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# By Any Other Name: Personal Essays as Columns, Op-Eds, and Blog Posts

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## Abstract

English faculty are familiar with the personal essay, a genre they sometimes teach, assign, and write. And while they may recognize the personal essay as the foundation for today's more fashionable media formats, they may not know how to remake its vintage form into more contemporary styles. Using examples by scholars already writing in the public sphere, two journalists-turned-academics will unpack various approaches to making disciplinary knowledge relevant to mass audiences. Their presentation will include: 1) how to analyze mass media formats for audience, purpose, and venue; 2) why making essays newsworthy through timeliness, proximity, and impact is the most effective sales pitch; and 3) how interpretive strategies in literature are relevant to a citizenry's ability to decipher the world-as-text-which is also, perhaps, the English discipline's greatest contribution to public education.

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