

More writers than would fit neatly into this page have inspired me to write. That said, below will cover some of the writers that have inspired the impetus to write into me, and those writers that might give an idea to the curious would-be reader what my writing works in part to be like. Careful reading ahead if you're intending to read any of these pieces, because I definitely spoil them.

George Orwell

Favorite Piece: 1984

George Orwell's novel *1984* continues to be my favorite book, largely because it was the first book I had read that made me think "Yeah, this is what I want to do." Growing up in a lower class Appalachian family is more akin to living as a prole than to living as any of the primary characters of this text, but it resonated with me nonetheless. While I hope to write texts that are imaginative and absurd, above all literary, I want to be sure not to lose connection to the political.

Fernando Pessoa

Favorite Piece: The Book of Disquiet

Fernando Pessoa's *The Book of Disquiet* is an...odd piece. His focus on dreams with intentional ambiguity given to the term to allow the term to simultaneously cover the expanses of the dreamscape, our hopes for the future, and our thoughts removed-from-experience was something I hadn't seen written on in-depth in another piece before, and something I hadn't known that I needed to see. In my own life I have lived much of it internally in a paracosmic world-of-my-own, and this piece, while not on paracosms, was one I could find a home in.

Salvador Plascencia

Favorite Piece: The People of Paper

When writing on Orwell I had briefly mentioned a fascination with and hope to participate in that tradition of literature that is both imaginative and absurd, and this is a wonderful example of that. While I myself don't have interest in writing meta-narratives such as this, there are particular aspects of the narrative that I do want to replicate. The story of personhood present in the paper woman, for example; or the slow repetition of the lives of the metal tortoises that adds conflict in a Kafkaesque not-going-to-explain-why sort of way. Absurdity that feels real rather than detaching the reader from the novel, I love it.

Alan Lightman

Favorite Piece: Einstein's Dreams

I am enamored with time, and a flash fiction collection with a throughline intimately connected with time was something, like *The Book of Disquiet*, so perfect for my own way of experiencing it'd never even occurred to me it could have existed! I'm not fond of writing flash fiction, but this piece does serve as a catalyst for my imagining frequently: it is my hope that what I can write will not lose the reader but will have the flexibility to play with time in a way that drives the narrative forward. The slow pace of this piece *is* something I want to take with me, as I've continued to become a better reader, I am again and again reminded of my preference for the slow pace.