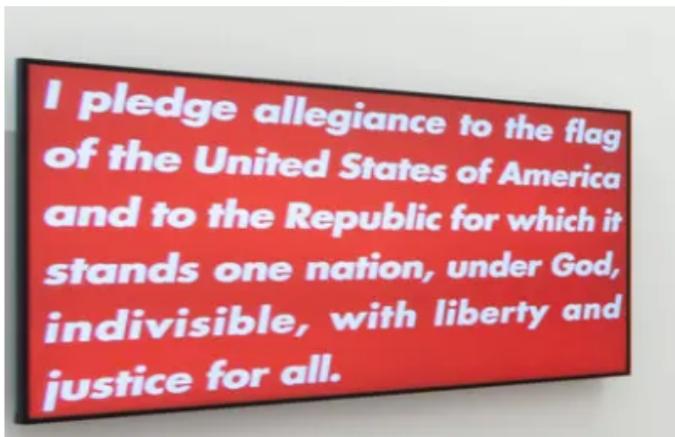


Barbara Kruger Endlessly Memeable Blunt Speaking Poem

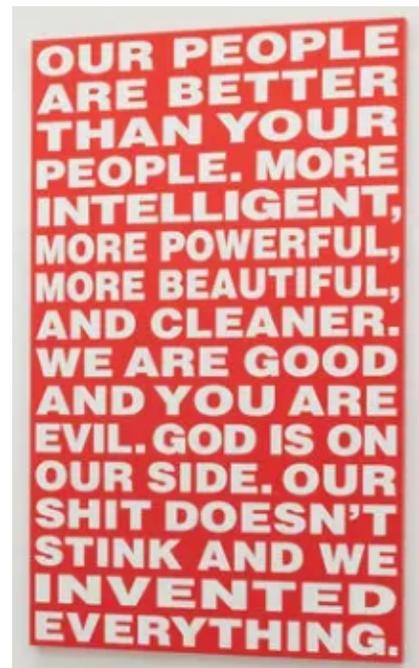
A wonderful article on Barbara Kruger's late 2021 exhibition at the Art Institute of Chicago inspired this exercise. From [the article](#):

Since the early 1980s, the engine of her work, and its effectiveness, has been formatting — the candy apple red bar containing [white sans serif type](#), rendered in Futura Bold Oblique, conveying aphorisms that could be taunts or pleas. Endlessly hashtaggable, they presaged how modern phone-centered communication would be reduced to the immediacy of the endlessly shareable and the fluidity of the endlessly memeable.

But they began much more humbly, as paste-ups made by hand, an extension of Kruger's work as a graphic designer at Condé Nast magazines. Twenty of her 1980s originals are displayed in a suboptimally lit walkway. Up against the room-size works, they feel like modest afterthoughts. But up close they are deeply moving, almost innocent. Each juxtaposes a gnomic phrase with a stark black and white image, but at this scale, they scan more as private entreaties than global dictates — rave fliers for young agitators.



Kruger works deal with authority and its abuse. From left, "Pledge," 1988/2020; "Untitled (Our people)," 1994/2017... Credit... Art Institute of Chicago



Essentially Kruger is translating this staple of US American propaganda into its actual meaning, in her view. Could you do something similar with your own home or writing space? Sam Hamill's home he built in Port Townsend was called Kagean or *Shadow Hermitage*. Bashō's hut had a banana tree. *Bashō* means banana tree and is how he got his name. The banana tree given to him by a student was planted outside his home. Other huts he visited during his well-documented journeys were *The Unreal Hut* and *The House of Fallen Persimmons*. Your poem could tell in no uncertain terms the rules/expectations of your space and how it aids your process. You do not have to use the same sardonic tone as in much of Kruger's work. You could use the boxy format. Consider a different font on a bold background and justified text which aligns to left and right.

Welcome to Casa del Colibrí where
the rabbits will not tolerate drumming
where lights out by 9pm & where we
watch each November bomb cyclone
wind ripple the giant brain we call
the lake. The sound of each syllable
reigns here as it occurs to a mind in
service to the greater mind (non-local)
which uses the Great Coot Mother as
another inspiration & where a 17
syllable poem will daily be committed
to paper brain. We'll feed you pescatarian
cuisine (maybe pizza or pancakes) honor
your noble spirit, value the absence of
noise & will help youprehend another
inspired improvisation including death,
in harmony w/ all sentient beings.

6:22am, 17—Nov—2021
Casa del Colibrí

Does the poem reflect your personal mythology? Your poetics? If poetics are cosmology, how do the two align in your abode, or your writing space? Learning how to manipulate fonts, backgrounds and effects can be useful for your multi-decade research project to add novelty to the visual presentation.

