

**Bourne**  
**toWrite...**  
creative writing  
workshops

GUILT  
an exercise in clichés OR *The Alchemist*

by Pauline Walden

Guilt is a four letter word, if you drop the 'u'; then it's a whole different ball game.

So let's play the alchemist and turn dross into gold; there are a number of means by which this can be achieved, depending largely on personality type and individual ingenuity - not to be confused with intelligence, and certainly not intellect which should impose acknowledgement of the impossibility of such a transmutation.

The most effective method is transformation from guilt to blame; simple - all it requires is sleight of mind, albeit a tortuous manoeuvre and, hey presto! the guilty party comes up smelling of roses - at least in their own eyes - and gilded with innocence.

But what if the guilty party is cursed with a dollop of intellect which may contain a glimmer of conscience? This, again, is a whole different ball game and could lead to things like accepting responsibility, making amends and all such tedious burdens which the practise of alchemy can conveniently sidestep.

But don't be fooled, it's not as simple as it sounds unless you have a certain type of personality - preferably psychopathic, and there's a lot of it about!