What’s in the way you write?

Psychologist: handwriting analysis shows a person’s true colours

By Rebecca Payne

My initial skepticism about graphology, which seemed to me like a quaint Holmestian practice about as accountable as phrenology, quickly eroded when I sat down with Annette Poizner.

She started telling me things about myself that I’d never admit to anyone. Then she told me what section of the newspaper I read first. In fact, in a minute before our discussion, I’d been so taken aback by what Poizner was saying I blurted out, “Who, me?” It was almost uncomfortable at some points, and I found myself blushing more than once.

Her goal seems to be to debunk the conception of graphology in North America. “Unfortunately graphology has been put into sort of a cult label. Graphology is a clinical tool, it’s not tea leaf reading,” she said.

The Annex-based social worker’s M. 10 lecture at OISE (252 Bloor St. W.), “The Psychology of Handwriting,” is an introduction to the principles of graphology which will be demonstrated using handwriting samples written by well-known public figures, including Michael Jackson, Robert Redford, and Princess Diana.

Before our meeting, Poizner had sent me her handwriting samples: a page-long description of the events of a particular day; ten nearly identical handwriting samples: a page-long description of the events of a particular day; ten nearly identical handwritings; a page-long description of the events of a particular day; ten nearly identical handwritings; a page-long description of the events of a particular day; ten nearly identical handwritings; a page-long description of the events of a particular day; ten nearly identical handwritings; a page-long description of the events of a particular day.

She then completed a Doctorate of Education specializing in Counselling Psychology from the University of Toronto. Her dissertation examined the use of graphology as a psychotherapeutic tool. She credits her supervisor at OISE for taking her on. “It’s an interesting story that I found a supervisor who was willing to do this dissertation with me. She was really great. It’s hard to explore these off the beaten track things, so it’s a testimony to creative, innovative professors at this local institution,” said Poizner.

Poizner also insists that graphology alone does not make an assessment. “Any time psychological tools are used they do something called triangulation. Nobody gives you one test and says, ‘Oh, here’s your result’s on the one test, because any one test has limits to its reliability or validity. So what you do is you triangulate the data … You would be irresponsible to use it alone.”

Being a psychotherapist, Poizner is necessarily intuitive and empathetic, but after I’d turned off my recorder and put on my coat, she walked me out of her office saying, “It’s an interesting story that I found a supervisor who was willing to do this dissertation with me. She was really great. It’s hard to explore these off the beaten track things, so it’s a testimony to creative, innovative professors at this local institution,” said Poizner.

Annette Poizner first became interested in graphology after being introduced to it in Israel.

“T he Psychology of Handwriting” will be held Thursday, March 10, 2011, Room 5170 at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (252 Bloor St. W.), at 8 p.m. $10. There will be a Q and A period afterwards. To RSVP and receive more information, call (416) 280-6442.

“T he Psychology of Handwriting” will be held Thursday, March 10, 2011, Room 5170 at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (252 Bloor St. W.), at 8 p.m. $10. There will be a Q and A period afterwards. To RSVP and receive more information, call (416) 280-6442.

“T he Psychology of Handwriting” will be held Thursday, March 10, 2011, Room 5170 at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (252 Bloor St. W.), at 8 p.m. $10. There will be a Q and A period afterwards. To RSVP and receive more information, call (416) 280-6442.

“T he Psychology of Handwriting” will be held Thursday, March 10, 2011, Room 5170 at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (252 Bloor St. W.), at 8 p.m. $10. There will be a Q and A period afterwards. To RSVP and receive more information, call (416) 280-6442.

“T he Psychology of Handwriting” will be held Thursday, March 10, 2011, Room 5170 at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (252 Bloor St. W.), at 8 p.m. $10. There will be a Q and A period afterwards. To RSVP and receive more information, call (416) 280-6442.

“T he Psychology of Handwriting” will be held Thursday, March 10, 2011, Room 5170 at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (252 Bloor St. W.), at 8 p.m. $10. There will be a Q and A period afterwards. To RSVP and receive more information, call (416) 280-6442.

“T he Psychology of Handwriting” will be held Thursday, March 10, 2011, Room 5170 at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (252 Bloor St. W.), at 8 p.m. $10. There will be a Q and A period afterwards. To RSVP and receive more information, call (416) 280-6442.

“T he Psychology of Handwriting” will be held Thursday, March 10, 2011, Room 5170 at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (252 Bloor St. W.), at 8 p.m. $10. There will be a Q and A period afterwards. To RSVP and receive more information, call (416) 280-6442.

“T he Psychology of Handwriting” will be held Thursday, March 10, 2011, Room 5170 at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (252 Bloor St. W.), at 8 p.m. $10. There will be a Q and A period afterwards. To RSVP and receive more information, call (416) 280-6442.

“T he Psychology of Handwriting” will be held Thursday, March 10, 2011, Room 5170 at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (252 Bloor St. W.), at 8 p.m. $10. There will be a Q and A period afterwards. To RSVP and receive more information, call (416) 280-6442.

“T he Psychology of Handwriting” will be held Thursday, March 10, 2011, Room 5170 at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (252 Bloor St. W.), at 8 p.m. $10. There will be a Q and A period afterwards. To RSVP and receive more information, call (416) 280-6442.

“T he Psychology of Handwriting” will be held Thursday, March 10, 2011, Room 5170 at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (252 Bloor St. W.), at 8 p.m. $10. There will be a Q and A period afterwards. To RSVP and receive more information, call (416) 280-6442.

“T he Psychology of Handwriting” will be held Thursday, March 10, 2011, Room 5170 at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (252 Bloor St. W.), at 8 p.m. $10. There will be a Q and A period afterwards. To RSVP and receive more information, call (416) 280-6442.

“T he Psychology of Handwriting” will be held Thursday, March 10, 2011, Room 5170 at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (252 Bloor St. W.), at 8 p.m. $10. There will be a Q and A period afterwards. To RSVP and receive more information, call (416) 280-6442.

“T he Psychology of Handwriting” will be held Thursday, March 10, 2011, Room 5170 at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (252 Bloor St. W.), at 8 p.m. $10. There will be a Q and A period afterwards. To RSVP and receive more information, call (416) 280-6442.

“T he Psychology of Handwriting” will be held Thursday, March 10, 2011, Room 5170 at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (252 Bloor St. W.), at 8 p.m. $10. There will be a Q and A period afterwards. To RSVP and receive more information, call (416) 280-6442.

“T he Psychology of Handwriting” will be held Thursday, March 10, 2011, Room 5170 at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (252 Bloor St. W.), at 8 p.m. $10. There will be a Q and A period afterwards. To RSVP and receive more information, call (416) 280-6442.