

## Introduction

### Discover Creative Writing Superpowers through Investigative Teaching Techniques

#### **Origins of My Investigative Creative Writing Practice and Teaching**

This book hinges on an orientation involving the concepts of *investigation* and *discovery* in order to transform novice writers into investigators and discoverers who learn through their writing. This orientation also involves the mystery of the journey of writing, not knowing where it will lead, and the mystery of the destination – which relies on finding revelations that can happen almost magically when subject matter is examined creatively. And when I write “creatively,” I mean it literally: through the act of creating something which did not exist before. Whether that something is a text or an experience or even a failure, the idea is that epiphanies can be hauled from the depths of our flashing synapses by directly engaging with processes which provide incentives for writers to explore areas they may have never ventured without some sort of driving factor that takes them outside of themselves.

What I’m talking about is playing with words and allusions, and interests and concerns, by shifting perspectives in order to actively engage *the imagination*: a concept that refers to the machinery humans use to create images and context, but also to all the other sensual and idea-generating mechanisms people employ to make

their lives more meaningful. In other words, there are innovative ways to play with language and learning which can reward those who write with experiences that take them to places they never thought possible. And because the payoff in discovering new terrain is often immediate, the result is an enthusiasm for exceeding one's own expectations. If you ask me, there's no better way to learn than that.

Envisioned primarily as a guidebook for student writers and those who teach and aspire to teach creative writing, this text is just as much about teaching creative writing as it is about teaching writing creatively. The ideas that follow can be applied to any writing or creative writing course from grade school to the graduate level, and they can serve creative and critical thinkers in areas as diverse as English, journalism, education, first-year writing, professional writing, technical writing, world languages, and rhetorical studies. The exercises and approaches in this book were designed to be adjustable according to the needs of instructors in any field that seeks to tap into the subconscious, promote group work, inspire dialogue, and get to the points which matter the most. In short, the general advice contained in these pages is relevant to any subject matter in which writing is used to discover, whether the explorers are in academic settings or whether they are artists, scholars, or curious individuals studying writing on their own.

Essentially, the narratives that follow are intended to help writers relate their own narratives. The trick, of course, is for writers to make the messages embedded in their narratives worth it for the audience, the discoverers of their texts, to learn about. When writers engage readers by prompting revelations which truly speak to an audience, that's an exciting and valuable asset for whatever those writers want to accomplish. When that sort of connection occurs, so does communication. Whether that communication be a personal discovery, an emotional expression, information which can be useful to others, or ideas meant to solve global warming, using language to communicate effectively provides a powerful platform to make something happen.

As history has proven time and time again, narratives make profound differences in peoples' lives. Just look at all the religious texts in the world and how those narratives are essential to forming identities that shape worldviews, start wars, provide for charity, and support beliefs passed on for generations. Consider all the novels, memoirs, poems, philosophical writings, and other published narratives that have inspired readers to travel, experience new cultures, meet people with different ideas, change their politics, and ask questions they might have never asked if not for the privilege of literacy. And then there are the narratives that find their form in movies, television shows, radio shows, opera, video games – which provide for forms of psychic escape. Songs contain narratives that make incredible differences in peoples' attitudes and outlooks every day. Whether those narratives reach audiences through the blues, country music, Gospel, Buddhist chants or hip hop, audiences have been finding meaningful context in verse for centuries that directly applies to their lives. For example, millions of people, who've been disappointed in not getting something in their lives, have looked to the lyrics of the Rolling Stones' "You Can't Always Get What You Want" (Jagger and Richards, 1969) for consolation. Given that, and given all the other narratives people tell each other on a daily basis (especially on cable news), it's obvious that narratives are central in affecting how individuals perceive and take part in the world.

Let's start with my own narrative, which is that of a creative writing polygamist. By this I mean that I am just as committed to poetry as I am to fiction, creative nonfiction, literary translation, and drama writing. I've practiced and published in all these genres, and I've had the good fortune to apply that experience as an editor of some extremely colorful literary journals, especially the legendary *Toad Suck Review*. As a creative writing professor, I've taught everything from all the standard workshops, forms, topics, and intro courses to classes in College Writing and in Editing and Publishing. I've started and advised student organizations, worked with community leaders, led protests, and I've taken my messages to the streets via television, radio, newspapers, podcasts, blogs,

and public talks. I've designed and developed creative writing programs, worked closely with administrators and faculty to launch those programs, and I've witnessed the growing pains associated with sustaining writing programs. I'm also dedicated to educating audiences interested in fish and environmental subject matter, I'm a practitioner of some obscure postmodern aesthetics, and I've published numerous articles in creative writing pedagogy – which is why this book exists.

In poetry I have always been attracted to the experimental subgenre of “investigative poetry” as proposed by the American bard-historian Ed Sanders, who appropriated techniques from Ezra Pound, Charles Olson, William Carlos Williams, and other avant-garde poets to develop a twentieth-century form of poetics constructed from “undefiled high energy purely-distilled verse-fragments” (Sanders, 1976: 11). Sanders' definition of investigative poetry is undeniably abstract, so I'll just define it here as a free-verse-based collage that incorporates data, history, politics, images, quotes, references, and other bits of textual information, all bound together by a biased sense of humor. To this mix I've added aspects of ecology, science, psychology, sociology, historical fiction, the oral tradition, and audio to develop my own stylistic voice in biology- and folklore-based poetry-portraits of natural and unnatural worlds.

Somewhere along the line, I came up with the umbrella term “investigative creative writing pedagogy,” which is an elusive notion. Even though there may be some conceptual crossovers that relate to “investigative writing,” “investigative journalism,” or “experiential education,” such established approaches exist independently from the theoretical framework of the practices and pedagogy I envision here. Simply put, I do not consider myself a patron of any specific school or tradition of writing pedagogy, but I do consider myself someone from the creative writing spectrum who feels no hesitation in applying the William S. Burroughs quote of “all is permitted” (Burroughs, Gysin, Corso, and Beiles, 1960: 61).<sup>1</sup> I took that statement as poetic license for the freedom

to appropriate, and with that liberty I developed a vision for what I call “investigative poetics” based on Sanders’ brand (which is commonly referred to as “investigative poetry” or “investigative verse”). I then developed a vision for “investigative eco-fiction” and “investigative nonfiction,” which I see as subspecies of the investigative creative writing pedagogy genus which I now find myself promoting with minimal attention to what theories are trending or what those who’ve invested themselves in other writing pedagogies might think about my trespasses.

My idea of investigative creative writing, like Sanders’ idea of investigative poetry, depends in part on combining different snapshots of a subject’s totality in order to create a textual mosaic that tells a unique story. In investigative poetry, the result of Sanders’ cut-and-paste approach is easily seen on the page; but in investigative creative writing, the collage approach is sometimes less visible because it’s more philosophical than physical. That is, in investigative poetry the combining happens right on the page; but in investigative creative writing, the combining happens behind the scenes. I’m talking about a conceptual combining – a combining of approaches, tactics, and exercises that invites students in, directly engages them in the discovery process, and creates a playful experience to inspire context which resonates for readers. Or, another way of looking at this comparison is that whereas investigative poetry is a collage composed of different facets of a subject’s nature, investigative creative writing pedagogy, like the investigative creative writing practice on which it is built, is constructed from a kaleidoscope of experiences bent on turning learning into an event.

Like the lyric essay (in which lyrical language is no prerequisite), investigative creative writing pedagogy is a concept that originated from propositions offered in previous historical literary contexts. The lyric essay was officially established in the Fall 1997 issue of the *Seneca Review* by John D’Agata and Deborah Tall and was characterized by them as a creative nonfiction mosaic stitched from narrative fragments (D’Agata and Tall, 1997). Like

investigative poetry, the lyric essay is a multi-faceted hybrid form that can incorporate research, memories, technical information, images, verse, and various stylistic tricks. Both the practice and pedagogy of investigative creative writing share the intention of the lyric essay and investigative poetry to combine smaller parts of the whole in order to create a new and novel way of providing focus. The lyric essay, being just as much a collage experience as investigative poetry, then joins the latter as a conceptual model for investigative creative writing. In the Whitmanesque sense that the self “contains multitudes” (Whitman, 2004: 123), investigative creative writing does the same thing: It relies on the premise that its entirety is amassed from myriad experiences.

At this point, defining investigative creative writing admittedly becomes an abstract argument based on teaching experiences that I recall but the reader has limited access to. That, however, is another reason this book exists: to organize those experiences, to set them down in the form of chapters, and to offer itself as a starting point for other writers and writing teachers to add their own experiences. Meanwhile, the word “investigative” refers to the act of investigating for the purpose of discovery just as much as it harks back to the innovative ideologies in Sanders’ vision of investigative poetry.

Investigative eco-fiction, on the other hand, is a construct that relies on a slightly different collage-oriented approach. As a method for montaging moments and memories from one’s own experience into a body of fictional prose, I examine the concept of investigative eco-fiction in Chapter 12 and advocate for experiential investigations that immerse and directly involve fiction writers in environmental subject matter. This getting-out-there-and-doing-it approach ensures that writers have more of a stake in the research focus than if they were just sitting at their desks making stuff up. Investigative immersion provides writers the opportunity to gather real-life, real-world, real-time information, so their final products have the advantage of being narratives informed by genuine experience.

The concept of investigative nonfiction is also examined in this book, especially in Chapter 13, “From Wild People to Wilderness,” which looks at how I combined experience with research in order to create a highly active nonfiction investigation. As I note in that chapter, when nonfiction-based discoveries happen in which writers lose or discover themselves, this is a prescription for investigative nonfiction.

In investigative creative writing, investigations can range from inquiries into experimental teaching methods and dramatic ways of learning to exploring questions in the creation and operation of environments that directly influence what the editor of this book and the anthology *Creativity and Discovery in the University Writing Class* refers to as “discovery-oriented pedagogy” (Pennington, 2015: ix). This brings up another previously established literary context that overlaps with and augments the investigative aspect of the pedagogy I proclaim.

Much of the conceptual grounding for this book was realized in connection with the workshops I taught for the 2013 Summer Institute on Creativity and Discovery in University Writing hosted by the English Department at the City University of Hong Kong, which was spearheaded by its Research Coordinator, Martha C. Pennington. The book which resulted from that conference, *Creativity and Discovery in the University Writing Class* (Chik, Costley, and Pennington, 2015), is without question a big sister to this book. *Investigative Creative Writing* follows in the spirit of incorporating exploratory aspects to learning, and it essentially grew out of and grew up with guidance from *Creativity and Discovery in the University Writing Class*. As Charles Bazerman suggests in the third chapter of *Creativity and Discovery*, “Creating Identities in the Intertextual World,” there is great value in “teaching students how to claim their place and accomplish meaningful actions in the worlds they are growing into. Teachers need to invent the environments and tasks that will nurture the students’ invention of themselves as powerful ... writers” (Bazerman, 2015: 46).

What this means is that a revolution needs to take place in education and specifically in the teaching of writing. This is not to say that I'm calling for an armed rebellion. Rather, I'm referring to a need for pedagogical motion, for teachers to get the investigative wheels rolling so that vehicles to discovery can take students to new places. What I am calling for is a progressive pedagogy, the idea being to move forward, to develop, to improve, to advance toward a higher, more effective state. "Progressive" is a quixotic word, an idealistic word, a word that implies moving away from the past and looking toward the future, and it has an agenda: to make things better, to reach a full potential, to evolve into the best incarnation possible. I envision the idea of revolution as a *re-evolution* in which educators, as Bazerman suggests, create occasions that lead to inventions (or discoveries) which not only empower students, but lead them to "understand and participate more fully in the worlds of their chosen disciplines" (Bazerman, 2015: 57).

As a mode to create greater communication between academic disciplines, investigative creative writing pedagogy promotes a progressive alternative to what Shirley Goek-lin Lim observes in "Highways and Sinkholes" (Chapter 13 of *Creativity and Discovery in the University Writing Class*) as the standard writing-pedagogy approaches of "observing poetic form, producing narrative structure, the best choice of diction, the most engaging dramatic action, and so forth ... [which] underlie much of contemporary teaching in the creative writing classroom" (Lim, 2015: 252). Lim has a beef with the "current creative writing textbooks so popular in college classes [which] model [and] repeat standard and usually un-interrogated maxims and dogma that have been generally valorized as 'lore'" (ibid.). That's a sentiment I wholeheartedly agree with.

Still, I'm not making the claim that the voices which dominate creative writing pedagogy should be ignored or discounted. Veteran creative writing teachers have vast stores of seasoned experience to offer, and that experience is balanced by a lot of new blood generated by the MFA industry, which is currently producing



plenty of passionate mentorship for developing writers. To this mix, I decided to add my own narratives to the conversation about what has been effective for me in teaching creative writing based on nearly twenty years of pedagogical experience at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. At times, my voice may seem unorthodox, and at times, it definitely is.

As a writer whose work often contains an edge which some have labeled “quirky” or “radical,” I’ve discovered that I can use these outsider qualities to reach a mainstream audience, especially with my monster-fish books. My intention isn’t to toot my own horn, but I know that my obsession with fishing and my sincerity of tone appeal to readers eager to experience the grotesques I’ve met. The discovery here is that creating a following is an important result which investigative creative writing practices can lead to – not for self-validating reasons, but for the most progressive reasons that have ever existed.

I frequently tell my students that writing is an advanced form of talking, and I truly believe it is. If you can get your views and visions down as you see them and feel them and hear them in your head, that’s an effective method to begin drawing readers in. Furthermore, when emerging writers connect with familiar voices, or voices that feel natural or playful or musical or rich in information, those connections provide effective examples of how to proceed. And if developing writers take those hints, and if their content is progressive in intent like the environmental chapters in this book, then those writers will have a better chance at making their environments more sustainable and productive.

Consequently, this book is my take on approaches that can stimulate student imaginations in order to help crystallize visions. It’s also my take on successful practices that students and teachers and writers can apply in the classroom and beyond. And by “beyond” I don’t just mean homework. I’m talking about writers feeling enthusiastic and confident when leaping into investigations that can yield rewarding discoveries in their lives and the lives of others. I’m talking about investigators challenging their intellects

by turning the practice of writing into a transcendental experience that takes them to greater heights. I'm talking about getting to that place where writers can discover and harness the crazy coursing currents of the word-universe through authentic experiences in which they become antennas pulling in visualizations and associations to connect and smooth out later. I'm talking about getting into the mythic "Zone," which isn't really mythic at all because these experiences can happen automatically and every day.

That's what happens when I write. I leave myself, go out of myself, and I experience a quasi-omniscience which allows me the freedom to play with language and ideas to the point that the outside world does not exist except as a place to return to. When I'm in the Zone, discoveries come in fast and frequent ecstatic rushes. This is the great elation and satisfaction that every writer strives to achieve. It's the stereotype of the mad scribe pounding away, spelunking the depths of his or her genius to find long buried treasures seeking light. It's the ideal, the grail, the apotheosis – and I can tell you that the Zone is achievable and tangible, and it's there right now for the taking.

Even as I write this, I see that I've forgotten to eat lunch because I'm as involved in mining my own mind for geodes of connectivity as a human being can possibly be. And yes, I'm hungry, but a cream-cheese bagel can wait for this highly addictive process to work its divine process.

Investigative creative writing is what I have to offer, and it's what I want to share with others. I've seen where it can take me, and the results are visible in my list of publications, which includes thirty books. I'm not saying this to brag; I'm saying this to show that immersing oneself in the practice of investigative processes not only is an accessible mind-blowing experience, but it can produce discoveries for which there is a strong demand. Not only that, those discoveries can lead to job security, support for future writing projects, awards, and professional recognition. But those are just starting points for what writing discoveries can really do. Since writing discoveries have led to the dismantling

of governments, treaties between nations, and constitutions and bills of rights, they damn well have the potential to strengthen communities, fund cancer research, expose corruption, and lead to the laying down of arms.

Investigative creative writing pedagogy articulates approaches designed to encourage writers to push themselves athletically and beyond what the Nike commercials recommend. To their general advice of “Just do it,” I would add: “...via writing discoveries that provoke!”

But provoke what?

Laughter, that’s what!

Or crying. Or catharsis. Or empathy. Or action. Or change. Or evolution.

Or insights that transform writers striving in isolation into leaders emerging from the shadows.

Or questions that drive writers to ask further questions, and questions that really matter.

But most of all, to provoke the discovery and the writing of original, imaginative works that are conscious of what they want to accomplish and effective in doing so.

One measure of effective writing is if an audience wants more from a writer. If that’s the case, then that writer is doing something right. Having an audience that wants more from you is a powerful hand to wield. That power, however, needs to be handled wisely and with respect or else it risks being wasted or misused. As Spiderman points out, echoing Voltaire, “with great power there must also come – great responsibility” (Lee, 1962: 11).<sup>2</sup> And as Bazerman indicates, teachers can invent ways for students to invent themselves into powerful writers. This means students have the power to discover their own superpowers – like the power to communicate and the power to influence and inspire – which hold both psychological and political currency and can be used to bring forth illuminations. Of course, the more play there is in discovering these powers, and the more personally rewarding those experiences are, the easier it is to get to know and control

these powers. And the more writers know and control their power to connect with others, the more they discover about their worlds and themselves and what they can do to preserve what I refer to in Part 4, “Eco-Investigations,” as “the whole fracking enchilada.”

As an activist eco-writer who recognizes that all life on this planet depends on the health of the environment, this is what I now find my words fighting for. Due to that idealism, and because I’ve discovered that a well-written letter to the editor can shut down City Hall, the goal of this book is to generate and model writing power in order to empower writers involved with the most vital work there is to do. Whether that work is making great leaps in the protection of human rights, civil rights, animal rights, the preservation and propagation of endangered species, disease control, or making progress in the common-sense work governing bodies need to do to increase everyone’s overall quality of life, I envision writing power as the ultimate gift teachers can give to students so that they can discover their own superpowers. But as both comic books and real life have demonstrated, there is always a risk with superpowers. Power can be used for both good and evil and everything in between, and it has been used for such extremes. Nevertheless, I am firmly committed to the belief that creative writing superpowers can help save us from ourselves.

## Overview of Contents

Let’s take a look at how the chapters that follow cohere to the whole. Part 1, “Discovery-Oriented Basics,” consists of chapters focused primarily on craft. In Chapter 1, “Teaching Students to Show Not Tell,” I address the age-old question of how to encourage developing writers to substitute specific detail for ambiguous or abstract words so as to conjure vivid visions and associations that resonate with readers, thereby challenging evolving imaginations to make use of writing power. Similarly, Chapter 2, “The New Weird: What Happens to Creative Writing When the Truth Is Stranger

than Fiction,” investigates approaches for empowering fiction by making it more colorful and memorable. Chapter 3, “The Ten Commandments of Incorporating Dialogue,” was designed “For Those Seeking to Inform the Unprepared, the Disengaged, and the Thoroughly Confused,” just as its subtitle claims. That chapter offers more than just advice on how to use the power of dialogue; it also offers practical reasons to hone a power which can change lives for the better.

Part 2, “Investigative Theatrics,” also aims to make use of power – that power being teaching methods which actively engage students so that they’re psyched to investigate. I see Chapter 4, “Multiple-Personality Pedagogy,” as a way to explain a hybrid teaching tool for varying voice in the classroom, and I explain why this dramatic approach ups the ante by bringing in diverse points of view through a method that at first seems ludicrous yet has always worked for my students. Chapter 5, “Extreme Puppet Theater as a Tool for Writing Pedagogy,” also illustrates a theatric way to entertain and educate in order to arrive at discoveries that free students from the learning fetters of the past (i.e. exams, memorization, forced essay writing), which just aren’t as functional as they used to be in this highly technological, fast-paced, short-term-attention-span world. Chapter 6, “May the Farce Be with You,” reflects on the phenomenon of puppet pedagogy and addresses the concept of *something else*, a loaded term which authorities in the field of creative writing pedagogy have been touching on for years. Chapter 7, “Pointers for Performance of Poetry and Prose,” then ends this section with a talking-point-based essay on how to make the spoken word (to borrow from Jack Kerouac) “burn, burn, burn like fabulous yellow roman candles exploding like spiders across the stars” (Kerouac, 1959: 6).

Part 3, “Programmatic Discoveries,” also seeks to tap into writing power, but at a more institutional level, so that higher education can serve students and communities. For example, Chapter 8, “How to Sell a Creative Writing Program Based on the Question ‘Why Study Creative Writing?’” is about establishing environments for students

to pursue discoveries that create strong communities. Likewise, Chapter 9, “Nine Recommendations for Growing Creative Writing Programs,” goes after that same power and provides perspectives to investigate further. These two chapters rely on my experience in designing and founding the Arkansas Writers MFA Workshop at the University of Central Arkansas, and they investigate ways to start and sustain progressive programs in the discipline. Chapter 10, “Dealing with Diverse Issues in Creative Writing Programs: A Polemic,” ends Part 3 with a look at recent arguments by some controversial provocateurs, but with an eye toward making the workshop more user-friendly and relatable for its diverse clientele.

Part 4, “Eco-Investigations,” is included because this is my primary research area, and since I know the subject matter well, I can comment with authority. It’s also the battlefield in which I’ve been concentrating my own power, and can be viewed as an example of how to effectively channel creative writing superpowers. Still, my intention here has nothing to do with winning anyone over to any side; it’s about showing how creative investigations can lead to discovering solutions so that future generations of writing teachers and writing students don’t end up powerless. Chapter 11, “Introducing ‘Eco’ to the Homies,” is a breakdown of my line of attack for doing the most I can do for this planet while I’m here. It’s a call to action, which is understood in much more depth when paired with Chapter 12, “Experience Investigative Eco-Fiction.” This chapter draws upon my experience applying what I’ve gleaned in the field to an increasingly popular subgenre that’s now urgently calling for more eco-voices to reach more readers because the planet is going down. Chapter 13, “From Wild People to Wilderness,” then deconstructs my own self-designed education in investigating monsters in our midst. That chapter examines how I developed a personal aesthetic through decades of research in art history and world lit. In a sense, this approach to investigative creative writing pedagogy and practice completes the triumvirate of the primary creative writing genres (poetry, fiction, nonfiction) by establishing an investigative nonfiction component to ride

alongside my versions of investigative poetics and investigative eco-fiction. More importantly, Chapter 13 provides an example for students of how to discover meaningful direction through investigative processes that have the power to influence social consciousness.

The last section, “Part 5: Experiential Exercises,” culminates with a series of observations on investigative exercises that have inspired hundreds of students to dive into their own writing and have a blast experiencing their own discoveries. Chapter 14, “Seven Investigative Group Exercises,” recounts some of the most successful experiments I’ve tried in the classroom. Examples of student work are provided to show the results. Specific assignments are included in this chapter, as in Chapter 15, “Four Investigative Exercises for Individual Discovery,” which is geared toward generating revelations through practices that foster creative interaction. That chapter incorporates examples by students as well as discussions of innovative approaches practiced by other teachers. And finally, Chapter 16, “Six Investigative Homework Exercises for Encouraging Literary Citizenship,” wraps up this treatise by examining how creative investigations that lead to writing discoveries can make a powerful difference for individuals as well as communities.

### **When Learning Becomes *Something Else***

As noted earlier, this book offers prototypes of investigative creative writing pedagogy for teachers to tweak according to their needs. Still, this text isn’t meant only for teachers and students; if anything, these meditations on investigative teaching techniques aspire to do what the root of the word “investigative” blatantly suggests: to *invest*.

But invest in what?

In communicating what matters the most for the sake of preserving what matters the most. In other words, investigative

creative writing offers writers an effective way to invest in themselves for what's needed to progressively evolve as a species.

But how?

By offering an accessible, provocative pedagogy that breaks into new grounds, excites imaginations, and provides for the illusion of play when serious work is being done. When learning becomes an adventure, it has an advantage over conventional methods in hooking students and leaving them hungering for more. Also, when learning becomes *something else*, the interactive process becomes a transformative experience for teachers as well as students. That's why I highly value group activities that create solid bonds in the pursuit of mutual goals, which is why I've made a study of how to pump up the play in order to engage students in the learning process – because learning always works better when it's fun.

From being a student myself in four creative writing programs, I instinctually knew this when I began teaching: That to be as effective as I can, to impart as much knowledge as I can, and to inspire students to take off on their own self-propelled investigations, my courses needed to be *amusing*. That is, they should provoke the muse through unusual experiences which open new doors and invite discovery.

Hence, *Investigative Creative Writing* – which comes directly from investigating my own writing experience – is my discovery on how to turn learning into a series of transformative events that elevate writing processes into *something else*. And since investigative creative writing pedagogy is equipped to provide the power needed to make use of our collective, ever-evolving, discovery-seeking DNA in the most progressive way possible, and since power is a terrible thing to waste, let's get cracking now!



## Notes

- 1 There is some confusion about this quote, which Burroughs originally attributed to Betty Bouthoul. According to Jeff Taylor’s article “Notes on the Origin of the Phrase ‘Nothing Is True, Everything Is Permitted’” (Taylor, 2017), this was the title of the thirteenth chapter of Bouthoul’s book *Master of the Assassins* (Bouthoul, 1936), even though the book was never published in English.
- 2 Voltaire wrote “grande responsabilité est la suite inséparable d’un grand pouvoir” (Voltaire, 1793), which I have translated from the French as “great responsibility always follows great power.” Other versions of this popular quotation have been attributed to Winston Churchill, Theodore Roosevelt, and Franklin D. Roosevelt.

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