

Legal Terminology, or: How do Definitions Work for You?

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1 INTRODUCTION. WHERE LAW BEGINS: SCULPTING THOUGHT BEFORE RULES

It was many years ago. I began my career as a university lecturer when I was asked to teach a course on legal theory. Lawyers know that this discipline is most often associated with the structuring of terminology and the systematization of legal knowledge.* Though legal theory opens the door to the world of jurisprudence, students usually experience it as a source of boredom.

Just imagine: a seventeen-year-old is plunged into the depths of knowledge, where every drop, every single term must be interpreted with precision, where free interpretation can lead to a person's downfall or the collapse of a business, where every argument is worth its weight in gold...

A law theory instructor should build a strong foundation for this young person's understanding of law.

I was fully aware of the responsibility I carried. However, the problem was that I didn't like the subject myself. By training, I am an international lawyer, and international law to me is reflection, freedom, struggle, process – life itself; filled with flavor, beauty, philosophy, and of course, intrigue. Legal theory, by contrast, felt like dry, stale bread in a shepherd's sack – nutritious, necessary for survival on steep slopes, but utterly devoid of flavor, as if it had forgotten that food can bring joy, not just sustain life.

Thinking about the inevitable trials and difficulties, I began preparing the course methodically. I already sympathized with my students. But they had no choice. And neither did I.

I tried to “revive” legal theory with landmark judicial decisions, examples from my experience working with government agencies, and insights from my collaboration with private law firms. I made efforts to diversify the course with various methodological tools...

* In a broader explanation, the tasks of legal theory are to understand the nature and purpose of legal norms and institutions, to determine what they should be, how participants in the legal system should act, and how to ensure the internal consistency of legal norms.

And, according to student feedback, the course turned out to be a great success. Yet the truth was – I didn’t feel any *air* in it. I believed the students couldn’t truly open up in this course, couldn’t taste the richness of deep discussion, couldn’t relax and find themselves within the whirlpool of legal knowledge. And the reason, I thought, was the *terminological cage*.

Legal theory contains a vast number of legal terms. They sound complex. They are not part of everyday language, and even when they are, they are often misunderstood: “normativity,” “legal norm,” “blanket norm,” “fiction,” “interpretation of law,” “disposition,” “imperativeness,” “legal personality,” and many more. For the semester, students had to memorize around seventy new terms. And they had to do more than just memorize them – they had to integrate them into their professional speech, which meant making them part of themselves.

I was genuinely relieved when, the following year, I was not asked to teach the course again. For many years after, I taught my beloved international law.

And now, it so happened that I once again found myself facing the legal theory course.

I immediately began searching for new methodological approaches. But nothing worked. A year of searching yielded no results.

By now, I knew more about legal linguistics and aimed to explore legal terminology through the prism of human behavior. But neither excellent academic texts nor immersion in audiovisual culture provided the deep, meaningful engagement with legal language I was seeking.

2 THE MAGIC OF FREEWRITING

In 2023, I was fortunate to join a group of Center for Liberal Arts and Sciences Pedagogy (CLASP) Fellows at the Bard College Institute for Writing and Thinking (IWT) who were studying the practice of Freewriting. I immersed myself in the work.

I admit, I didn’t immediately understand what was happening in our classroom. Every part of me resisted the need to think and write.

Why? I kept wondering. What is the practical value of Private Freewriting? Why spend so much time just writing? Writing what? Writing for whom? What if someone reads it? What if I’m punished for it? What if it’s not approved? I’m not a philologist, not a writer. I know how to formulate questions – what more could I possibly be taught after so many years of professional practice?

I had many doubts. And no fewer fears.

Each of our sessions changed something within me. I realized I was beginning to look forward to them. I reread the assigned texts – often without fully grasping

their meaning – but I could feel that something was happening inside me. I began to look inward.

First, I discovered that I loved every letter that flowed from my pen. Then I noticed how Freewriting lifted unexpected thoughts and insights from the depths of my subconscious. Eventually, I came to see that my thoughts were *productive*. Along with trust and self-confidence came joy and pleasure in my work. I began to *like* what I wrote. Each idea was mine. And I was precious to myself. I understood that I had begun to love myself.

Over the past thirty years, I have written nearly a hundred articles, theses, and policy papers. Every one of them had been a struggle. And suddenly, through the act of expressing my thoughts freely, I escaped the grip of perfectionism and began to *breathe*. Letter by letter, word by word, the page filled quickly. Apt metaphors and poetic forms leapt from somewhere within me. I didn't even notice when my new article was born.

So this is why it's called freewriting, I thought. Because in it, I express my true nature, I create, I share my joy, and this sincerity beautifies everything around me.

Like a nocturnal voyage through fog, it offers no clear direction – yet one often returns bearing unexpected treasures.

From a philosophical perspective, this process might be described as *authentic self-revelation through creative existence* – a practice that gives rise to beauty and meaning in the world.*

Freewriting gave me a chance. And I took it.

Reflecting with colleagues on Freewriting assignments, I began to experiment with integrating the skills I acquired through CLASP into my legal theory classes. And I concluded: *thinking – language – law* – this is the order in which these phenomena emerge.

The generation of ideas through language takes shape in *crafted* (written) forms. In this sense, law becomes the social formalization of thought *through* language.

As Brenda Danet observed:

To practice law, on the other hand, is to relate to people as social beings, as “language animals” (Steiner, 1968; Winch, 1958). The substance of law is entirely symbolic and abstract (O’Barr, n.d.). Its dependence on language has interested several legal scholars, though their approach has been mainly philosophical and conceptual (Bishin and Stone, 1972; White, 1972; Probert, 1972).¹

* Aristotle would assure me that the highest good for a human being is that which is realized through virtuous activity in accordance with reason. Karl Jaspers would say that existence becomes authentic through action, communication, and creation. Jean-Paul Sartre would remark that I live “authentically” – which means being true to oneself, living out one’s uniqueness. Friedrich Nietzsche would convince me that a human is not only a creator of things but also a creator of meanings – and thus, through creativity, the world is transformed.

There is also a fascinating term – *eudaimonia* (from the Greek) – meaning well-being or happiness. What is especially important here is that a person is happy not only for themselves, but in their fullness radiates this outward. And psychologists would say that all of this is a sign of psychological maturity and inner harmony...

Thus, in teaching legal theory, we must strive – through the theory of law, articulated in Ukrainian (or English, depending on the language of instruction) – to arrive at awareness, generalization, and the formation of personal meaning.

And so, I returned to the classroom – to my students...

3 CRAFTING CLEAR LEGAL DEFINITIONS

The students settled comfortably into the classroom.

It was our second session. We were about to discuss the evolution of law. We had only recently met and had just begun to delve into the goals of legal theory – bringing legal reality into a system, interpreting it, and generalizing its facts. We already knew that, according to Brenda Danet, the two primary functions of law are to structure human relationships and to restore social order when it is disrupted.²

The attentive eyes of my young colleagues were filled with curiosity and fear. Each of them had their own story. For many, it was a tragic one.

The most important thing, I thought, is to make sure the students feel safe and comfortable in our classroom. I agree with Sharon Marshall, who views teaching as

...an opportunity to act as a bodhisattva – to take away suffering and give joy. And joy can continue to grow as students learn that they can make things – create new structures, or worlds, if you will – with words, and that these word/worlds have the potential to change their creators profoundly and influence others.³

Words are symbols, the materialization of our experience. In this sense, legal terminology is not fundamentally different from any other linguistic unit. It concentrates within itself the experience of an entire society. It is built on traditions, rituals, and values. It has been tested by ideologies, sifted through the sieve of state agendas, and refined through political debates and compromises.

In a practical sense, legal ideology is the outcome of many generations of scholars, practitioners, and representatives of the dominant schools of legal thought around the world. To feel – and therefore to understand – the meaning of this experience, to make it your own, is possible, perhaps surprisingly, only through the self.

A creative, unstructured approach to generating new knowledge is offered by the method of Freewriting.

Liberated from the fear of being misunderstood or judged, focused and attuned through Private Freewriting, each student wrote down in their notebook three words or word combinations that they associated with the values of legal theory.

Within just three minutes of Focused Freewriting, a mosaic of our group's values began to take shape:

Well-being, freedom, humanism, equality, justice, fairness, compassion, subordination, cooperation, the right to life, rationality, wisdom, and pacta sunt servanda.

The students were looking inward, into their own experience. Writing helped them shape their thoughts into concepts. From those concepts emerged terminological units.

It was important for us to lay a foundation for ourselves – a launching pad for understanding the essence of law. To grasp what we already *know* about this great human achievement. To tune ourselves for a calm and constructive discussion of complex legal ideas.

We wanted to find definitions that would most accurately reflect the essence of legal concepts. At the same time, we sought to avoid the excessive complexity and confusion found in the terminology of some popular textbooks.

"Now let's try to describe these terms," I suggested.

My young colleagues read their definitions aloud with confidence. Yet they also expressed doubt about whether it was even possible to define some of the words precisely.

In this way, we began to grasp the idea of "evaluative terms" in legal language – terms that could be interpreted in favor of or against a defendant.

"How is one to engage with this?" one student asked. "Who bears responsibility for the classification of offences within the framework of criminal law?"

The room fell silent in thought.

"Judges classify criminal acts," another student answered.

"Yes, indeed, the question of legal classification is the prerogative of experts. In criminal law – judges; in constitutional law – the legislator or, again, judges, though this time of the Constitutional Court," I summarized.

We continued to reflect on the notion of evaluative meaning.

Our task was not only to create definitions that made sense to us, but also to learn how to select the word to be defined, and then to clearly and concisely formulate its meaning.

And here, Freewriting opened up the space for creative solutions.

I won't hide it – many of the definitions proposed by the students were far more rational than those we found in some textbooks.

Now we felt like participants in the large and complex process of lawmaking. We understood the practical challenges lawmakers face when formulating legal definitions. It became clear how, in the development of legal terms, one could – and should – strive for simplicity and clarity.

4 THE LINGUISTIC FORMS OF LAW IN THE LIGHT OF VALUES: READ THROUGH THE EXPERIENCE OF FEELING

To understand how the value system of law has formed, one should look into history.

At home, the students had already read materials about religion, space, and human beings. They had watched an animated film on myths and reflected on Marcel Mauss's logic, who argued that in "early" societies, social phenomena are deeply interconnected, simultaneously reflecting multiple institutional dimensions such as religion, law, morality, and economy.⁴

Now it was time to read George Orwell's essay "Shooting an Elephant," which describes a situation in which, despite the absurdity of the act and internal moral contradictions, a British police officer in Burma, driven by the will of the crowd, kills an elephant.

We divided into four groups, each reading an excerpt from the essay.

Seven minutes of reading passed in a flash. A heavy silence filled the classroom. One could feel the tension – fear mingled with pain.

Then something completely unexpected happened. I noticed tears glistening in the eyes of several students. They recognized in this 1936 essay something deeply personal – their own life stories. Suddenly, the words we had identified earlier – well-being, freedom, humanism, equality, justice, mercy, subordination, cooperation, the right to life, rationality, wisdom, *pacta sunt servanda* – gained deeply personal meaning.

I took a deep breath. At that moment, I knew I had to be a source of support for my students. bell hooks' words echoed in my mind: "To teach in a manner that respects and cares for the souls of our students is essential if we are to provide the necessary conditions where learning can most deeply and intimately begin."⁵

I was certain we had to move forward together and that we could face and process our complex past. Yes, dear bell hooks, pedagogy is a living process, grounded in the intention to help a person grow and begin from where they are. And in this context, Loop Writing offered us a way to construct new knowledge from fragments of memory, present-day insights, and personal sensation.

4.1 DECOLONIZING THOUGHT

On large sheets of paper prepared in advance, we recorded answers to four questions in sequence:

- 1 What do you already know about this topic? (Alternative: What assumptions or pre-conceptions do you have about it?)
- 2 Name every conflicting feeling you experience about this topic.
- 3 Write brief one-sentence portraits that describe the traits or characteristics of people who caught your attention in this essay.
- 4 What rules did the essay's protagonist rely on? Formulate three such rules.

We spent the most time on the fifth question:

- 5 "Formulate the legal norms that, in your opinion, existed in the society of Lower Burma as described by Orwell."

Here, a serious debate began. Personal experiences spilled out.

But our task was different – to understand the *logic* of social life in early twentieth-century colonial Burma.

In the fifth section of our charted papers, the following phrases began to appear, one after another:

- Principle of authority (subordination) – decisions made by the colonial administration were not to be questioned.
- Right of force – the authority of the colonial regime justified the use of violence, even without a clear logical or moral justification.
- Principle of control – a norm existed in the colonial system requiring control over the local population and its resources.
- Collective responsibility – the crowd compelled the officer to commit the killing of the elephant.

But in the list of terms we had defined at the beginning of class, only *subordination* had appeared. How many secrets our subconscious holds!

Now we have added new terms: right of force, control, and collective responsibility.

James B. White, a major pioneer in the field of Law and Literature, believed that law can be viewed as "a way of establishing meaning and constituting community in language," the ultimate goal of which is justice.⁶ He wrote that arguments and

debates “define a set of possibilities for asserting and maintaining meaning, for carrying on a collective life.”⁷

And so, using the tools of language, we collectively searched for justice and tried to grasp the logic of collective behavior. We wanted to understand *how*, in what way, society forms its demand for legal norms of a particular content.

At last, our “terminological cage” dissolved, clearing a path toward something vital, accessible, and most importantly, *personal*. It became a knowledge base drawn from lived experience.

A girl sitting in the front row read her conclusion aloud:

Life, the right to life. In Orwell’s essay *Shooting an Elephant*, the right to life is shown as a fundamental human right that can be violated under the pressure of social norms and expectations.

The young man beside her added:

Orwell shows how the officer’s actions, driven by public expectation, threaten a living being’s life despite his moral doubts. The right to life becomes dependent on external circumstances and personal convictions.

I saw sparks of joy in my students’ eyes. They had reached understanding, confidence, and a sense of fulfillment. Now they were ready to write the definitions they had longed for: well-being, freedom, humanism, equality, justice, mercy, cooperation.

From this vocabulary emerged the values of a democratic society, well-known to those who study democracy^{*} and happiness[†] indices.

For us, first-year students, these were discoveries. They made us wonder, even underestimate what had just happened, because our understanding came not from memorization or grades, but from *our reflections*.

Even more surprising: we, first-year students, actually knew *a lot*.

So, what happened in this session?

At the beginning of our reading, we didn’t know where to start. We probably weren’t even emotionally ready for serious ethical discussions. But now, in the sixth section – in the very center of our large sheets of paper, after deep analytical work – appeared the description of the main value in Orwell’s story:

The human being – their life, dignity, integrity.

The right to life is a fundamental, inalienable right of every person, protected by national constitutions and international legal instruments such as Article 3 of the 1948 *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* and Article 6 of the 1966 *Internation-*

* *Democracy indices*: free and fair elections, civil liberties, preference for democracy, political participation, and effective governance. Democracy Index. <https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/democracy-index-eiu>

† *Happiness indices*: social support, GDP per capita, healthy life expectancy, freedom to make life choices, generosity, perception of corruption. The World Happiness Report. <https://worldhappiness.report/ed/2025/executive-summary/>

al Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. It guarantees every person the right to life and protection from arbitrary deprivation of it, and obliges states to take effective measures to uphold this protection.

This right also implies a strict prohibition on capital punishment, except in rare, exceptional cases, and requires that states prevent threats to their citizens' lives.

The concepts we defined best describe the depth of human presence in social and state life. They highlight the priority of human life. These same terms – well-being, freedom, humanism, equality, justice, mercy, cooperation – lead to an understanding of the active role of the individual and awareness of personal responsibility for what takes place in society.

We didn't notice how time flew. It was the depth of the topic, the desire to speak, and the unusual framing of questions. And, perhaps most importantly, *the presence of each person* in the conversation. Each student contributed their thread to the tapestry of shared knowledge.

"We're not used to speaking," said one student as he smiled and left. "We're used to listening."

5 DEFINITIONS IN ACTION: HOW LEGAL TERMS SHAPE MEANING, ARGUMENT, AND POWER

I laid out Jean-Louis Bergel's *General Theory of Law* (1965) textbook on the table, along with my favorite articles by Peter Elbow and John Biggs. I delved deep into the recesses of my mind, trying to understand why my attitude toward legal theory had changed so drastically, and why my students, though slightly confused, left today with glowing faces, rosy cheeks, and a desire to continue our work. I carefully reviewed my notes from Stanley Fish's article:

The problem, of course, is that human intellects are prone to various unfortunate tendencies –the tendency to overvalue one's own opinions, the tendency to prefer evidence that supports one's already - held convictions (known as 'confirmation bias'), the tendency to be moved by flattery or fear or both, the tendency to identify what is true and valuable with self-interest or the interest of one's family and tribe...Given liberal thought's relocation of authority from fixed, unimpeachable sources (God, the king) to the deliberative powers of the individual seeker of truth, it is imperative that the mind, newly elevated to a place of prominence, be made – or rather make itself; there's the rub – into the proper kind of instrument. They must imitate his emptying of self...⁸

And I understood: this is what Freewriting had become for us – liberation.

Each prompt forced us to focus and think about the essentials. Skimming wouldn't have achieved this effect; it would not have led us to a deep understanding. It turns out that deep learning is buried under layers of experience, stereotypes, and political narratives. Overloaded with multitasking, we try to keep up with everything. Freewriting allows us to examine ourselves (to know), to love and admire ourselves. And when used in education, the material we process becomes just as personal and intimate. Then the dry, boring theoretical legal concepts begin to dance with the diversity of our sensory perception. As Henri Bergson wisely noted, “the eyes only see what the mind is prepared to comprehend.”⁹ Thus, the results of our thinking are individual and personal. They differ. And that's the point: dynamic development along a personal trajectory.

Pedagogical approaches to teaching legal theory may vary. First and foremost, it depends on the theoretical position the teacher adopts. Are we dealing with “conceptual theorising, which concerns the nature of law and legal institutions, as represented by traditions such as natural law theory and legal positivism”? Or “normative theorising, which concerns what form legal institutions ought to take or how specific legal rules should be reformed”? Or even “ethical theorising, which concerns how actors within the legal system ought to behave”? Or perhaps “doctrinal theorising, which seeks to bring coherence to a particular body of substantive legal rules and principles?”¹⁰

For me, the ethical approach is the most relevant today, given the evolving needs of society. This approach best aligns with learner-centered educational methods.

Without planning it together with John Biggs, at different times and under different life circumstances, we arrived at a similar path – building upon our students' values by anchoring them in their personal experiences.¹¹ Biggs wrote: “Learning is thus a way of interacting with the world.”¹² And here, it's impossible not to agree. The key isn't just acquiring information – it's how we structure it that helps us see the world differently.¹³ Relevance, motivation, freedom, and collaboration (dialogue) – according to Biggs¹⁴ – “These four points contain a wealth of implications for the design of teaching, and for personal reflection about what one is trying to do.”*

I could expand this list with such qualities as focus (attention), love, and passion for knowledge.

Remember my earlier doubts about the practical value of Freewriting? Well. Now I can say with certainty: Freewriting reveals and restores the self. It's no coincidence that it's used in various therapeutic practices. Thoughtful work always requires time – lots of time. But like meditative practices, Freewriting is calm, steady,

* Such educative conceptual change takes place when:

- 1 It is clear to students (and teachers) what is “appropriate”, what the objectives are, where all can see where they are supposed to be going, and where these objectives are buried in the assessment tasks.
- 2 Students experience the felt need to get there. The art of good teaching is to communicate that need where it is initially lacking. “Motivation” is a product of good teaching, not its prerequisite.
- 3 Students feel free to focus on the task, not on watching their backs. Often, attempts to create a felt need to learn, particularly through ill-conceived and urgent assessments, are counter-productive. The game then becomes a matter of dealing with the test, not with engaging the task deeply.
- 4 Students can work collaboratively and in dialogue with others, both peers and teachers. Good dialogue elicits those activities that shape, elaborate, and deepen understanding.

and joyful. A pen and notebook are additional tools: they engage fine motor skills and relieve mental overload. Every line that appears on paper is priceless for self-realization. They are also remarkable instruments for constructing and discovering one's knowledge.

In recent years, psychologists have increasingly stated that the ultimate goal of education will become the achievement of focus.

Freewriting grants us that focus.

I know that love and self-awareness, inspiration, and passion give a person wholeness, growth, development, and a will to live. Private Freewriting brings us back to ourselves, makes us love ourselves, and feel capable and confident. Focused Freewriting prepares us for dialogue and extracts vital, unexpected ideas from our subconscious. A Dialectical Notebook immerses us in a whirlwind of events, enabling us to feel freedom, creativity, and diversity. Collaborative learning enriches us with the experiences of others, allowing us to contribute uniquely to a shared vision. Loop Writing weaves together the forgotten and the lost, showing the path to new knowledge.

I open the magical prompt pages generously shared by Nicole B. Wallack in *Effective Revision as Radical Revision*:

When you write a little bit too much, you force yourself past what you already know to discover new ideas... Find a key image or key language in your draft. Write to explain what this image or language might mean.¹⁵

I write in my beautiful notebook: "Legal terminology, evaluativity, legality, interpretative, contextuality."

I reflect: "Depending on its strategic nature, a definition can legitimize or delegitimize a legal subject. And here the task of the lawmaker is not to deviate from the values we previously defined."

This is exactly what my students discussed when analyzing values and functions in Lower Burmese society.

I continue writing:

By answering the question of what constitutes 'the people,' we gain access to understanding 'the right of peoples to self-determination.' Defining 'law' as a principle, and not merely a rule (as Ronald Dworkin suggested), we see how a judge applies the law by interpreting it by moral norms, expanding the understanding of law as a process. One of Olga Butkevych's interviews* is dedicated to 'living law' – the ECHR... The case on crucifixes in Italian schools (Lautsi v. Italy) is about the balance between identity and freedom

* Olha Butkevych is a Ukrainian legal scholar specializing in international law and human rights, the President of the Ukrainian Society of International Law. She has written extensively on the European Court of Human Rights, the Council of Europe, and the interpretation of law as a living system. To listen more: Еволютивний підхід Ради Європи: сприймати право як живе, – Ольга Буткевич / The Evolutionary Approach of the Council of Europe: Perceiving Law as Living" – Olha Butkevych. 07.05.2016. 05:57. <https://hromadske.radio/podcasts/hromadska-hvylya/evolyutyvnyy-pidhid-rady-yevropy-spryymaty-pravo-yak-zhyve-olga-butkevych>

of religion in public spaces... The right to raise children. Conscience. Freedom of religion. The rights of the state.

Prompts for generating missing text did their job. I found it. Out of the many cases the ECHR has reviewed over the years, I found the one that would best continue the logic of our legal theory course – *Lautsi v. Italy*. We will study the definitions developed by the ECHR judges, reformulate their vague phrasing, and move on to a moot court, where – using the terminology we’ve crafted – students will play the roles of the applicant, the state, and the court.

As Oliver Burkeman said: “You just do the pages, and something else does the rest.”¹⁶

On a fresh page, my pen began its journey...

*The topic of the next class: Justice.**

I’ve come to love legal theory. Or rather, legal theory has become my life. I look forward to meeting my new students. We will journey through the labyrinths of legal terminology. We will gaze into legal theory as into a mirror. We will fill thick notebooks with our thoughts – and share them with others.[†]

It turns out the power was within us all along...

6 CONCLUSION. NO EPILOGUE – ONLY AN ENDLESS ROAD

Many years ago, while walking through a park with my little daughter, I met a stranger who looked me in the eye and said, “The hardest thing is to know yourself and to overcome yourself.” At the time, I didn’t know what to make of this phrase. Was it a challenge meant to guide my next fifteen years of growth?

Freewriting and participation in the life of the Bard College Institute for Writing and Thinking became the space where my teaching style began to take shape, and where my trajectory in legal-theoretical thinking started to come into focus.

Together with my students, we refine the art of formulation. Terminology has come to life. In a recent evaluation of my course, one student wrote: “The instructor has a rare ability to develop in students a deep understanding of the subject by encouraging them to build their position and argumentation, and by cultivating a high level of discussion.”

This means that legal theory *breathes*. That students *feel* at home in their profession – confident, grounded, and clear.

And if you ask me a methodological question – how a beginning student can

* I am sometimes asked whether I deviate from the material planned in the course. No, I do not. At the beginning of my teaching career, I was taught to have 3–4 possible scenarios for the methodological development of the course and its content in reserve. This is not improvisation. This is working with the audience’s requests.

† Most likely, we will find confirmation of John Dewey’s thoughts that the educational process has two sides – psychological and sociological, where the psychological is the basis. For the mentioned idea, read: John Dewey, *My Pedagogic Creed*, *School Journal* in 1897. P. 85.

learn to work with legal terminology – my answer will be simple: *you need to launch the process of thinking.*

In practical terms, this means:

- 1 *Just write.* Trust yourself, stay true to who you are, and remain in a constant state of personal and professional search.
- 2 *Write together.* Invite students into an atmosphere of equality, trust, and creativity. Write synchronously, pausing for discussion and clarification.
- 3 *Read good texts.* Read attentively, immersing yourself in the depth of the author's thinking. Try to understand how their reflections resonate with your own experience.
- 4 *Leave existential questions open.* Each person has their vision and will find their path. Each will continue to grow.

In one of his works, Crowe observed that students often feel theorists aim to indoctrinate them – even when invited to question the material, they're unsure how.¹⁷ In this context, to avoid students' thoughts becoming "tied" to a certain narrative, Freewriting offers an opportunity to unlock internal potential and focus on the essence of their own discovery and personal inquiry. Then the student becomes not merely a force maintaining a proper social order. Still, one who nudges this social order toward further development, and thus continues the life of the social organism.

NOTES

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- 3 A Case for Private Freewriting in the Classroom, Sharon Mashall / Writing-based teaching: essential practices and enduring questions / edited by Teresa Vilardi and Mary Chang, Albany: State University of New York Press, 2009. p. 7.
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