

### PART 3.

## SHORT (BUT BITTER/SWEET) NARRATIVE SNIPPETS OF FAILURE

It can sometimes be tricky determining the who? what? when? where? why? and how? questions of any given failed performance. The contributors to Part Three offer short narratives of failure from multiple intersectional angles and points of view. These authors take a good look in the mirror with accounts of their own experiences with failure. Contributors provide personal and professional snapshots of situations where it's sometimes difficult to pinpoint precisely why and how a failed performance occurred.

Teagan Decker, in **Chapter 8**, “Imposter, Performer, Professional,” continues the personal narratives of professional women, started in Chapter 7, as she looks back on her time as a graduate student experiencing haunting imposter-syndrome feelings. In **Chapter 9**, “Self-Sponsored Writing & Academicized Space in FYW (Or, A Failure in Three Moves),” Tyler Gillespie presents a narrative of their failed Instagram essay assignment to explore failure as an important pedagogical moment, as well as to illustrate their trajectory of digital writing pedagogy in FYW (with a few examples from their former students). William Duffy, in **Chapter 10**, “The Afterlife of Unfinished Writing,” narrates their coming to terms with something most writing teachers never talk about even though many of us are intimately familiar with it: all the writing we start but never finish. And in **Chapter 11**, “In Pursuit of Industry Knowledge: Always Learning by Often Failing,” Michal Horton looks back on their failures to find a job, to pay the bills, to stay positive, and asks, “When is failure valuable?” The author illustrates how, in their personal life, they have adjusted the paradigm, recognizing failure as a re-orienting process—one redirecting them toward experiences that can be meaningful even if not “successful.”

Sean Fenty, in **Chapter 12**, “Opening Doors to the Ivory Tower: Helping Students Feel Welcome to Engage in Academic Discourse,” tells the story of a former student of theirs who, as a photographer, explored spaces fraught with real peril to life and limb, fueled by the adrenaline of discovery, but as a writer, he switched from writing about his true passion, because he was afraid he'd fail. And in **Chapter 13**, “Standardized Test Writing and the Fear of Failing,” Elizabeth Blomstedt reflects on their own experience learning to write in high school in the shadow of No Child Left Behind and examines how that experience influences how they approach teaching writing and critical thinking to today's college

college students. Jerrice Renita Donelson and Anicca Cox, in **Chapter 14**, “Failure to Launch? Theorizing Rhetorics of Rejection from Graduate Student Perspectives,” attempt to explore the terrain of rejection-as-failure by examining the development of their own relational, affective, and community-oriented perspectives in processing realities essential to daily grad-life.

In **Chapter 15**, “The CV of Failure: Making Rejection Visible and Cultivating Growth Mindsets in Doctoral Writers,” Dana Driscoll shares their CV of Failure, where they include failed dissertation topics, failed degree programs, and article and grant rejections, offering the “story” behind the publications. Laura Decker, in **Chapter 16**, “Reaping What You Sow: Reframing Academic Rejection as a Community Garden for Writing Studies,” reframes academic rejection, using their own narrative as a non-tenure track faculty in writing and describing the way they worked to understand their labor for others’ success as a sort of tending to the collective garden of writing studies. In **Chapter 17**, “Using X as Applied Learning in a First-Year Writing Classroom,” Jeffrey Jackson laments how their intended goal of making Twitter a vehicle for applied learning in their course never advanced from the embryonic stages. And Mario D’Agostino rounding out Part Three with **Chapter 18**, “~~Trust the Process~~’ Dissertation Gatekeeping, Failure, and Graduate Student Writing,” builds on their troubled dissertation-defense experience to highlight the emotive work of writing, as well as the importance of building relationships that support graduate student writers.