



JOHNS HOPKINS
BLOOMBERG
SCHOOL of PUBLIC HEALTH

Department of Epidemiology
Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health
415 N. Washington Street, 2nd Floor
Baltimore, Maryland 21231

29 July 2021

Memorandum

To: Trialists

Fr: Curtis Meinert

Re: Recreational writing

My predilection for writing goes back years. When I ran the Center and wanted to get a difficult point across, I would distribute copies of letters from CLM to me.

When Al Sommer was dean I kept a “snowball file” of letters concerning important issues, but with twists (to see if he read them!). The file was home to the “stapling protocol”, prompted by “sloppy stapling” when deans still distributed paper (posted to “Musings and Rants”).

As researcher-scientists you do a lot of writing – mostly boring, tedious, and encumbering. My escape has been “recreational writing”.

We do many things for the joy they bring, even if not immediate. For example backpacking. Before you finish an extended hike your legs are beat, your shoulders hurt, and you are sleep deprived. The joy comes reliving the trip from the comforts of home.

I used to be a paper and pencil guy; now a laptop and word processor guy.

I am not an outline person when it comes to recreational writing. Just an idea where to go. Start where ever the spirit moves. Sans paper and pencil.

My dictionary is Merriam Webster; early on a hard copy; now the electronic version. For spell checking it is Word Perfect and Google.

My “rules”:

- Backup your work early and often; bad stuff happens!
- Avoid “ly” words
- Avoid double negatives (like “and the skies are not cloudy all day” leaving one in doubt if the writer is saying skies are clear all day or just some of the day)
- Avoid contractions like “don’t” or “can’t”
- “Data are”, never “data is”
- Proof read from print copy; never from computer screens
- Mouth words and follow along with finger or pencil
- “Finished” copy should be read independently by at least two people; a good piece of work will require multiple iterations and multiple reads
- Once finished avoid reading (for fear what you may find)

Recreational writing is what you do for you, for nourishment of the soul and inner being. Indeed, a lot of postings to trialsmeinertsway.com are recreational in nature, especially my rants.

More extensive recreational works are books, intended for family and friends. Covers, prefaces, and tables of contents for the works listed below are posted to my website under “Recreational Writing”.

The file appended to this note is a story from “Stories and Essays from Klinkapunk”. ([click here](#))

Recreational writing**2013**

Stories and Essays from Klinkapunk (a collection of stories and essays under my nickname from my father; 269 pgs)

2018

Dickie Harris (a collection of stories told to my three daughters on camping trips over the years; 216 pgs)

2020

Pernelda Violet Applebee (another character in stories told while camping; 82 pgs)

2021

Vignettes in my life sojourns (a collection of life shaping events in my journey through life; 171 pgs)