Consultation Reflections for "Normativity as the Root of Secrecy and Moral Degeneration in Ellen Hart’s *A Whisper of Bones*"

Ava King  
*Denison University*

Lauren Ehlers  
*Denison University*

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.denison.edu/prologue

Part of the Arts and Humanities Commons

**Recommended Citation**

Available at: https://digitalcommons.denison.edu/prologue/vol15/iss1/10

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Writing Center at Denison Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Prologue: A First-Year Writing Journal by an authorized editor of Denison Digital Commons.
Consultation Reflections

**Writer**  
Ava King

I wrote “Normativity as the Root of Secrecy and Moral Degeneration in Ellen Hart’s *A Whisper of Bones*” for my Writing 101 class Queer Mysteries or Queer Detective Fiction with Dr. Sylvia Brown. My approach to the writing process was usually heavily dependent on the subject or discipline that I was writing for. At Denison, particularly because my Writing 101 class was very interdisciplinary, my writing style matured as I learned to weave together the styles of literary analysis with elements of gender theory and other considerations. For this paper, after reading Ellen Hart’s novel and considering normativity as a theme through which to analyze the novel I went through an editing process where I submitted the piece for feedback once before I received a final grade on it as the first paper of the semester. Then for our final I revisited the paper and with help from Dr. Brown changed the flow of ideas.

With help from the writing center I was able to consider ways in which I could improve my sentence coherence and structure as well as how much plot to discuss and where to place that information. Overall this process has illustrated how much my writing has improved since I started at Denison in the fall.

**Writing Center Consultant**  
Lauren Ehlers

In her essay, “Normativity as the Root of Secrecy and Moral Degeneration in Ellen Hart’s *A Whisper of Bones*,” Ava King achieves a nuanced analysis of character, plot, and the psychological impacts of enforced normativity using textual evidence, wielding Hart’s words to drive home her own original argument. During our discussion of her essay, Ava and I focused on clarifying plot details, tightening paragraphs to avoid repetition, and finding opportune locations for the integration of contextual information. My favorite parts of our consultation were the “A-ha!” moments that came when we toyed with different syntax options and ultimately agreed about which worked best. To me, there seemed to be a shared sense that neither of us knew more than the other; we were merely spitballing until we found a version of the sentence that really clicked. I wanted to avoid phrasing suggestions as non-negotiable edits, so, after an instance where I feared I did that, I made a point of welcoming pushback on every proposed change for the rest of the consultation. This amendment speaks to the broader mission of the Writing Center, which is to give writers a place to sort through their ideas and steer their own work, without consultants making rules about what’s wrong and what’s right.