

## Signature strokes

### Woman finds personality, intricacies in handwriting

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Handwriting is your body language on paper.

And Dr. Arlyn Imberman, who studied the European method of handwriting analysis for three years in New York, wrote a book called *Signature for Success*, in which she decodes the personality behind writing samples from artists, politicians, celebrities and others.

She said the American school of thought attributes people's traits to specific strokes, such as the idea that putting the bar high above a "T" signifies ambition.

"But the Europeans don't believe that," she said. "They believe you look at the patterns. You study the patterns. You look at the number of times a stroke is repeated. You look at the spacing, the margins, the pressure, the quality of the stroke, the speed. The whole pattern folds into place like a photograph being developed."

She had to study lots of psychology and graphology, which roots back to 11th-century China.

"Everybody's like a safe," Imberman said. "Everybody has a combination that will open that safe, and handwriting can give you the combination. You can see Jung, Adler and Freud in handwriting - you can see those typologies. You can see the Myers-Briggs typology in the handwriting without the person taking the test."

She gave a lecture last week in Santa Fe in which she focused on the writings of Georgia O'Keeffe and turned local artists and gallery-owners into examples.

Monika Kaden, who runs Casa Contemporary Fine Art in Santa Fe, hosted the lecture at her gallery and also submitted her handwriting.

"I'm not into this really because I'm kind of a down-to-earth person," Kaden said. "She asked me if I would write two paragraphs, and she looked at it immediately and did the analysis. She put it in wonderful, amazing words. I would never have thought about those things - about my life and about what I went through in my life."

Companies often hire Imberman to look at applicants' handwritings to see if they would be an asset or a risk.

"People who go into a negotiation can hire me, and I can see the secret agenda of the person they're negotiating with," Imberman said. "Everybody has something they want to get out of the negotiation. Most of this is shown on the page."

In her book, she makes predictions on the outcome of the presidential elections based on the candidates' handwritings. She said since the book came out eight months ago, some of her predictions aren't as groundbreaking because we've learned so much about them by now.

"I predicted that Hillary wouldn't leave until the last dog died," she said. "I predicted Obama had tremendous arrogance that might be his undoing. John McCain? The problem with McCain is he has a lot of medical issues with his writing hand, but you can see how he digs into the page, which is his intensity. It's his temper; how short his strokes are, which is his irritability. You can see the writing is very rigid, which is partly due to his disability but also due to the fact that he doesn't adapt well."

She said a good way to use her book is to write yourself a letter before opening it.

"At the end of each chapter you will see more and more into who you are," she said. "You will learn more and more about decoding the pattern on the page. That's one way that you can teach yourself what the book has to say about graphology and how you can learn about yourself. Understanding oneself is sort of like the last frontier. We've conquered the land; we've conquered the sea; we've conquered the heavens; but we haven't conquered inside ourselves."

Marty Rosenberg, who owns a vintage poster gallery in Santa Fe, said he bought her book after her lecture. He was also featured in her handwriting samples.

"It's a very practical guide to a not-very-well-known or understood area of behavioral analysis," Rosenberg said. "It demonstrates that graphology has a history and academic background which truly gives it substance. In a sense, like astrology needs substance and background, graphology needs to have this underpinning as well, and her book documents this very well for the layperson."