

SignWriting Symposium 2014

Presentation 3

ABSTRACT

“Ways to Write Sign Languages by Hand with SignWriting”

by

Adam Frost

ASL Professor, San Diego Mesa College &
University of California San Diego (UCSD),
Linguist, ASL Wikipedia & SignWriting Editor
www.frostvillage.com, frost@signwriting.org

SignWriting has been written by hand since the very beginning. With the introduction of computers, writing by hand has gone into disfavor even to the point that many have believed that writing by hand takes too long and is impractical. There have been many ways of writing by hand that have been almost forgotten. I have been fortunate enough to have the need to write by hand at times, and to have close workings with Valerie to recall many of those methods and how to incorporate them into modern use. This paper will explore some of those ways as well as some of my own that I have developed in the process.

First, we will cover the ways of writing to match the way computers print, but we will not stop there like most people would assume. We will go through various levels of simplification making it less cumbersome to write by hand. By the time we have gone through several layers, we will arrive to what I personally use when jotting down notes. We will not get into shorthand as it was introduced in the 1980's or after, since shorthand is not a one-to-one correlation with print making it useful for other purposes.