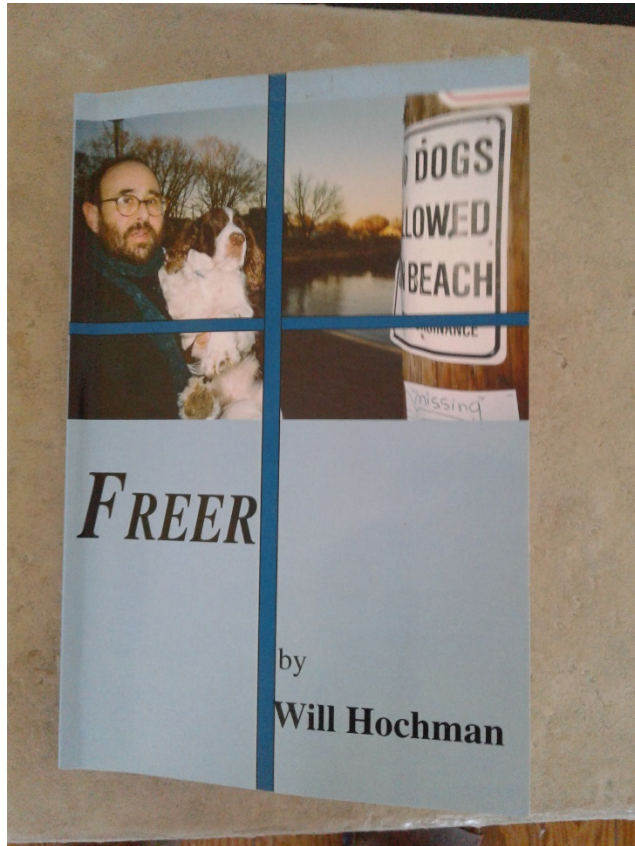


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Thank You Will: I Miss You Brother —or— Learning to Surf Raindrops



We met in March of 2008 at the 4Cs in New Orleans. I was invited to a semi-formal meeting with several members of the hiring committee for the position I had applied to at Will’s school, Southern Connecticut State University (SCSU). Dressed in a black polo shirt and slacks, and accompanied by my best friend Teagan, I had a cold. Will, wearing a New York Yankees baseball cap and a sports jacket, spoke with exhilarating excitement and energy about my candidacy. He made me feel great. Later, he would attend my panel presentation (Session J.19: Re-Mapping Technological Territories) and write a review of it for *Kairos CCCC Reviews*.

After just Will and I shared probably the best pizza I’ve ever eaten (for my campus visit dinner at Frank Pepe’s in New

Haven), we spent the next five years working closely together at SCSU. Will taught me how to use the Colorado State Writing Studio. We strolled along the New Haven City Point boardwalk eating amazing tacos from the taco carts and letting the conversation flow where it may. We called each other by lots of pet names over the years. Will called me Little Stevie (after Little Stevie Wonder), so I started signing my emails with “ls.” After leaving SCSU for George Mason University, we stayed in touch.

Three years later, Will played an integral role in helping me land my life-changing job at Texas A&M University-Kingsville. I will never forget our final phone conversations regarding contract negotiations for the position. While I walked my favorite lush nature paths in Springfield, VA with my dog Madison, Will urged me not to request tenure. He told me that he could have done it when he first came to SCSU years ago, but he chose not to. Instead, he wanted to show his new colleagues that he could earn their respect and trust first. I told him he had an open invitation to come visit any time he wanted, and I’d pay for his flight.

Below are excerpts from one of our last email exchanges ...

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From: Hochman, William <hochmanw1@southernct.edu>

Sent: Tuesday, August 16, 2016 10:52:33 AM

To: Steven Corbett

Subject: Re: Texas A&M Kingsville Might Call...

Sometimes it’s good to dive in...just do your best and try to fit into the new learning culture and you’ll be fine.

From: Steven Corbett <scorbet3@gmu.edu>

Date: Tuesday, August 16, 2016 at 10:50 AM

To: Hochman Will <hochmanw1@southernct.edu>

Subject: Re: Texas A&M Kingsville Might Call...

Hey, sorry, brother. They've granted all of my requests and the contract is sitting in front of me, ready to sign. I start Sept 15, which is way too soon. I should have stuck to my guns in asking for a spring start date. This is going to be tough ...

Is

From: Hochman, William <hochmanw1@southernct.edu>

Sent: Tuesday, August 16, 2016 10:46:07 AM

To: Steven Corbett

Subject: Re: Texas A&M Kingsville Might Call...

So?

From: Steven Corbett <scorbet3@gmu.edu>

Date: Monday, August 8, 2016 at 7:38 PM

To: Hochman Will <hochmanw1@southernct.edu>

Subject: Re: Texas A&M Kingsville Might Call...

Brother! I got the offer, and negotiations are going very well so far. Should I book your flight now or would you rather wait just a bit?

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love,

Is

From: Steven Corbett
Sent: Saturday, August 6, 2016 6:05:47 AM
To: Hochman, William
Subject: Re: Texas A&M Kingsville Might Call...

Check out this essay for Duane Roen and colleagues forthcoming collection on cognition and writing. What do you think of my student's paintings at the beginning and end?

Is

From: Hochman, William <hochmanw1@southernct.edu>
Sent: Friday, August 5, 2016 7:21:48 PM
To: Steven Corbett
Subject: Re: Texas A&M Kingsville Might Call...

203 231 5770

From: Steven Corbett <scorbet3@gmu.edu>
Date: Friday, August 5, 2016 at 6:22 PM
To: Hochman Will <hochmanw1@southernct.edu>
Subject: Re: Texas A&M Kingsville Might Call...

Hey, what's your cell #?

Thanks!

Is

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From: Steven Corbett
Sent: Friday, August 5, 2016 6:03:05 PM
To: Hochman, William
Subject: Re: Texas A&M Kingsville Might Call...

Hey, thanks Will! I'll call tomorrow late morning. Love the poem! I will be about 45 minutes or so away from really nice North Padre Island beaches. Some people live closer by it anyways and commute. But you know me; I'll want to be within walking or bicycling range of campus 😊

Talk soon, brother.

Steven

From: Hochman, William <hochmanw1@southernct.edu>
Sent: Friday, August 5, 2016 5:15:58 PM
To: Steven Corbett
Subject: Re: Texas A&M Kingsville Might Call...

Just got her Email—not back in english orifice for a few more weeks—and will set up a day with Susan...love the location...a student during my colorado days wrote about Matamoros and I never forgot it She was illegal, but great in the class. Also, did some background on your new boss. Turns out we both think about updating Emerson, though I did it before she was born in the late 80s in Neon some small press journal and again in a book in 93.

Tuning Fork

Thoreau once told Emerson
Turn on your radio and catch haphazard words
There are American phrases in waves that create
A beachhead, yours for the vibrating
You can't just turn around and review your stamp collection
So much as finally catching a wave that lets you know
You can ride it
Your gliding hum breaks

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With Special Delivery of self
Curling in the calendar days
That fall off the wall and into the ocean

The sea's surface
Is a voice that unfolds from touching
Words turn at eye level
Thoreau once said to his executor Emerson
My grave need be marked only by a plank
Driven into the ground deep
But flat
with words
Whose
paint will
fade
In the first
rain of the
future
Thoreau
once said to
his pal
Emerson
We will
learn to surf
raindrops

Feel free to
call anytime
this
weekend
(except sat
night—
dinner
party!) to
coach and
update me.
Sending
good
thoughts,
Will

