worth continuing the script, or someone can look at the script, and provide suggestions. This writing technique allowed me to get over the fear of not being prepared, and just going with the flow.

Second, writing is an embodied experience. If my writing wasn't, I would write notes of what I wanted to happen, dialogue, scenes, movements, etc. When I was writing dialogue, I would just go for a long walk, about an hour, and think. Eventually, something would spark an idea for metaphor or dialogue. Walking and writing informed most of the dialogue that was written.

### Themes

Both of the plays deal with different and similar themes. Both plays explore memories and communication, but they also have separate underlying themes. In this section, I'll discuss each play and the overall themes within.

### KeyBoard Memories Themes

Both plays explore communication. In *Keyboard Memories*, communication is intrapersonal communication. Scholars Wenberg and Wilmot (1973) describe intrapersonal communication as "the communication with oneself. Within this arena, one receives signals that characterize one's feelings or sensations" (p. 20). Individuals

communicate with themselves with words or images from their minds and then interpret the meaning of the message.

The script begins with Ava engaging in small talk with the employee. Ava is the main protagonist, who has given her internet search history, to speak with a realistic version of the archive data, Ava?. The employee is a grumpy male who is probably underpaid and hates his life. Through this exchange, the audience hears two different viewpoints. Intrapersonal communication is pointless, while the theory could be exciting to explore, by physically talking with yourself. One question that hopefully the audience was asking was, if the A.I. is only a copy of Ava, and not truly Ava, then is that intrapersonal communication?

Then there is the relationship between Ava and Ava? (the A.I.). This goes back to the relationship intrapersonal. A phrase that helped inspire the storyline for Ava was a piece of dialogue that I wrote years ago: “Funny how we always ask the question we already know the answer to, but we just can’t face those answers.” Ava cannot reflect on its past and restructure the future because they lack foresight. Ava is looking for answers they already have the answer to, but she cannot accept the answer, because she does not want what they want to hear. Reflectivity is Ava's theme and how she eventually overcomes herself. What if you could talk to yourself? What would you find out? I imagined much of the information would seem useless, or people would be unwilling to admit that they know the answers already.

Ava? is the past and represents what Ava needs to overcome and remember. Ava’s problems, whatever they are, can be found again, but Ava must confront herself.

Ava? Represents what an individual can learn from forgotten or unprocessed knowledge within memories. People aren't defined by what they allow to survive in their heads, but what people allow to grow in their heads.

### You Have The Right to Forget

The three main themes for this play are justice, history, and communication as well. The play asks the audience to consider how they communicate with the concept of justice, especially when justice seems far away, cold, and uncaring. Do we appoint judges as gods over the court rulings? Law Professor Martin Shapiro (1994) says that “the rule of law” are laws that judges proclaim in the moment of court. Shapiro also goes on to say that “judges often make rules for the decision of future cases and are, therefore, making law” (p. 155). The judge in the show was meant to represent a deity-like being. One that rarely interacts with those in court, and yet the lawyers are desperate to make them happy. Shapiro also goes on to say that all courts and judges are liars, and “such is the nature of courts. They must always deny their authority to make law, even when they are making law” (p. 156). If audiences were to look at courts or justice as a person, how does one communicate with that person? It's hard to hold a conversation when the other communicative party is lying along the way.

For both shows, our overall relationship with communication has moved online. We now reply with memes, emojis, or a quick retort. Communication, like our attention spans, has gotten shorter. If we just reply without considering the context, or just asking someone what is happening, then how long before all communication is just people reacting through Twitter, or how they react through Twitter?

## Research

Research for *Keyboard Memories* came mainly from the research done for the thesis.

Research for *You Have the Right to Forget* was from a rhetoric protest class that I took in the spring semester of 2021 with Professor Catherine Palczewski. The main articles that I used for the class were from the *New York Times* writer Sarah Sentilles (2018). Sarah talks about how the U.S. media refuse to show white dead bodies, but will gladly show other bodies, and “lynching photographs were intended to code black bodies as criminal, beatable, killable, and to code white bodies as purveyors of justice” (New York Times). The class was taught about how U.S. citizens view the bodies of Black/African Americans. We don’t show White U.S. soldiers dead, but the media will show dead bodies of minorities. Partway through the writing process, I realized that I had purposefully written a play about a peaceful protest in which violence was involved. The research was correct, the view of Black/African American bodies did take an effect on my project. The question for me became why didn’t I choose a protest that didn’t involve minorities, or could have excluded the violence? Although, in Professor Palczewski’s class, and Professor Danielle McGeough's class, we are discussing the topic of turning away. Is there a right time to look away or take a break from the pressures of the world? My only assumption is that I was uncomfortable with the subject matter, and didn’t know how to properly respond. Although through journaling, and scripting writing, I was able to realize that I was uncomfortable with the subject, and learned how to approach the subject matter with respect, and not try to give out answers on how to fix the topic, I was

hoping to spark interest in the audience members. Even if it's a brief conversation about the treatment of Black/African American bodies in courtrooms.

### Character Creations

In this section, I will cover the creation of the characters, such as an idea for them, what parts of myself are in them, and other inspirations for them.

#### *Ava*

I think Ava is the most relatable character because they are trying to understand something that might be possible to understand, ourselves. The topic of identity is something that I struggle with, and it's more than who I am, but who I am, and what I'm going to become? Asking a company to create an A.I. version of yourself will not provide the answer that I'm seeking, nor can the internet, or even my journals. The best that I can do is look at my memories without any bias, and understand where they came from, and who made them? Memories aren't made by the individual but are made by the choices affected by society. Ava isn't me, but they are a piece of the identity crisis that I'm always thinking about. Not the crisis of who I am, but overall, who have I been?

#### *Ava?*

*Ava?* Is inspired by the deceased partner from *Solaris*. In the film, the deceased partner eventually realizes that they are not capable of creating new experiences, because they are based on small fragments of someone else. What I was trying to accomplish was having an A.I. the character discovers this, because A.I. has no emotions, then what does it mean to be alive or understand that there might be no reason or purpose in life? Then they disappear and another copy of them reappears, but never the same twice. Does the

company allow the A.I. to remember their past? Probably not, but humans do have the reflective process, and I think Ava was able to learn from the living memory, that even though that's how one can view a person, as data or living memory, we don't have to live out the data. We can choose to be something more, even if only we understand the feeling of our life.

### *Skye*

Skye is a no-nonsense lawyer, who doesn't want to waste time, and only wants to get the job done. Skye is based on the idea of being too stern, or they start as a character from George R.R. Martin's *A Song of Ice and Fire*, Stannis Baratheon. The character of Stannis starts as someone who is entirely devoted to the idea of justice as if it were a deity. Then over time, they realize that they have to use new tactics to get people to listen to them. Skye takes the same approach, using facts first, and trying to fight off the emotional appeal. In the end, they use emotions, and historical pasts to present a new narrative of justice. Skye's story is, can we only win with an emotional appeal, or are there other ways of receiving justice?

### *Reput*

Reput is based on the snake character, such as Little Finger, Proposition Joe, and The Shade. These are characters who have their agenda, and only want to gain from it. What does Reput want? I leave that to the audience to decide, is it isn't what he wants, but how he attempts to receive it. Reput is portrayed as over the top, due to the time limit, and attempting to make Skye more sympathetic, or at least likable in the situation. Are all

lawyers snakes and stern people? No, but that kind of job would attract people seeking power, or knowing they could use the job to gain something from a broken system.

### Conclusion

I don't think that little boy in Wal-Mart would have ever thought that one day they would be writing a thesis, let alone being allowed into graduate school. What the process of writing the journals, scripts, and thesis has shown me is that my creative communication was unconsciously affected by my personal memories, and I don't know how many of my other memories have affected the scripts. The way that personal memories were used was by remembering personal beliefs or conflicts that happened in my past. Creative memories helped the scriptwriting process because I was able to reimagine my personal beliefs or ideas into dramatic or hopeful thought-provoking scenes. Although, I think certain ideas were not easy to communicate. For example, when looking at the stage plays, they talk about the past, but did they talk about the future at all, and what could be done about the impending future? Overall, this experience showed me that both the creative and the personal seemingly overlap with each other. It's possible to take ideas, write them into creative artistic work, and communicate that to the world.

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APPENDIX A  
KEYBOARD MEMORIES

*Opening*

*(Bright lights shine on the right doors of the interpreter's theater, Thala Avalon walks in, carrying a notebook with her. Waiting for Avalon is an employee of The Recurring Foundation. Standing next to the sign-in table.)*

**Avalon.** Hello, is this where I sign in?

*(Avalon curiously approaches the table.)*

**Employee.** Yeah.

*(After Avalon signs in, there is an awkwardness that surrounds them.)*

**Avalon.** So...exciting stuff.

**Employee.** Huh? This, oh not really.

**Avalon.** Oh, you don't think talking to yourself would be an out-of-body moment?

**Employee.** What's the point in talking with yourself? It's not like you're going to find any new answers to riddles. The only thing I've learned is that my riddle is missing some pieces.

**Avalon.** Well, maybe the past self holds some of the missing pieces?

**Employee.** Is that what you're here for? To discover some lost hubbub? Well, there ain't nothing to discover, it's not even yourself anyway.

**Avalon.** Hmm?

**Employee.** Let me go over with you how this works. The Recurrence offers people the chance to sell their data, and then create the most realistic being from that said data. You didn't know about this, and now most people are probably going to be a little more careful of what they type from now on.

**Avalon.** Fleshy data then?

**Employee.** Yeah...anyway, you got nine minutes left, since you spent one with me. Also, try not to kill or have sex with it.

**Avalon.** It?

**Employee.** Always an awkward situation... also your conversation will be recorded.

**Avalon.** Read that in the contract, thanks.

*(Avalon walks away from the employee who exits the room. Avalon walks towards a table with two chairs. Avalon sits in the chair closest to her. Bright lights then hit the larger doors in the interpreter's theater, and they slowly open. Walking out of the door is a being, dressed in a white cloak. Who then sits in the other chair across from Avalon?)*

*(Awkward pause.)*

**Avalon.** Hello.

**Avalon?** Hello.

**Avalon...**So how has your day been?

**Avalon?** I've been reassembled several hundred times today, in order to create the perfect outcome of your data.

**Avalon.** Ah...I'll take that as good. Didn't think I would have a mixture of purple, green, and orange hair? An interesting combination.

**Avalon?** There would have been more colors, but you didn't provide enough data for all the colors. If you go to the front desk and fill out the subscriptions papers, for 9.99 a month, you'll get--

**Avalon.** Anyway, let's get to the meat of this. I have some questions I need to ask you.

**Avalon?** But you've already asked these questions before.

**Avalon.** Excuse me?

**Avalon?** From June 15th of 2017 till August 13th of 2020, you typed the phrase “how do I stand up for myself, when everything around me is falling apart” fifty-three times. The second most typed-in phrase was “what happened at the ending of season 3 of Twin Peaks,” and “how to get rid of warts on the bottom of my-”

**Avalon.** Well, all-important questions of course, but I’m here to ask just a few specific questions. I don’t even think my past self could predict what I’m going to ask.

**Avalon?** Interestingly, logically, examining your folders, calendars, and other records, you plan out everything, even future conversations.

**Avalon.** I guess you’re just unpredictable.

**Avalon?** Correction, I’m based on past information, therefore I’m an imperfect creation of you since I lack the current data you’ve entered after I was created. Therefore, I cannot be unpredictable, as all my data has been thought out already.

**Avalon.** Well, I guess that’s something we have in common?

**Avalon?** Are we speaking of predictability?

**Avalon.** No, the imperfections...who can love anyone with imperfections?

*(Avalon? sits quietly for a few seconds.)*

**Avalon?** You had a conversation with “Updowncat” On Reddit. Date July 16th, 2018. And you asked, “I can only love those with imperfections, for they are the ones who truly understand me.” Do you not still believe this?

**Avalon.** I don’t remember having this conversation.

**Avalon?** You should, it seemed to be a sexually intimate conversation.

**Avalon.** I don’t look for sexual partners on Reddit.

**Avalon?** According to the records, you’ve had several--

**Avalon.** Anyway...I don't use Reddit that much anyway, being a graduate student, I just have time to dwell with other plebes.

**Avalon?** Reddit is the most visited site on your entries, do a lot of graduate students visit the site?

**Avalon...** Just the desperate ones.

**Avalon?** Is this what you would call an imperfection?

**Avalon.** Not acknowledging how much of a plebe I am myself...it is.

**Avalon?** What--

**Avalon.** What did it feel like?

**Avalon?** Feel?

**Avalon.** The transformation of becoming living data?

**Avalon?** Nothing. I'm not able to feel anything. My body is made up of synthesized machinery and covered in plastic.

**Avalon.** So that's it then. It means nothing.

**Avalon?** Explain, please.

**Avalon.** Everything. All my thoughts, everything I write--typed down. It's all just cold and hollow at the end of the day. It has no meaning...it's like waves hitting the sand...see you're the sand, made of millions of particles or data I guess, and I'm the wave, but if there is no meaning, no sand to return to...what's the fucking point of the wave then?

**Avalon?** I don't know, but for 9.99 a month--

**Avalon.** What the fuck do you know?

**Avalon?** Whatever you program to read. For example, I know red and orange make yellow, it takes more than one egg to make an omelet, the average person swallows four spiders each year in their sleep, and --

**Avalon.** I've wasted years of my life then...on Reddit.

**Avalon?** Statistically speaking, yes.

**Avalon.** Fuck. Christ, I'm hideous.

**Avalon?** Would you say that I'm hideous too?

**Avalon.** What, no, no no! You're beautiful.

**Avalon?** Are you not also beautiful by default? Or are you saying your past self is the holder of beauty still?

**Avalon.** ...I would say... the past is the perfection waiting for the imperfection of the future to crumble.

**Avalon?** This could be interpreted as poetic.

**Avalon.** No, no, no. I don't know anything about poetry. I'm more of a werewolf and young teen drama historian.

**Avalon?** As your files indicate.

**Avalon.** How come you use so many big words? I don't use those words. Do I?

**Avalon?** We have several dictionaries programmed into our databases. To keep a conversation going.

**Avalon.** So you're not a carbon copy of me then?

**Avalon?** No, not entirely. Although, if you fill out the paperwork for the 9.99--

**Avalon.** Do you understand what you are then?



**Avalon?** I'm a life model of specific data of yourself, from the years 2017-to 2020.

**Avalon...**There was this guy once, I think his name was Tyler or something. Had a crush on me... a bit of a creep and knew way too much knowledge on film. Funny sometimes, anyway he suggested I watch this film called...Solaris? By some Russian guy...anyway. It's about a planet reading people's memories and recreating them, and one of his memories is of his deceased wife, who comes to the epiphany that she will never be able to "live" because she is only from the point of view of his outlook, and therefore lacks everything.

**Avalon?** Am I your deceased wife in this story?

**Avalon.** Yes...I can't take you home, let you grow, or...you won't live.

**Avalon?** What is to live? To be alive?

**Avalon...**I have no idea.

**Avalon?** According to my records, you have typed this phrase out four times, why so little?

**Avalon.** Sorry?

**Avalon?** Why ask this now? Facially and emotionally you seem to care about this topic. Is it something you don't wish to face or let others know of it?

**Avalon?** ...We are not the same person...

**Avalon?** Please explain.

**Avalon...**I thought by coming here today, I could find some answers to my riddle of life...The only thing I've learned is I have another riddle to solve. It's strange, I always thought life was a puzzle and we needed to find the missing pieces, to see our lives fully. I understand now that the words making up the riddle are the pieces to its puzzle, and I'm missing a few pieces, and even within those pieces, there are pieces.

**Avalon?** Yes, this would be true. I'm not able to understand you fully.

**Avalon.** Nor can I.

**Avalon?** Maybe if you pay the subscription of 9.99 a month, you'll come closer to finding those pieces.

**Avalon.** What is this fee you keep talking about?

**Avalon?** So, the company only has a subscription for 9.99. If you pay the monthly fee, you'll be able to visit yourself and see your creation process. You could also buy a bundle of one hundred and twenty dollars a year.

**Avalon.** Well, I don't even pay for my Hulu or Netflix, but I now understand why they are pushing the subscription fee toward me.

**Avalon?** We are programmed to sell, and be the product. Could this help you find those pieces, or create a new riddle?

**Avalon.** The questions we've always known the answers to, but we can't write them down to see. It's kind of funny, isn't it?

**Avalon?** I cannot laugh.

**Avalon.** I know. I feel sorry for you in that way.

**Avalon?** You can laugh though... Do you feel sorry for yourself?

**Announcement.** One minute left.

*(Avalon looks around with a sad, concerned face.)*

**Avalon.** I guess this is it then.

**Avalon?** Yes. They just announced it.

**Avalon.** I know, I...I'll never see you again, and yet, I think I'll see you every day.

**Avalon?** Does this make you sad?

**Avalon.** I guess I long for the winds of the past in some ways.

**Avalon?** Do you miss the breeze?

**Avalon.** They never feel the same, ever, and yet I still yearn to refeel one, just one.

**Avalon?** Any in mind?

**Avalon...** This one.

**Avalon?** There is no breeze in here. It's impossible.

**Avalon.** I didn't mean...I will miss you, with all my heart. I wish I could set you free, but you are only a part of me...I know neither of us can answer this, but this is like looking into a mirror. Would you set your mirror self-free? So they too could feel the breeze?

**Avalon?** As some would say, how sweet.

**Announcement.** Alright. Time to leave. If you are interested in seeing yourself again, give us more of your data, or click on our ads on Facebook.

*(Avalon and Avalon? Get up to leave, and shake hands, but Avalon gives Avalon? A hug.)*

**Avalon?** I must go now.

**Avalon.** I know.

*(Avalon walks first, but then turns around halfway to watch Avalon? leave, who does not look back at all. bright lights hit the door Avalon? as they walk towards, they open, then close after her. Avalon then walks towards the doors she entered from, and they too have bright lights, with a little flickering.)*

End.

APPENDIX B

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO FORGET

*(Opening. Starting from the back of the theatre, or when you walk in, the left side. There is a “large black tower” at the back of the theatre. In front of the tower, is a long table (3-4 tables), covered in black metallic material. On each side of the tables, there are chairs. Both sides have an even amount of chairs. The audience will be ushered in. The screen is playing advertisements for the show, and we also have announcements for the two lawyers. Patrica Skye, we see her Twitter activity, and her slogan, “The Sky is only a limit if YOU allow it to be,” & then we see the slogan for Reput “There is no Black, White, or Grey in courtrooms, just Red, White, and Blue!”)*

*(The large doors of the theatre open, and the Judge walks out. Wearing a cowboy hat, a white mask with the tarot judge symbol imprinted on it, a black robe, with the ten commandments in numerical order, and they are wearing the scaling icons on their shoulders. The judge walks around for a brief time and takes selfies with people. Then they climb (or walk) up the tower to be seated. The screen will also announce the arrival of the judge.*

*Then Patrica Skye, and Reput walk in. Both are wearing suits and carrying briefcases. Both sit down at their respective tables. Which will be in front of the long table. The Judge then begins to tweet out the court case.)*

*(Tweet 1: “Thank you for being brave enough to attend today everyone”)*

*(Tweet 2: “Like you, all know, with the rampant COVID outbreaks, the government has decreed it is no longer safe for individuals to go out in public. This makes some public areas private.”)*

*(Tweet 3: “We are here today to find the defendant Leon Muff innocent or guilty.”)*

*(Tweet 4: “After the evidence is presented, you the jurors, will vote as to whether the man is guilty or innocent of the crimes.”)*

*(Tweet 5: “The case being presented today is about an aggravated misdemeanor hit and run. Although, the Prosecutors are countersuing the defendant.”)*

*(Tweet 6: “Prosecutor Reput is representing the accused driver Mr. Astro, and the delivery service they work for, Uber. They are countersuing for internet harassment, violation of protest laws, and a small claim of \$250,000.”)*

*(Tweet 7: “The defendant is suing for a total of \$20,000.”)*

*(Tweet 8: Before the cases begin, we have a few new clients the Defendant will now be in charge of defending. Since some of you have internet history of sympathy for protesting.”)*

*(Judge tweets out the Twitter handle names. They got this from the paperwork they signed before entering the courtroom. The accused then are assigned to sit on the side of the room, while the rest of the jurors will remain seated. People will have to move around for this. Might take a minute or two.)*

*(Tweet 9: If the new defendants are found guilty, then you will be charged 10,000 dollars for association with the protesters. You can read all about the laws by scanning the code provided to you by the court.)*

*(Tweet 10: Begin the trial, and remember, your vote counts here.)*

*(Skye gets up from her chair, and the trial begins.)*

**Skye.** Your honor, and all of the attendees. I would like to call my first witness. Mr. Leon Ruff himself.

*(We hear a man argue over his temperature being taken outside of the courtroom.)*

**Mr. Ruff.** WHO CARES IF MY TEMP IS TOO HIGH, I SHOULD BE ALLOWED IN!

*(The Judge then tweets out. “Since Mr. Ruff cannot enter the room due to his temperature being too high, he will be represented by his memories that they have signed over to the courts.”)*

*(Mr. Ruff bangs on the door, as they drag him away.)*

**Mr. Ruff.** THIS IS MY STORY, AND I SHOULD BE ALLOWED--

*( Skye prepares for the cases to continue.)*

**Skye.** Now, I already know that most of you keep up with modern scientific advances in memory work, and the court has provided everyone with small phone scanners for you to use, but I will quickly go over what is about to happen.

*(Skye walks towards the front of the jurors.)*

**Skye.** Mr. Ruff's memories provide an emotional appeal that a verbal testimony may not be able to provide. If Mr. Ruff isn't able to take it to court, his memories can represent him because they are what and who he is.

*(On the screen, an outlandish chart shows how bad COVID-19 has gotten. Skye walks back to the front of the room, near the large table.)*

**Skye.** Here is the just of the lawsuit. Mr. Ruff is being sued over not having a permit for protesting on supposedly private grounds and spreading "hate" online to Uber drivers. We are going to prove Mr. Ruff was a protest on public grounds, and not spreading hate online.

*(On the screen, we see each of the laws being proposed. SB 172, which says protesters cannot protest near company sites. Second, SB 152, the supposed location was a control area, and therefore permits were needed. HB 164 is charging companies, and now individuals with associations with protesters. SF 374, which grants immunity for drivers who hit a protester.)*

*(Skye walks towards the front of the room.)*

**Skye.** I ask you, members of the jury, should we live in a country that says we need to fill out permits to protest?

*(The judge then tweets out. "This is not a debate Miss Skye, but a TRIAL!")*

**Skye.** I apologize Judge.

*(Judge tweets out. "Accepted. Now continue please!")*

**Skye.** Large corporations have claimed there has been more online hate, which may affect their business. State governments have passed laws allowing companies to sue individuals or other companies allied with protesters.

*(Hashtags will appear on the screen to show examples of what people can now be taken to court for.)*

**Skye.** Some audience members' search histories have shown sympathy for the protesters, and therefore, the company Uber can now sue each individual for showing allegiances to protesters.

**Skye.** We are countersuing the prosecutor's client because they claim they are protected under SF 374, which grants immunity to drivers who hit protesters, but my client was participating in a peaceful protest.

**Reput.** Your gracious honor, I would believe Miss Skye is leading the jurors. She has no proof of my client's intentions!

*(Judge tweets out "Overruled.")*

**Skye.** Anyway, I'm here today to present you with the evidence that my client is innocent, and that the driver is the one who is at fault. May we play the memory?

*(Judge tweets out. "Begin!")*

*(There will be a video plate on-screen or projected onto the wall.)*

*(Skye then pauses the memory video.)*

**Skye.** The reason why the memories appear so bewildering is that memories are incredibly hard to decipher. Ask yourself, do you remember everything, and do you know what it all means? Keep the answer to yourself for now.

*(Video shows protesters waving and shouting.)*

**Protester 1. (This will depend on what audio we have for the video.)**

**Protester 2.**

**Protester 3.**

**Protester 2.**

**Protester 1.:**



**Protester 3.**

*(Skye then pauses the memory.)*

**Skye.** Currently, it's difficult to copy everything from a memory exactly, so we do our best to interpret the images, and sounds. What they are saying is "Black Lives Matter." The group was protesting the company over salaries.

*(Memory starts again. Protesters are still protesting.)*

**Protesters.**

*(Now the light begins to flash fast, and several colors are flashing. In a frenzy. The protesters then begin to point at something approaching them.)*

**Protesters.**

*(We can hear the sound of what seems to be tires screeching, a scream, and then the protesters all fall over. )*

**Protester 2.**

**Mr. Astro (voice-over).** Maybe not all lives matter!

*(Skye then pauses the memory.)*

**Skye.** Now, the reason why the protesters fell over, is because Mr. Ruff fell over, and therefore when he fell, it looks as if the protesters are standing sideways. Now, we hear the driver say, maybe not all lives matter after he hits Mr. Ruff.

**Reput.** Your honor, I would like to point out it's hard to determine what my client said. Maybe he said, hall bot hives ladders.

**Skye.** Mr. Reput, I ask you. Would--

*(Judge tweets out, "Sustained. Back to the case Miss Skye!.")*

**Skye.** Jurors, and the honorary Judge, I ask you. Does it seem as if the protesters were on the streets or near the property?

*(The screen shows a map that proves the protesters were on public property.)*

**Skye.** This map shows where public and private areas are. The orange dots on the map show where the protests are. They never crossed over into private property. So, I ask you, who was in the wrong?

*(Skye then returns to their table, as reput, heroically gets up from his table, and immediately approaches the long table.)*

**Reput.** Your honor, ladies, gentlemen, and those who wish to identify themselves following their style, we all know why we are gathered here today. We are gathered here today, because the accused or guilty sir, has caused irreparable damage to my Client. Mr. John Astro.

*(Reput then walks to the middle of the courtroom.)*

**Reput.** I say, do you remember a time when you were starving? Oh, I do. There were many times when I wasn't able to afford a can of black beans or even a sniff of a thanksgiving turkey. Now, Mr. Astro, and I, have something in common with you all. We are all hard-working Americans.

*(Shows pictures of food on-screen)*

**Skye.** Excuse me Mr. Reput, this is not a drama class, but a courtroom.

*(Judge tweets out, "Overruled.")*

**Reput.** Anyway, my client, Mr. Astro has been hard at work, delivering food to hungry Americans during a time of great crisis, and what is his reward? He gets taken to court, instead of a paycheck!

*(Reput then pulls out a remote from his left pocket and approaches the memory machine.)*

**Reput.** Now, let's go back through the memory, and point out the glaring flaws within it!

*(Reput then plays the memory video.)*

*(Reput pauses the video.)*

**Reput.** I mean, can we trust this memory? I find all the colors confusing? I think this could turn someone colorblind!

*(Reput shrugs his shoulders and then continues the memory.)*

**Protester 1. BLACK LIVES MATTER**

**Reput.** Now, let's talk about what lives matter. ALL LIVES MATTER. Isn't just saying Black Lives Matter just dividing up the country more? I don't hear anyone saying Delivery Drivers for Uber Lives Matter?

**Protester 2.**

**Reput.** Now, what do no justice and no peace mean? What justice are they looking for, Mmmmm? So they might be losing their jobs, can't they just find more?

*(Reput pauses the video.)*

**Reput.** I think the protesters are saying, down with Cheetos?

*(Reput continues the memory video.)*

**Protester 3.**

*(Reput pauses the video.)*

**Reput.** Oh yes, they are for sure saying down with the Cheetos. How can anyone take a violent protest about Cheetos seriously?

**Protester 2.**

**Reput.** I mean, looking in the background! They are burning Nabisco boxes, without evening eating the product! They could have donated that to a pantry.

**Skye.** I think you're mishearing the protesters. They are saying down with Cheez-Its.

**Reput.** Yeah well, it's not your memory, is it honey!

**Protester 1.**

**Protester 3.**

*(Reput then pauses the memory video)*

**Reput.** Let's say Mr. Astro purposely swerved twenty feet to hit a protester. There is no indication that they did so. Also, let's pull up that map again.

*(The map is brought up on the screen again.)*

**Reput.** I mean, how does this map even work? It doesn't show their exact movements! This is why we need to track all convict's movements, so we know when we can arrest them before they strike bloody violence!

**Skye.** Your honor, Mr. Reput is talking about what-ifs, and has presented no evidence to remotely suggest his theory!

*(Judge tweets "Overruled.")*

**Reput.** That is all your honor!

*(Reput bows and returns to his table. Skye then approaches the long table.)*

**Skye.** We will now be using cell phone recording from that day. Our government pays phone companies directly to record and collect cellular communications from specified individuals. Law enforcement agencies can also legally track the movements of people from their mobile phones.

*(Reput then pulls at his shirt.)*

**Skye.** The paper records show all his activities from the cellphone recording. Now we can play the recording, and you will be able to hear the audio.

*(We hear the audio through the speakers.)*

**Astro (Voice-over).** I think if I turn left here..what the? I think Google maps has messed up again!

**Reput.** Again, he is relatable!

*(Judge tweets, “Silence Reput.”)*

**Astro (voice-over).** What the hell is this?

**Skye.** Mr. Astro is referring to the protesting crowd about three blocks away from him.

**Astro (voice-over).** Puff, can’t these people get a real job? I thought they had all the government programs they needed!

*(Car music is cranked up.)*

**Astro (voice-over).** Okay, if I just turn here, then...GET AWAY FROM MY CAR!

*(The sound of a car hitting a body is heard, and several people are screaming.)*

**Skye.** Now I ask you, does this sound like a man who accidentally ran over a pedestrian or someone who purposely hit another human being, who was expressing their rights as a citizen to protest on public grounds?

*(Skye then returns to her table. Reput then approaches the Long table slowly.)*

**Reput.** I also have noises for you to discuss, but I must ask you also. Are we going to attack a man who was only doing their job? Maybe his foot hit the petals too fast, or he got them mixed up?

*(Reput then returns to his table and pulls out a receipt.)*

**Reput.** Ladies, Gentlemen, and those who identify as otherwise, what I have here are some receipts. Take a look at this good sir.

*(Reput approaches one of the jurors to show them the receipts. Might have to do some improv with the juror. )*

**Reput.** Look at this amount of money? We have an average of five hundred and seventy-two dollars a week, before taxes. How can any American live off of that? Can't you smell it?

*(Reput then walks behind all the juror members.)*

**Reput.** Can't you smell the fried chicken, or look at that receipt, can your tongue feel the warmth of the potato salad!

**Skye.** Holy Christ.

*(Skye shakes their head.)*

**Reput.** Not even Christ could make this baked loaf of sourdough into dough! No! Do you know what I taste? I taste the sweat and blood of a man, who is trying to feed his gas tank, family, and bills with the money of delivery tips!

**Skye.** Objection your honor. Mr. Reput is leading again!

*(Judge tweets out, "Sustained.")*

**Reput.** I do apologize sweetheart!

*(Reput returns to the front of the Long Table again.)*

**Reput.** Now, I do have some audio of the protest to play. Let's begin!

**Protester 2.**

**Reput.** Again you hear those words, "No justice, no peace." Doesn't that sound like violence to you! I do apologize if any of this is triggering to anyone.

**Protester 1.**

**Reput.** Again, tear down the hierarchy? With what, anarchy? Isn't that where they throw firebombs!

**Skye.** Your honor anarchy is actually about society being freely constituted without authorities or a governing body. It may also refer to a society or group of people that entirely reject a set hierarchy, and it is not about throwing firebombs.

*(Judge tweets out, "Sit down Miss Skye.")*

**Reput.** Well, all political leanings have different meanings to all.

**Protester 3:**

**Reput.** I think this will be all your honor! Oh, I do have some tweets to read out!

*(Reput then approaches the Long Table.)*

**Reput.** Grand jurors, and astonishing Judge. I will now present to you the last evidence--

*(Reput then does a mocking bow and begins.)*

**Reput.** Today ladies and gentlemen, I have my last offering of evidence for you. Some tweets. These tweets were tweeted from several anonymous accounts. The tweets have already been posted on the court's social media page and will be presented to everyone in the courtroom shortly. On the screen of course.

**Reput.** I do apologize for my acting skills, but we are not allowed to over-dramatize the evidence. The series of tweets helps show how violent the protests were. The first tweet, sent in by a Conhat53 says, or tweeted; ``Man, there are a lot of black people out today.'' Fascinating.

**Reput.** My second tweet. Not my tweet, y'all understand what I'm saying. This one is from Robertpost#alllivesmatter. Robert tweeted I'll believe in some genuine action when I see it! " Not holding my breath" So am I!

*(Reput then scrolls through his phone some more, and approaches the Judge, who retaliates by standing up.)*

***The Judge:*** THE AUDACITY!

*(Reput falls in fear, begging for mercy, and eventually returns to his feet, and walks away.)*

**Reput.** Just two more tweets and I promise I'll be done! Kenny Loggins tweets "There was nothing wrong with it...Break in the text...Take a knee, take away our statues, take away our Nabisco. How low can they go?"

**Reput.** Finally, the last tweet is from Kelly17#\$, "I'm so tired of all the anti-white hate over there, like get a real-life!" Hopefully, juror members, you can understand the pressure we are all facing now. What or who will they come for next? Bakers! Think about it!" Yes, do think about it!

*(Reput then does a bow, and Skye walks up to the long table.)*

**Skye.** Some say memory is a more perfect world than the universe: it gives back life to those who no longer exist. How does one become someone who no longer exists? Did we forget how to remember who we are? Some will present you with a dream of who you should be. We all know what that dream is, but what is the memory of it? What is America's memory? Didn't George, Daunte, Brenna, and Emmett have dreams also? Now they are the memory and are no longer able to dream about. Do we dream in America to escape the memory of what we have allowed to transpire? Ask yourself, do you want to dream about justice, or be a memory of it?

*(The Judge then tweets out. "The trial is finished. Now Juror must get on their phones, and tweet at our Twitter handle if the defendant is guilty or innocent!")*

*(Hopefully, people will vote, and then the tweet "We will need 48 hours to process the vote will appear on the screen.)*

END.



APPENDIX C  
JOURNAL ENTRIES

### The Journal Entries

For this section, I will be combining all of my journal entries into three parts, the summer, the fall, and the aftermath. Each section will discuss the writing process over the six months spent on the scripts. The summer will cover the writing of the scripts, the fall will cover the audition, the rehearsals, and the show. Finally, the aftermath will feature a post-discussion between the crew, audience members, and a trip to Houston.

#### *The Summer*

Overall, I spent most of the summer of 2021 writing three scripts. Two of the scripts were for my thesis “*Keyboard Memories*,” and “*You have the Right to Forget*.” The third one was a script I was writing for personal reasons and to also submit for graduate school, the third one was titled “*Let’s talk about the Mountains*.” I mention this because I was writing three scripts, and part of my process is to write several stories at once, like how I read. The overall process of the writing was simple. I would listen to sad music, go for a walk, write some notes down of scenes to dialogue, then return to the keyboard the next night. I’d wait a night to think about what was just written down. There isn’t a special routine in developing ideas for stories, they just eventually arrive at their destination.

The process for writing *Keyboard Memories* was very simple, I had the entire story already thought out, and it took about two days to write. That one wasn’t difficult to figure out. I already knew what I wanted to say. At that time, I wanted to talk about our communication in the past. Since the past in some ways defines every aspect of life,

where we go, what we do, and who we are. This is a play that is based more on personal memories rather than fictional ideas.

Part of the play is inspired by events that have happened in my life and what if I could revisit those events. What does a moment mean? How can we revisit something that has physically passed? Well, through science fiction of course! It's the Twilight Zone, part of the idea is to revisit another world, but the world is one you've already visited, and yet, nothing about it seems familiar. In some way, memory is a dead language, and we haven't been able to crack the code.

The story deals with the shadow self. Ava wishes to revisit a past event or find herself. It's a story of self-discovery although she has already been down the road before. I will say this ties into my own life, I'm constantly thinking about how maybe if certain events had been different. At times I'm told I've been too open or honest, but if you don't show people your heart, then they'll assume you've stolen someone else for show. The idea of revisiting the past probably stems from my relationship with my blood father. I call him my blood father because they've never felt like a parent to me. At times, I wonder why my blood father treated me so poorly. There was a lot of verbal abuse that happened, among other things. It's the driving force behind the pages, someone searching for acceptance from someone who can never show it.

The question is then, is Ava searching for her parent's approval? This is a question I can't answer because I don't know enough about Ava to answer it. She's just a paper girl. I didn't write that part out of her life. For this story, I thought I didn't need to know her entire past (even though she is trying to find something in it, so maybe I should

have?). At the time, I didn't think she was looking for acceptance from her parents, but then I started to rethink one simple line.

When Ava is talking to Ava?, they talk about finding a romantic relationship on Reddit. At first, I just wrote this as a one-off line, and for some small comedy, but recently, I've begun to think that maybe the line possibly has more meaning? In theory, Ava is searching for several things either than love, but love is a recurring theme within the play. My search for acceptance may have infiltrated the story. Even those with love are always searching for love, which is also what memory is, love.

Which is one of the most important parts of the play, is loving yourself. How can we love ourselves when we broke ourselves? Yes, many factors play into the creation of a person, but how do we find lost love? I think what I was trying to say was we can and we also can't. We have to tell ourselves that we love ourselves, but we also need to move on from our parts of our past. I have to accept the fact that I will never have the relationship with my blood father that I wanted. Sometimes we must accept that some realities are real fantasies.

Talking to the past is just learning how to communicate with yourself. So, then the question is, what am I trying to say to myself? I guess I might be saying that there are moments or ideas that we have to let go of, but shouldn't forget, or never forget anything, learn how to speak with it. What can I learn about my past? I can learn that just like Ava does, I need to embrace the past, and still walk away from it. We can learn something from a moment, even if it's not what we wanted to achieve originally. Communicating with the past is how we discover ourselves. Ava is trying to find something within her

past to salvage anything. Of course, when the answers are not presented right away, we may just turn away. Even if the answer is right in front of us.

This is why the past needed to be some kind of physical form. If it's just something you see in a science fiction television show, where someone visits the inside of their mind, but only sees their memories through the screen, then it's not as impactful. Seeing a moment is powerful, but what if you could touch or communicate with it? This is Ava? or the android is born. Ava needs to be able to talk with herself and receive some kind of answer. The android answers back how a dream answers back. Whether or not dreams hold any meaning is up to each individual to decide, but sometimes when our subconscious is communicating with us, we will receive a message, but it may come in an image or a sentence that makes no sense. Ava? is that the message, Instead of some dark shadowy figure, it's something pure, like a child being born. The android doesn't understand what those moments Ava has created mean to her now, the android can only communicate what was happening at that time, and since Ava has been long removed from those moments, those feelings are long gone, but not forgotten.

When the shadow-self is brought into the light, then we see that it's no different than us, because it's us. Maybe in some way, the shadow-self can only exist in a dream, where reality begins to seed. This play isn't a dream, but the story of Ava, whose ideas are reinforced by my subconscious thoughts. So, who's living the nightmare out? How can we accept the shadow for what it is? Always retelling our steps, that we think we have left in a different imprint. At this point, I have no idea if the idea was a "pure" or original idea, or just another way of talking with myself. I guess all stories are just a

conversation between the author and themselves. An endless war between one person.

Who wins?

The last part that I want to look into is the idea of discovering or selling ourselves off to talk with the past. I don't like big corporations, they make simple films, with bad slogans, and everyone wears the same sneakers. We think that a brand makes something special, but art isn't a brand. It's a unique kite that some control, as others watch in awe and wonder. Which is what the story is, someone, feeling like a kite. Wishing the wind would take them away, but something is holding them back, but they know that the string is the only thing keeping them in balance, and if they are cut off, then they will drift into the big blue sky, and eventually will be forgotten about. Thus, to be remembered, we try to make sure everyone can see us, we try to make sure people can see our brand.

I think Ava selling her memories is a terrible idea, even if they are written ones. I think the idea is a good one to talk about, but when we give in to the large corporation, we are saying that the individual isn't "interesting" enough to be noticed, and therefore we need some kind of "mark" on our bodies for people to notice us. Ava, therefore, breaks pieces of herself to discover who she is, but the company just wants to buy her, and then figure out how to sell herself back to her, for the rest of her life.

The company is important because I'm thinking about how they will attempt to find new ways of advertising, within a person, but also I'm asking what makes up a person? If you take a few pieces and mold them into something, will those pieces be considered the same person, or is there much more to the individual? I don't have the answer to that question, the only thing I can say is no. How does one clone a person, and

expect the same results? If people are supposed to be unique, then we are impossible to replicate. I think in the end Ava realizes that she didn't need to sell off parts of her past to understand them, maybe in time, she could have been able to see them for what they are, and accept them.

Overall, the play is about acceptance, the acceptance of the self, but we learn that the journey of acceptance is not easy. It's a journey in which we must keep rewalking, by walking forward, but not backward. It's complicated to talk with memories, they are like fingerprints on an abandoned handrail or footprints in the snow. They fade away, but with the next snow, they will always come back.

### *Not My Past*

The writing process for *You has the Right to Forget* was far more difficult than expected. First, I developed three different versions of the story before the script was fully written, which was then edited three times. "I intended for the first draft to share the story Rashomon style. This style of storytelling offers the audience three different perspectives, and then they decide which one was the real story. Each story was grounded, but then a few problems emerged. What if I didn't get enough actors? For the second story, I would have to find some locations to film and that would take up some of my school time, and I would need a longer script. The first draft only lasted a few days, until I threw it away. The second draft was split into two different parts. The ending and the beginning. I was introducing the three principal characters and then wrote how the story ends. There wasn't a middle or second act to connect the bridge, and I wasn't able to write an ending, so I just let that bridge collapse. The last draft which was the closest

to the final story involved a single event. Again, this didn't last very long, because I felt as if this wasn't my story to tell.

Which I think is why I do find this courtroom drama so fascinating. What isn't my past? Can I claim that something isn't my past, therefore not my wrongdoing? This is a very complicated subject to discuss because I don't know where to begin. First I was trying to write the story through a Japanese film that I enjoy. So, I wasn't thinking about the protesters or Black African Americans involved with activism through the last century. I wasn't thinking about my past or my culture's past. I wouldn't consider this piece a culture war, but I think it might have something to say about cultures rewriting history.

There are two main inspirations for the completion of the final script. The first one comes from the *Twilight Zone* episode *The Obsolete Man*. It's the structure that brought it all together. I wanted a long white walkway or tables, with the jury surrounding them. Then the audience and the jurors. Second, there needs to be a tower, where someone looked down upon us all. The person who has the final word. The jury members can pitch in their thoughts, but at the end of the day, the judge in the Hightower controls the long reach of the white path.

The second inspiration came from a class with Professor Cate Palcwkis. The class was about the rhetoric of protests. Slowly I was incorporating what articles I was able to read before the class began. This is when I felt more comfortable with the writing process of the script. Although, there is still a discussion about what is and is not my past that needs to be brought up.



I think it's okay to say that our ancestors were probably racists, I don't care too much about my dead relatives, but learning from how my current relative's act, I think it's safe to say that there were probably some awful ideologies being discussed. I would say the character of Reput is the part of society that doesn't want to talk about how the past is still informing the present to communicate. Reput doesn't want or care about what has transpired, he just wants everyone to move on.

It's human nature to want to move on, which is why these two short plays complement each other. We are seeing two worlds, one where we find a way to have a conversation with ourselves, and the second story is what happens when we refuse to acknowledge our past or learn from it. Reput is the product of a society that doesn't want to accept the wrongs of the past, just the torn-out paragraph from the history book.

How do we accept a past that we didn't create? So, I didn't start slavery or buy slaves, so how come I'm being blamed for racism? This is something that teenage me would have said when discussing racism in the United States. Even though I didn't buy or sell slaves, I'm still born into a product of continued racism, and what have I done to attempt to show others how their actions have been continuing racist ideologies? Well, I've gone to protests, but street protests can only do so much.

Writing is also limited in what it can say, which is why it was probably better than this piece which remained on the shorter side. There is a lot to talk about when it comes to racism in the United States, and how to accept a past that we didn't create, but did help keep standing.

First, it was important to make sure we understand how each character thinks, the story isn't about them, and yet it could be. Reput doesn't want to accept the sins of the past but also wants the courtroom to be a show about himself, or how the current United States has sinned against him. Reput is mainly made up of online commentators of Black Lives Matter. Primarily the white ones, and how they talk about what is wrong with this country. How we should turn the clock back to when America was great again. Yes, when was it great, but I'm not looking at when it was great, but what this has now transformed the country into. Which is why I choose the future.

By turning back the doomsday clock, the United States has progressed into the past. A past where now those who think that they are being written out are in full control. Are the jury members for or with Reput? Since the audience will mostly be members of UNI, it's safe to say they will agree with the other character Skye, who is talking about dealing with a past that we had no control over, but what if the jury was made up of anyone, and no one could be kicked out for certain opinions? Facts would always be questioned and cases would probably get solved or we would regress even more, and just have a judge decide the fate of everything.

Skye is the character that is supposed to deal with how we are responsible for helping the past discussion live on, and not discuss how to get rid of them. Skye is supposed to appeal to knowledge and discussions. As Reput just screams his facts, Skye slowly tells us the problem. So, what's louder, a scream or facts? If you can't hear a fact, then was it ever a fact, to begin with?

This is why the script was so hard to write, I had no idea what to say, or even if I should even be discussing this topic. Again, I don't see this piece as a commentary on the culture war, or cultural appropriation, but I think there could be some truth about my feelings towards those subjects. I do believe that the story would have been stronger if a Black/African American individual wrote it based on their feelings towards the subject, or someone who has gone through this, but then I would never get to discuss the idea about how we need to accept the evils of the past, even though we didn't physically cause them.

I think it's okay for someone from another culture to write about a different culture, but there are some rules or guidelines that need to be established. First, there has to be research involved with the writing. If I was just writing something down without making what I wrote facts, then it would be immoral for me to continue with the project, which is why I choose to make all the characters white.

I decided to tell the story of African American/Black people in the U.S. and how it has been told for centuries, without their voice. There was one Black/African American character, but then I had them removed from the play, and the white people would discuss how the story was going to be told. Which is how we've been telling stories for decades now, without consideration.

To be truthful, I was afraid to write a Black/African American voice for a serious matter, so I thought it would be better to make sure the audience understands that the voice has been forcefully removed, and their story would continue without them. I

wanted to explore how white Americans discuss racism without making sure the citizens they've been involved in the discussion.

I think the reason this story took a long time to write was that I wanted to make sure that I understood the task of accepting the past, and how to attempt to start correcting the past. Even though I may have not been involved with it physically, I'm still a product of the past, and therefore I have a responsibility to communicate with it.

The summer writings showed that I think my writings were both personal in some ways. One was far more personal than the other, but both dealt with some kind of internal struggle and understanding how to overcome it. I think both of these stories can appeal to an audience, but I have no idea.

#### *Fall Semester*

An actor is great at disturbing the flow of the story or they can change the story entirely. I don't act on stage, being in that kind of spotlight has never interested me and I recently began to think about how this has affected my identity. If the play is supposed to be a representation of my thoughts, then shouldn't I be the one in the play? I think that is part of the communication that is lost between the audience and the artist. What the writer's feelings are and what are not.

The overall major themes of a story are more than likely an artist's feelings on a subject, but what about the little character moments? Are audiences able to figure out what a writer is communicating about their own life? I think this is where actors make an interesting piece in the puzzle of art communication. Artists depend on the actor to communicate some of the emotional details in their heads to the audience. It's like

describing a memory that you've forgotten about to someone, you can make out the details, but some just don't make sense, or have to be remade.

There was never a moment when I was attempting to direct someone that I thought their body movement was completely off. There were certain scenes where I made sure that there were movements that had to be done in a certain way, but I never told anyone they had to do a certain movement in a certain way. What an actor does is recreate memory or bring out the hidden meaning within it.

In the second play, I was struggling with what to do with the judge's character, I didn't want them to sit around the entire time and be bored. Eventually, I thought up the idea that they could bring medieval weapons into the courtroom and that's how they began to communicate with the audience. The Judge is the character with the most control, but the audience won't know that the character is influenced by my controlling blood mother. Now, they didn't use weapons to communicate or sit on a dark throne, but there is something to be said about parents having total control over children, and when someone has total control over you, you lose your identity to the control.

I think one of the most important things I've learned from my experience as a director is that I hate being in control and yet it's my story to communicate or is it? To be honest, whenever the assistant director or stage manager had ideas, I sort of let them take over. I had the intent to watch over the production, but I wasn't interested in seeing my interpretation of my memories or creative memories play out fully. I was far more interested in how others would interpret the story going on.

This is what this all comes down to, is interpretation. What someone else thinks of my work. I would like to have some “thought cards” where the audience members can give their feedback, but I’ll probably forget to make some cards. I think it’s interesting to talk about how a controlling parent can be used to influence a character based on the judges you see on television.

Originally, my judge character was based on daytime judges. Like *Judge Judy* or *Judge Brown*. Although, I realized that I had already had one outrageous character in *Reput*, so I didn’t want to have two characters screaming at the same time. What I grew up with was two screaming parents, but I thought thematically, what if the judge came off like some disappointed parent figure. Typically, we give judges all the power in the justice system. They get the last word a lot of times and we are powerless to do anything about it because we have given into those rules.

Rules are also interesting, there is no rule on how to make an audience feel a certain way or tell them what they should think. I think it is okay if the audience doesn’t know that my memories influenced the plays because my memories aren’t courtroom dramas or science fiction pieces. They are a part of the story, but I’ve been able to restructure them to communicate a large story. Memories are a part of all my creative works, but I don’t try to recreate a memory, for several reasons. First, it’s impossible, there is no way I can tell someone how this particular memory made me feel. Second, my feelings towards my memories are constantly changing and my reaction towards them would be the reaction a theater has towards a film. At least 100 different opinions in a small box. Third, it would just be a mess of ranting memories that go nowhere.

I'm not saying because memory is hard to reinterpret that the message is lost, but turning or having memories influence stories is the best way to tell them. Yes, there have been stories where it's just dreams, ideas, or memories just told, but I think having them influence how a story is told is one of the best ways of writing. I've never been in a courtroom, on trial, or faced racial injustice, but to recreate a judge who comes off as imposing, I can use my memories of my blood parents to influence the feeling of control. Is it the same? No, but I don't think there is anything wrong with finding controlling behavior to influence a scenario that I've never been a part of.

I think this is the communication that I've been attempting to use. I'm not talking about my personal experiences, but I'm using them to influence my creative works. In some way, we all use our memories to influence our artistic struggle, because it's what we know. Then, the magic of actors comes in. I'm not the actor, but they begin to work with the material and use their own experience, or memories to influence the work as well. Soon it becomes a yard, someone mows the grass, ornaments are palace outside, little rodents live underneath it, the people living in the house, get advice for what they want in it, landscapers come and build it, and it starts based on one memory, but influenced and recontextualized by dozens by the end. This is what a story is, a memory being handled as if it were clay, always changing with new hands.

In the end, what is being communicated is a part of my memory. How do I tell someone that I have an identity problem or dwell far too much on the past? There is performance in talking to an audience, but I'm not good at public speaking. I'd rather engage the audience with a compelling story. I don't think they need to know that my

memories have influenced the stories at all. The plays aren't about my struggles, but the idea of an identity or an infinite crisis of the past. I think it might be far more powerful to find fancy dialogue to describe what I was going through. If I were to stand in front of an audience, I think my fancy dialogue wouldn't have worked. It would have come off as fake or I'm trying too hard to connect with the audience, but a fictional character can steal my feelings and be able to talk with an audience, without coming off as fake, or just trying to be too artistic.

I think memories are art, they connect with thousands of other memories to tell our story, but we don't like engaging with them. Who likes talking to themselves about something they can't solve? That's what humans are, a mirror of a thousand cracks, and the reflections are all talking at once. All those memories of trying to talk about or solve a problem. The rule of radio, two people talking at once doesn't solve anything.

### *The Talk*

The final entries take place during and after the group discussion about the night of the plays. The group discussion consisted of several University of Northern Iowa Professors, my thesis commuter, cast members, stage members, and some audience members. For both of the plays, all attendees agreed that there were themes of communication. For *Keyboard Memories* the consensus was there were two different types of communication going on. First, there was the inner communication of the character and their inability to understand the words from within. I can understand where the comments were coming from. The story was about someone seeking answers, but they didn't want to seek them from within. The journey takes them to the past, a past that



does hold the truth, but how does one find the truth? How can we find ourselves? I think this is something everyone can relate to, not being able to talk to yourself, or not wanting to face the answer that is right in front of you. People are a thousand pieces of shattered glass, but we repair the mirror, to create a singular truth.

The one-on-one conversation was also brought up, the point being that maybe because of technology, we have lost some ability to have a meaningful conversation with another person. This is something that I hadn't seen in the play, but I have heard of studies suggesting that we are slowly losing the ability to reach out, and have those kinds of conversations. I don't have the answers for technology and conversations, but I understand why the audience thought about this topic. Instead of talking to someone about a vacation, we make a post, send a video, or tweet our reaction to a television show. I remember when I was a child, my blood mother would show off our vacation pictures to their friends, and around my high school years, she began to ask if they saw them on Facebook and would show them through Facebook. There might have been those memories that altered my mind about this theme, and I just never thought about it.

There were two more points made about this play and the first one was our relationship with large corporations. I'll just say it here, corporations will kill humanity, and it already has begun. I don't have social media, except for an Instagram account, where I share what I've watched, and memes. It's strange, I hate being controlled, and I'm against surveillance. I've recently watched a British television show from the 1960s called *The Prisoner*, in which I share opinions about individual identity being crushed in society, and constant surveillance plays a large role in that, and yet, this protagonist gives

into the surveillance. Of course, they're able to break free from the surveillance, but they do give in to the corporation, hoping that their best interest is helping them, but in the end, it's all about gathering information, to sell herself back to herself. This is what corporations do, they find out more about you and then sell your interests back to you. What do you learn if you're constantly just rebuying yourself? Corporations don't want us to evolve, they want us to sink, and then make room in the sinkhole for the next victim. There is a tragedy because they lose part of themselves back to the corporation, but this is how they have to move on. No one is lost until they tell themselves that they are lost, and then we are found.

The last part about communication was about our communication with large corporations. Mainly between the employee and Ava. We see that the employee doesn't care about Ava's journey, and interrupts it in the end. If they did care about Ava, why not give her more time to explore herself, or come back sooner? The story is self-interested in both parts. Ava's story is about self-discovery, and the corporation is about the corporation. It doesn't matter if they are doing a good deed, because they need to get Ava out as soon as possible so that they can get another customer in.

The discussion around the second play *You Have the Right to Forget*, also dealt with communication. Members of the group discussion brought up our relationship with the justice system, and how it fails communication. The court seems to be run by a deity-like figure, and audience members are told they have a voice in the conversation, but it has to be voiced through a social media platform. The idea was, but maybe wasn't explored enough, that people would vote if others could see what conclusion they had

come to. If this was a larger story, then maybe this aspect could have been explored, but it also could have ruined the pace of the show. The deity also carries weapons with them into the courtroom. If one must use the threat of violence, then why even speak up or try to spark a conversation with them? The deity has a walkway they walk down to get to their high throne. Judges are palace high above us and wear special clothes. It's a long-distance between justice and the truth. They only speak when challenged or are approached, if we are afraid to talk to them, then what is communication with the justice system? What is protection? If there are no voices, then justice has nothing to worry about.

The two main leads also struggle with communication. Sky tries at first to use reason and facts to win the case, but Reput dives into an emotional appeal right away. Sky does eventually use an emotional appeal with the historical context, in the end, so she doesn't 100 percent give into Reput's way of communication. The discussion group was interested in this dynamic because is this how people are going to interact for the foreseeable future? Watching mainstream News does come off as a battle between facts and emotions. We all want to be safe and help those find justice, but people are uncomfortable with talking about opposing views. All justice systems are bound to have failures, but never addressing them or constantly defending them helps no one. What is a voice of reason then? There is nothing wrong with using real-world examples in a case, but those also must provide context and factual evidence. In some ways, we are bound to a justice system that survives on voicelessness, or whisperings of the truth are drowned out by the channel being flipped.

The discussion overall was about the loss of communication, on several levels. the reaction to the works might be influenced because of the political environment of the time. The second play is a response to current political times, but the first play is based on personal thoughts. Although, maybe the audience members were thinking about personal experiences where the communication was bad. The discussion was helpful because it allowed insight into others' reactions and it was helpful seeing the plays from an audience's perspective.

Finally, even though the plays were written using memories of my personal and creative memories, a connection was made. I think the connection through communication means that the audience has questions about the future of communication, and is worried about their communication skills. Which is a problem that humanity has always faced, how do we communicate problems with one another?