

# A Writer Is Re-Born

by Despina Panagakos Yeargin

Sometimes, the life of a writer is dangerous.

Sometimes, a writer is born because of his dangerous life.

In the case of writer Barry Parham, a graduate of the University of Georgia's journalism school, he wasn't born, he was re-born as a writer, and yes, it happened as a result of his dangerous life.

Writing as a career did not work out for Barry. The idea of building websites evolved into a job, so Barry gave up on being a writer, although he never gave up writing. That's fine, but one day, as he was living his dangerous life, he experienced something which eventually became fodder for the idea that writing could evolve into a job too. Hmmmm.

In Barry Parham's own words, "...I decided to give parasailing a go." What ensued is a classic, although rare, sporting event S.N.A.F.U., which (14 years later) gave birth to a writer.

After the breaking of his hips, the emergency room visit, the surgery and the administering of high-tech drugs—after all of that typical stuff- came another typical, but for Barry, all-too-memorable, event. Again, in his own words\*,

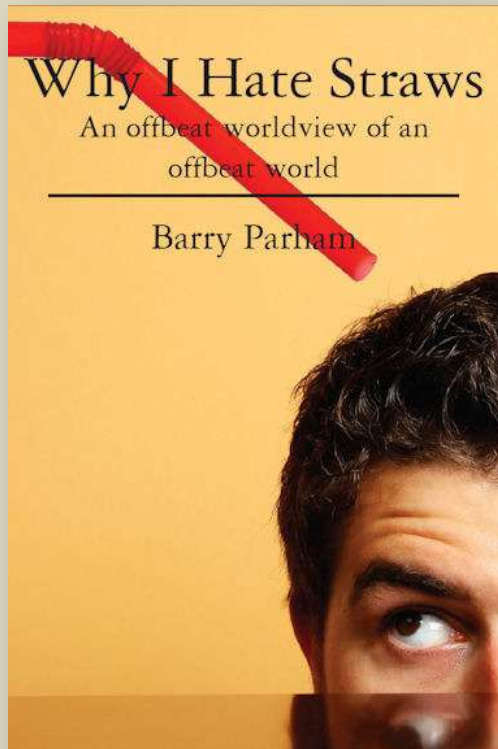
*... since I couldn't get out of bed, to perform even the most basic personal duties, my medical team called for something called a catheter, which is Latin for "Nurse, you have lost your damn mind. You're gonna put that WHERE?"*

*To this day, whenever I see a straw, I have hateful, violent, anti-social thoughts.*

And, so, 14 years after the parasailing accident—a result of a dangerous life—a writer was re-born. But, you ask, how did Barry Parham, the web designer formerly known as a writer, begin to believe in himself as a writer again?

"That event, the memory of that pain just never leaves me," Parham jokes, "well not for long, anyway." It was during one such remembering of the unfortunate turn of events of 14 years ago that Barry decided to write it all down, "for therapeutic reasons," he says with a sly grin, and an essay entitled "Why I Hate Straws" was transformed from a memory to a laugh-out-loud story about a regular guy that other people could read and laugh along with too.





While continuing his work building websites, Parham had a side gig going for years. He had been moonlighting as a blogger, putting his college education to good use by writing about things—about the little things, the big things and the extraordinarily weird things of everyday life. In 2009 he branched out and began writing a weekly column for AssociatedContent.com and developed a serious group of laughing followers, believers in the life-through-cracked-glasses flavor of Barry's written observations.

One day, Barry realized that he had to take another risk. Remember, sometimes, the life of a writer is dangerous. This time, it would not be parasailing. This time he was going to collect his series of stories, put them between covers and get his first book published. And that, children, is how the book, Why I Hate Straws: An offbeat worldview of an offbeat world was published.

This time there was no accident. This time, the risk paid off, and Parham is working to balance web design, writing, speaking engagements and making appearances at book stores. He also has fans—Strawheads—who are addicted to Barry's take on what he observes as weird, funny or even insane in the everyday happenings of everyday life.

This sampling of reader reviews from Amazon.com illustrates his followers' passion—they appear to be addicted to Parham's writing style and cunning observations.

- *One of the funniest books I've read in a long time.*
- *I think my wife was glad when I finished the book because my laughing interrupted her reading.*
- *...reverentially irreverent, wry, dry and very funny observations on life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.*
- *Do not eat, drink or operate hazardous equipment while reading this book...*
- *If you're having a bad day, pick up this book and see what happens! To say it's a fun read is really an understatement.*

Anyone looking for an escape from the dark and dismal reality of living in the last year of the first decade of this already worn-thin 21<sup>st</sup> century is well-advised to seek out the cure, Why I Hate Straws, the first genius child born to born-again writer, Barry Parham. If you ask nice, he might even come to a library or bookstore in your town to read for you and to sign your copy of his first-born.

\*Excerpt from “Why I Hate Straws” © 2009 Barry Parham All rights reserved.

**For a video snippets of an interview with the author, winner of the November 2009 Writers Circle Competition, go to <http://www.youtube.com/user/bparham924>**

Barry on [AssociatedContent.com](http://AssociatedContent.com)

Strawheads [fan page](#) on facebook.com

Buy your own copy of [Why I Hate Straws](#) on Amazon.com

Barry’s [author page](#) on Amazon.com

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