



## “Every Footnote Should Be Taken Out And Shot”

So said my friend, the poet, Edmund Cusick, commiserating me on the frustrations inherent in finishing my PhD. I did finish, and in good time too. What’s the secret?

**Have a process:** Want to write your proposal in 6 months? Where to begin? Can’t write the introduction until you know the rest. So take an image: a funnel. What’s the widest scariest part of the proposal? The literature review. Do it first. If the handbook says the proposal is 40-80 pages, the literature review cannot be more than 40 pages. Review has five sections, so that is 8 pages per section: looking more manageable?

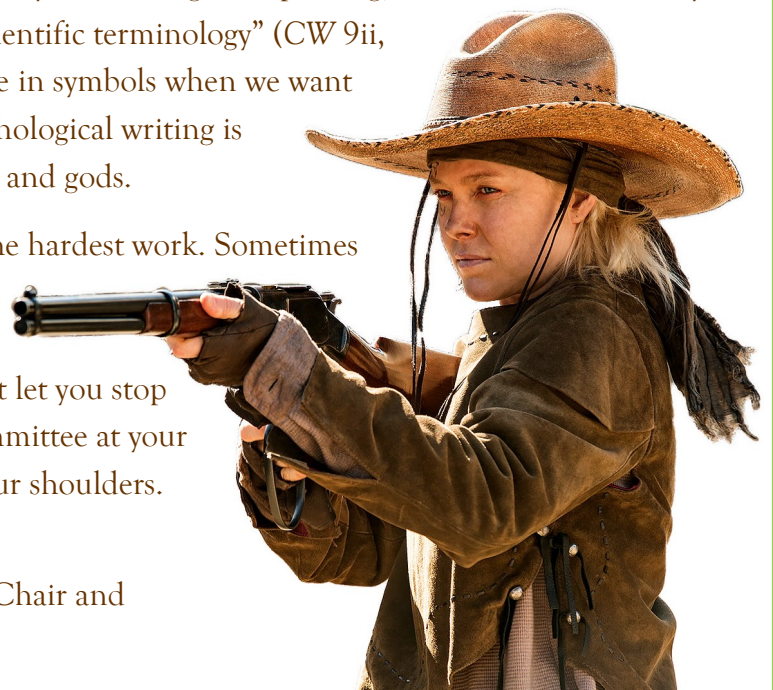
**Too Pragmatic?** Where’s the poetry, the ambition, the big, Big, BIG ideas? *Every footnote should be taken out and shot*, that’s where. PhDs are conversations within the field. So references, references, references. Big ideas have to be referenced. Need another year to research that topic? Is your dissertation a lifelong quest or a piece of acceptable research as one stage in a vocation? Twenty years or two, your choice.

**Oh yes, there are goddesses and gods:** We have all heard of tricky Hermes the hermeneut. But he is where Hestia is not. Where is Hestia? *Every footnote should be taken out and shot*, for it is she who demands those references to keep us centered on the scholarly hearth, to keep our interiority to the disciplinary discourse. Fortunately, she may allow Artemis in the environs, writing to knit us to wild nature. Here comes Athena whose strategies are community oriented, Aphrodite whose mysteries of the erotic body suffuse sensuous writing.

**More exact:** Jung says: “Therefore, in describing the living processes of the psyche, I deliberately and consciously give preference to a dramatic, mythological way of thinking and speaking, because this is not only more expressive but also more exact than an abstract scientific terminology” (CW 9ii, para. 25). See, see more exact! Put another way; we write in symbols when we want to be more exact; precise and not literal. Dramatic, mythological writing is more exact because it is home to many of the goddesses and gods.

**What I mean is:** I never, ever, feel like writing. It is the hardest work. Sometimes the underworld swallows all the words. So the only way to complete a dissertation is to make every day a small sacrifice to one god or another. Eventually, they will not let you stop until you have finished. When you stand with your committee at your defense, you will feel those divine shadows brushing your shoulders. They won’t let you go.

—Susan Rowland, PhD, Engaged Humanities Program Chair and Core Faculty







## Some Tips From The Other Side

Emails and text messages aside, I haven't written a single word since completing the final edits of my dissertation manuscript. Since finishing there has been a delightful absence of pressure in my life. As a possible helping hand to anyone currently in the dissertation writing stage, I want to briefly impart three of what I found to be the most useful tips/pieces of advice to help complete this arduous process. Please bear with my informality:

Tip #1: "Brevity is the soul of wit"—Polonius.

If you're anything like me, there can be a tendency to feel like a dissertation has to be very thorough, even dense. In this vein, a two-page section can nag at you, as if saying "I need to be at least five pages long." Nonsense! I was amazed during the editing of subsequent drafts at the importance of economy of expression and keeping things concise. Which leads to my second tip.

Tip #2: "A good dissertation is a done dissertation"—Brian G.

A very smart cohort member uttered these wise words prior to our embarkment on the dissertation journey. It's perhaps just my view but I don't think the dissertation should be one's magnum opus. For me, it was very helpful to think of the dissertation as a long term paper and an academic requirement, not as the zenith of my intellectual life (although I am proud of the outcome).

Tip #3: "Have you ever tried voice-to-text software?"—My father-in-law.

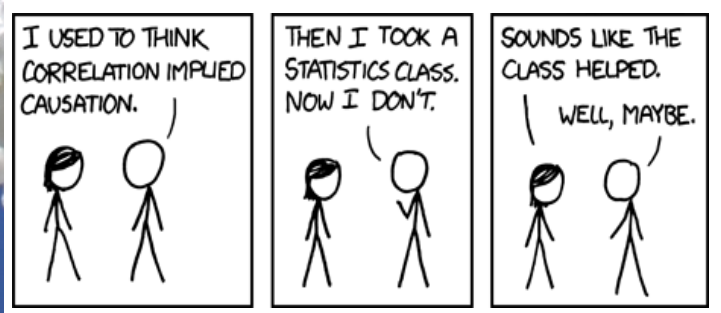
I realize that this tip doesn't work for everyone, but for those that can, enable the free voice-to-text software available on all Macs and most PCs that allows you to speak your sentences instead of typing them. I found this VERY liberating. Sure, "young" has to be correct to "Jung" and "Hillman" can easily become "Hell man" but, such nuisances aside, the energy saved and the rate at which you can speak a paragraph definitely help lighten the load of the volume of writing required.

That's all I've got! Good luck with the process and remember: just finish it!

—John Sherk, PhD, 2018 graduate of the Depth Psychology Psychotherapy program. The title of John's dissertation is *Archetypal Underpinnings of Paternal Postpartum Depression: A Phenomenological Study*.

### Pacifica Web Links

[Dissertation Webpage](#)  
[Upcoming Oral Defenses](#)







## *Congratulations to the 2017-1018 Dissertation Award of Excellence Winners!*

**John Sherk**

*Archetypal Underpinnings of Paternal Postpartum Depression:  
A Phenomenological Study*

**Kathleen Marie Warwick-Smith**

*Remembering Prudence: Tracking the Iconography of  
a Cardinal Virtue to Her Resurgence in Depth Psychology*

**Elizabeth Ruth Wolterink**

*Cloaked in Darkness:  
Feminine Katabasis in Myth and Culture*

### What Does A Dissertation Conclusion Look Like?

The purpose of a conclusion is to answer your research question. Begin, with repeating your research question. However, don't simply reiterate the research question, but integrate an explanation of it into the rest of the section's discussion.

Then give the conclusions that you draw based on the results of your research (use the key results that are most relevant for answering your research question).

Finally, answer the main question and explain how you have come to this conclusion of your dissertation. Don't just list the question with the answer below it, but carefully explain it and incorporate it into the rest of the text. Provide the raw observations and don't interpret.

#### Checklist: Conclusion.

- The research questions have been answered.
- The main question or problem statement has been answered.
- The hypotheses have been confirmed or refused.
- The right verb tense [present tense] has been used.
- No issues are interpreted.
- No new information has been given.
- No examples are used.
- No extraneous information is provided.
- No passages from the results have been cut and pasted.

Swaen, B. (2014, September 9). Writing a conclusion and discussion for your dissertation [Web blog post]. Retrieved from <https://www.scribbr.com/dissertation/writing-conclusion-discussion-dissertation/>



## Recently Published Pacifica Dissertations

Cynthia Caldwell, Mythological Studies, *The Changing Myth of Mary Magdalene*

Boston Carter, Depth Psychology Jungian & Archetypal Studies, *An Archetypal Profile of Fire, Earth, Air, Water, and Four as Wholeness*

Craig Curtis, Depth Psychology Psychotherapy, *Mourning Becomes Her: Dark Archetypal Exploration Into the Genesis of an Era*

Rene Dumetz, Clinical Psychology, *In a Dark Light: A Heuristic Investigation of Nondual (Unitive) Experiences*

Teresa Fisher, Mythological Studies, *Prison and the Underworld: The Daily Nekyia of the Correctional Psychologist*

Maria de las Mercedes Gertz, Depth Psychology Psychotherapy, *Through The Rabbit Hole: Images as a Language For Transition*

Kristen Hornung, Depth Psychology Psychotherapy, *Woman and Predator: Intimate Partner Violence at Home and in "Bluebeard"*

Rachel Irish, Clinical Psychology, *The Lived Experience of Traveling Environmental Workers Studying Climate Change*

Heather Lovig, Depth Psychology Somatic Studies, *Healing Through Remembrance: An Embodied Exploration of The Basque Witch Burning Times*

Betty McEady, Depth Psychology, *Being-in-the-World Nonviolently: Perspectives of Formerly Incarcerated Participants on Transformative Pedagogy for Nonviolence*

Daniel Ortiz, Mythological Studies, *Another Chapter on Dionysus: Identity, Modern Digital Technology, and the Specter of Death Drive*

Stephanie Paidas, Depth Psychology, *Nature, the Numinous, and Individuation*

Patricia Patrick, Depth Psychology Somatic Studies, *Becoming Conscious: Seeking Body's Role*

Rachel Redding, Mythological Studies, *Reclaiming the Divine Feminine: The Hindu Goddess and Jungian Psychology for a Postmodern Western Culture*

Timothy Ridley, Depth Psychology Psychotherapy, *A Psychology of Complementarity: Toward a Synochi of Psyche and Physis*

Nazila Sayahzadeh, Clinical Psychology, *Soul Encaged: In Search of Liberty Exploring Rumi's Poem "Padeshah va Kanizak" The King and the Slave Girl Through a Jungian Archetypal Lens*

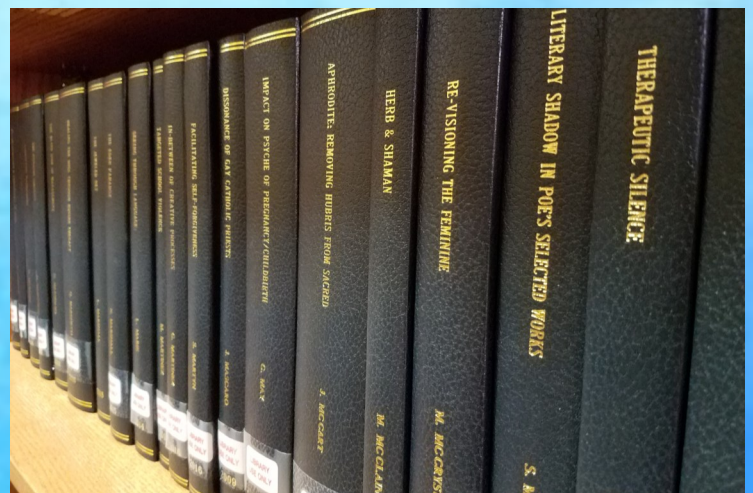
Bruce Selvage, Jr., Depth Psychology Jungian & Archetypal Studies, *Steampunk: Mythopoesis in a Clockwork Dream*

John Sherk, Depth Psychology Psychotherapy, *Archetypal Underpinnings of Paternal Postpartum Depression: A Phenomenological Study*

Nadia Thalji, Clinical Psychology, *Homecoming in Liminal Times: Depth Psychological Perspectives on the Experience of Immigration*

Vicky Jo Varner, Depth Psychology Jungian & Archetypal Studies, *Dream the Myth Onwards: The Typology of Imaginal Figures*

**These dissertations are now available on [ProQuest](#) and in the [Pacifica Research Library](#).**



Dissertations shelved in the Pacifica Research Library. Photo by Rachel Reeve.