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Technology Tango

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Submitted by bkahan on Tue, 11/03/2015 - 14:08

Right now I am in the grip of my Techno Fear and Frustration syndrome. I just wrote this blog, all excited because I had found (I thought) the correct place to write it and clicked the right link to post it - success was mine, I foolishly thought. Because, in actual fact, failure was the result - the blog is not posted, I can't find it anywhere, and now I have to write it - all over again. You can bet, though, that this time I will copy and save it before I try to repost it, in case it disappears into the ether once more. Of course the good thing about Techno is how easy it is for a writer to copy and save. And make corrections. And reorganize. In the old old days, I typed everything, and if I made a mistake had to use whiteout and retype over the whiteout and being a messy person not surprisingly made a mess. If I wanted to reorganize a manuscript, I literally cut it up with scissors and taped the pieces into the order I thought would work better, and then of course had to retype it so it would all be on whole pieces of paper. There was no spell check. Making tables was a nightmare. You get the picture... Now I highlight and click delete; highlight and retype; highlight, cut and click to paste; click to insert a table. So easy! So timesaving! Until the inevitable glitches pop up, like disappearing blogs, to make my life a misery. (Oh - brilliant flash of insight - my mistake must have been to click "Add content" when I should have clicked "Save" in order to post my blog - duh. Often, it seems, the problem is not Techno, it's me.) But still I rely on email, am sort of getting the hang of Facebook and enjoy Twitter on my rare visits (got rid of LinkedIn, though, never did figure it out) and manage to do a fair amount with my websites. On the other hand I don't have a cell phone and many of my first drafts I write in longhand and I am often to be heard cursing Techno when I get stuck - why can't I move this photo to this part of the page, why won't this font change size no matter what I do? Overall, however, despite our conflictual relationship, Techno gives me more satisfaction than pain and I wouldn't want to do without it (I doubt Techno feels the same about me, being feelingless and all, but who cares?). And now for the real test - will I succeed in posting this or not? (If you're reading this, I did - yay!)

Update, several days later: except, it's taken me three days to get it up. There was a Techno Glitch, no matter what I did I got error messages and my blog had disappeared yet again. (But this time I had save it, as I do sometimes learn from my mistakes.) Thank you Sean Sunley for saving the day once again! In the meantime I have had more Techno Tango time, with internet not working, trouble downloading files from DropBox, an email that didn't get where I sent it (until a few hours later, when it didn't matter anymore)... The good news is - most of these issues are now resolved. The bad news is - there will always be new Techo issues to replace the resolved ones! But for the moment, things are working, and Techno and I are friends again. Yay technology!

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Barbara Kahan

Typos - bane of my life

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Submitted by bkahan on Sat, 06/13/2015 - 15:39

Little things. Tiny errors of carelessness. A punctuation mark omitted or incorrectly inserted, a word misspelled. Which most people won't notice; and if they do, most of the time it won't matter. Except - some do notice! And sometimes it does matter!

The first of my two most recent typo sins: I left off a quotation mark at the beginning of a quote on a brochure of Wild Sage Press books. My ruler had become an extension of my arm as I measured and re-measured to adjust spacing so everything would line up neatly; I read and re-read to correct all those glitches that pop up unexpectedly. But apparently, as occasionally happens, in the process of fixing one error, I caused another error. The quote mark was there in the previous draft, and somehow in the final copy it wasn't there, and that was the version that got printed. Sigh. My howl when I discovered the mistake would have shattered eardrums if it (the howl) hadn't been internal. Not a major catastrophe. Not a misplaced decimal point that might have cost millions of dollars or lost lives, not a spelling error that would cause an inappropriate ingredient to be used in a recipe. But still extremely annoying for a perfectionist like me.

My second most recent typo sin: This one I didn't notice myself. I was alerted by my husband Evan, who called up the stairs to my top floor work space to tell me I'd misspelled someone's name in the most recent issue of The Wild Sage *Breeze*. I'm embarrassed to say my first reaction was, ignorance is bliss, I wish he hadn't told me! I'm over that now, all I am is embarrassed, and am sending psychic apologies everywhere.

Then there are all the recent near misses, like putting my childhood phone number down instead of my current one (caught by the eagle-eyed Wild Sage Press design consultant)...but I think I'll stop here so as to minimize the potential for yet more typos. (I'm tempted to put one in on purpose in this blog but chances are I've made one or more accidentally. If you find any, you don't need to let me know!)

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Barbara Kahan

Happy 2020!!!

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Submitted by bkahan on Tue, 01/07/2020 - 11:24

Happy New Year everyone. Here are my musings for the next twelve months.

- *I predict:*
  -- 2020 will be better than 2019, purely on the basis that 2020 has a more musical ring to it than the clumsy-sounding 2019.
- *I resolve:*
  -- everyday to acknowledge all the wonders in my life that I have to be grateful for (my granddaughter, the roof over my head, the local library...).
  -- to act to address what I see as the greatest threats to the world: the climate crisis, white supremacy, the erosion of democracy.
- *I hope:*
  -- that compassion and critical thinking will replace hate and muddled thinking.
- *I wish:*
  -- that everyone will have a joyful, meaningful, healthy, peaceful 2020!

I am trying hard to remain positive in the face of terrible things happening in the world. Australia burning; growing (or at least not lessening) racism/Islamophobia/Jew-hatred; politicians acting out of self-interest, ignorance, and/or vengeance. I am at the point where I know participating in another march, writing another email, doing my civic duty by voting, being kind to family/friends/strangers, being open-minded/reflective/aware is not enough. Haven't quite figured out what would be enough. Will keep you posted!

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Barbara Kahan

P.S. to previous blog

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Submitted by bkahan on Thu, 01/09/2020 - 21:44

What a difference a day makes. On Tuesday I wrote a somewhat hopeful blog about 2020 being better than 2019. And then on Wednesday (yesterday), 176 people died when Ukraine International Airlines Flight 752 crashed in Iran, likely because of a surface-to-air missile. I feel so much sorrow, for the pain their family, friends, neighbours, and colleagues are enduring. Sorrow for the loss to all of us, of those lives so full of promise.

And I feel anger, because the worst kind of geo-politics, the kind intended not to make the world a better place, but rather intended to maintain the worst of our current world conditions, has caused this tragedy, as it has in the past, and will again in the future. Unless...unless what? I hope we figure that out quickly. In the meantime, I am taking some time to grieve.

May the memories of those who so recently graced this earth be a blessing.

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