

1999

JAEPL, Vol. 5, Winter 1999-2000

Follow this and additional works at: <https://trace.tennessee.edu/jaepl>



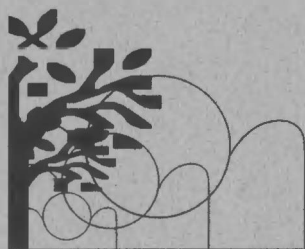
Part of the [Creative Writing Commons](#), [Curriculum and Instruction Commons](#), [Curriculum and Social Inquiry Commons](#), [Disability and Equity in Education Commons](#), [Educational Methods Commons](#), [Educational Psychology Commons](#), [English Language and Literature Commons](#), [Instructional Media Design Commons](#), [Liberal Studies Commons](#), [Other Education Commons](#), [Special Education and Teaching Commons](#), and the [Teacher Education and Professional Development Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

(1999) "JAEPL, Vol. 5, Winter 1999-2000," *The Journal of the Assembly for Expanded Perspectives on Learning*: Vol. 5 , Article 1.

Available at: <https://trace.tennessee.edu/jaepl/vol5/iss1/1>

This article is brought to you freely and openly by Volunteer, Open-access, Library-hosted Journals (VOL Journals), published in partnership with The University of Tennessee (UT) University Libraries. This article has been accepted for inclusion in The Journal of the Assembly for Expanded Perspectives on Learning by an authorized editor. For more information, please visit <https://trace.tennessee.edu/jaepl>.



J A E P L

The Journal of the Assembly for Expanded Perspectives on Learning

Teaching in the Fullness of the Moment

Volume 5 • Winter 1999–2000

The Assembly for Expanded Perspectives on Learning

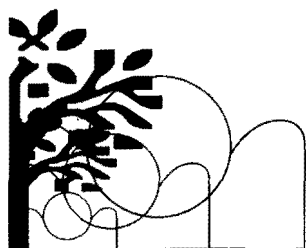
Executive Board

OFFICERS

<i>Chair</i>	Betsy Burris, Williamstown, MA
<i>Assistant Chair</i>	Bruce Novak, University of Chicago
<i>Secretary</i>	Helen Walker, Messiah College
<i>Treasurer</i>	Sherry Swain, Mississippi State University
<i>Advisory Board</i>	Alice G. Brand, SUNY College at Brockport Peter Elbow, University of Massachusetts, Amherst Richard L. Graves, Auburn University, Emeritus Sondra Perl, Lehman College, CUNY Gabriele Rico, San Jose State University Peter Stillman, Calendar Islands Press Charles Suhor, NCTE
<i>Ex-Officio Voting Members</i>	Bruce Ardinger, Columbus State Community College Richard L. Graves, Auburn University, Emeritus Jane Tompkins, University of Illinois at Chicago
<i>Founding Members</i>	Alice G. Brand, SUNY College at Brockport Richard L. Graves, Auburn University, Emeritus Charles Suhor, NCTE
<i>JAEPL Editors</i>	Kristie S. Fleckenstein, Ball State University Linda T. Calendrillo, Western Kentucky University
<i>AEPL Newsletter Editor</i>	Tom Dean, University of Iowa

JAEPL is a nonprofit journal published yearly by the Assembly for Expanded Perspectives on Learning with support from Western Kentucky University and Ball State University. *JAEPL* gratefully acknowledges this support as well as that of its manuscript readers.

Logo Design: Ann and Kip Strasma



J A E P L

The Journal of the Assembly for Expanded Perspectives on Learning

Editors

Kristie S. Fleckenstein
Ball State University

Linda T. Calendrillo
Western Kentucky University

Book Review Editor

Susan Blau
Boston University

Copyright ©1999
by the Assembly for Expanded Perspectives on Learning
All rights reserved
(ISSN 1085-4630)

An Affiliate of the National Council of Teachers of English
Member of the NCTE Information Exchange Agreement
Member of the Council of Editors of Learned Journals

Volume 5 • Winter 1999–2000

JAEPL

The Assembly for Expanded Perspectives on Learning (AEPL), an official assembly of the National Council of Teachers of English, is open to all those interested in extending the frontiers of teaching and learning beyond traditional disciplines and methodologies.

The purposes of AEPL, therefore, are to provide a common ground for theorists, researchers, and practitioners to explore ideas on the subject; to participate in programs and projects on it; to integrate these efforts with others in related disciplines; to keep abreast of activities along these lines of inquiry; and to promote scholarship on and publication of these activities.

The *Journal of the Assembly for Expanded Perspectives on Learning, JAEPL*, meets this need. It provides a forum to encourage research, theory, and classroom practices involving expanded concepts of language. It contributes to a sense of community in which scholars and educators from pre-school through the university exchange points of view and cutting-edge approaches to teaching and learning. *JAEPL* is especially interested in helping those teachers who experiment with new strategies for learning to share their practices and confirm their validity through publication in professional journals.

Topics of interest include but are not limited to: intuition, inspiration, insight, imagery, meditation, silence, archetypes, emotion, attitudes, values, spirituality, motivation, body wisdom and felt sense, and healing. Articles may be practical, research-oriented, theoretical, bibliographic, professional, and/or exploratory/personal.

Membership in AEPL is \$15. Contact Bruce Ardinger, Columbus State Community College, 550 E. Spring St., Columbus, OH 43215. e-mail: bardinger@compuserve.com. Membership includes that year's issue of *JAEPL*.

Send submissions, address changes, and single copy requests to Linda T. Calendrillo, Co-Editor, *JAEPL*, Department of English, 1 Big Red Way, Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, KY 42104. e-mail: linda.calendrillo@wku.edu

Address letters to the editor and all other editorial correspondence to Kristie S. Fleckenstein, Co-Editor, *JAEPL*, Department of English, Ball State University, Muncie, IN 47306. e-mail: kflecken@gw.bsu.edu

Contents

v Editors' Message

Essays

- David Bleich* 1 **Learning from Everyone**
In the teaching of writing and literature, it would be helpful to teachers and students to encourage students to overtake, use, and reuse one another's various uses of language in essays and other course work.
- Lisa Tyler* 14 **Narratives of Pain:
Trauma and the Healing Power of Writing**
Writing about traumatic events is useful, healing, and meaningful, and such work deserves a place in the composition classroom.
- Bradford A. Barry* 25 **Writer Motivation:
Beyond the Intrinsic/Extrinsic Dichotomy**
This article articulates and develops a much needed theory of communication motivation which shows how we can nurture in our students rhetorically-based intrinsic motivations.
- Kia Jane Richmond* 37 **The Ethics of Empathy:
Making Connections in the Writing Classroom**
Instead of relying on our memories, we should listen empathetically to our students so that we can help them with their writing as individuals— and not as carbon copies of ourselves.
- Catherine L. Hobbs* 47 **The Architectonics of Information:
Ancient Topical Thought and Postmodern Information**
This paper examines the usefulness of thought patterns from ancient rhetoric as they have been appropriated historically and as potentially applicable concepts for the present and future in today's interlinked electronic environment.
- Susan A. Schiller* 57 **Spirituality in Pedagogy:
"A Field of Possibilities"**
Students' responses to a spiritual approach to teaching provide evidence of the efficacy inherent in such an approach.

Reviews

- | | | |
|---------------------------|----|---|
| <i>Anne E. Mullin</i> | 69 | Teaching Writing Creatively
(David Starkey, Ed., 1998) |
| <i>Keith Rhodes</i> | 71 | Zen in the Art of Rhetoric: An Inquiry into Coherence
(Mark Lawrence McPhail, 1996) |
| <i>Ellen Davis</i> | 74 | Women in Praise of the Sacred:
43 Centuries of Spiritual Poetry by Women
(Jane Hirshfield, Ed., 1994) |
| <i>Jean R. Trounstein</i> | 78 | Educational Drama and Language Arts:
What Research Shows
(Betty Jane Wagner, 1998) |

Editors' Message

Zen students, Charlotte Joko Beck tells us, have a job to do, "a very important job: to bring . . . life out of dreamland and into the real and immense reality that it is" (12). The goal and the way to the goal are the same: mindfulness, a return to the clear experience of the present moment, within which the artificial dualism separating self and object dissolves. To be mindful is to be aware, *The American Heritage Dictionary* says, to hold in the fullness of mind rather than to be destitute of mind or consciousness. Mindfulness is the key to human interaction, to memory, to learning. Captured by our awareness of the moment, we listen and attend. "Mind me," we tell our children. "Hear me," our children respond. "Pay attention," we tell our students; "pay attention," our students respond. Each request and command weaves out of and returns to mindfulness, the heart of living and teaching. In a variety of ways, each essay in this our fifth edition of the *Journal of the Assembly for Expanded Perspectives on Learning* addresses the quality and importance of teaching in the fullness of the moment.

David Bleich in "Learning from Everyone," opens this issue with a plea that we mind or attend language in the moment of its performance, as it lives, rather than to the emptiness of a textual form. "It is easier to teach language when it is living within you," he points out, adding that "[i]t is more interesting if we pay attention to how things are said and try to understand why they are said in just that way." Lisa Tyler's "Narratives of Pain" emphasizes the psychological and physiological value gained by attending to trauma through writing. By offering our students the option of writing about painful events in their lives, we invite them to hold those events within the fullness of mind and possibly initiate the healing process.

In "Writer Motivation: Beyond the Intrinsic/Extrinsic Dichotomy," Bradford A. Barry highlights the need for mindfulness in our students' writing tasks, the need for our students "to be immersed in writing tasks that teach students about themselves and the world around them." He offers a theory of rhetorically-based intrinsic motivation called rhetrinsic introphy that fuses self-determination and flow theories with rhetorical concerns. Kia Jane Richmond in "The Ethics of Empathy: Making Connections in the Writing Classroom" reminds us of the need for empathy in the writing classroom regardless of the assignments or the theories from which we work. She defines empathy as a dialectic between cognition and emotion, one that requires mindful listening to our students rather than the superficial mindless response that solves the students' problems before they are even defined.

Catherine L. Hobbs attends to the demands of the information age, offering the "architectonic arts" of Neapolitan philosopher Giambattista Vico as a means to structure our attention in a world that floods us with information. In "The Architectonics of Information," Hobbs points out the crisis of attention caused by the information age and suggests that Vico's structuring arts based on metaphor and imagery can serve as a productive way to transform ourselves into intelligent agents, mindful of the barrage of information around us and the ways in

which we can control it.

Finally, Susan Schiller addresses mindfulness explicitly in a classroom incorporating meditation techniques that increase students' spiritual connection to self and world. In "Spirituality in Pedagogy: A Field of Possibilities," Schiller describes a course designed to enhance her students' awareness of the moment through meditation, a process that stimulates growth in the comprehension of subject matter. Such pedagogy, she writes, requires that teacher and students be joined in a like commitment to the possibilities of heightened listening through meditation.

Mindfulness connects us to the moment, to ourselves, and to the world. "The first great discovery of mindfulness meditation," Francisco J. Varela, Evan Thompson, and Eleanor Rosch write in *The Embodied Mind*, "tends to be not some encompassing insight into the nature of mind but the piercing realization of just how disconnected humans normally are from their very experience" (25). The range of essays within this volume highlights the ways in which we all can better attend to the fullness of the moment and by so doing reconnect on myriad levels with the world around and within us. As teachers and as students, "we have to pay attention to this very moment, the totality of what is happening right now" (Beck 10). ☁

Beck, Charlotte Joko. *Everyday Zen: Love and Work*. San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1989.

Varela, Francisco J., Evan Thompson, and Eleanor Rosch. *The Embodied Mind: Cognitive Science and Human Experience*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996.

Learning from Everyone¹

David Bleich

In elementary school, our class was told to “keep our eyes on our own papers.” Sometimes people were caught “copying.” This “no copying” rule did not change for me through college and graduate school. No one wondered about this rule or whether it was the only possible rule for learning how to learn. When Helen Keller was eleven, her achievement with language was doubted as possibly fraudulent because she memorized a story, verbatim, then had it published as “her” story. One of Helen Keller’s defenders at the time was Mark Twain, who reminded people that everyone “copies” all the time. We just do it unconsciously. Twain’s defense was written off as charitable rather than substantive. As I discussed some time ago, the childhood acquisition of language is a sophisticated form of emulation (to be distinguished from imitation) that is governed and motivated by the social relationships which form the scenes of living. In our coming into language and knowledge, we overtake the language of others, change it, and pass it back to these and other others, thus sustaining, through the use of language, family, community, and society. If we view the use of language in this way, we will have to find a way to change the classroom rule of “no copying.”

This may not be such a hard thing to do. For one thing, in societies that don’t think writing is holy and in those where there are no written texts, there are no sacred texts. There may be sacred moments and sacred gestures, but not sacred texts. This distinction matters, as moments and gestures depend on the present, but texts as we usually use them do not. What if there were only speaking needed in classrooms and no writing? Then, it would be a virtue to be able to repeat what others have said, and, contrary to what occurs now, students’ ability to repeat others’ words would, instead of discrediting them, earn them public acclaim. One of the results of our deep dependence on writing is the illusion that texts that are not present, not in use, are as material as those that are present and in use. Each person’s writing, we now presuppose, connects them with a not-present material reality (the reference, the meaning) that others can steal by stealing the text. In this situation, texts are confused with language. People treat texts as if they were language, when actually, texts only *become* language when they are in living use, as when a text is read to others or when a script is performed in public. In the classroom, to copy is, in practice, to steal a text; because of the confusion, it

David Bleich teaches writing, language and literary theory, women’s studies, science studies, Jewish studies, and film studies at the University of Rochester. His recent book is Know and Tell: A Writing Pedagogy of Disclosure, Genre, and Membership, from Heinemann.

¹ This essay was the keynote address at the Fourth Annual Colorado Conference of the Assembly for Expanded Perspectives on Learning in Estes Park, Colorado in June 1998.

looks as if the thief is stealing language and thus not thinking. However, the thief is only stealing a text and his/her language is probably in good health, thank you, perhaps just as good as the language of the laboring text-producer. If each person's written text were considered to be in living use, it would be a virtue, as it is in the imagined "no-writing" classroom, to overtake other people's language: it would happen so often, and be noticed in addition, that its commonplace status would change classroom practices radically.

In the study of literature, it is considered a virtue to overtake other people's language. And it is not necessary to know a person's source for the language in order to see its otherness working in new ways. As I remove the hamburger from the freezer, I say, "O that this too too solid flesh would melt, thaw, resolve itself into beef patties." As I look at the cat who ate the rabid mouse, I say, "O Rose, thou art sick! The invisible worm that flies in the night in the howling storm has found out thy bed of crimson joy, and with his dark, secret love, does thy life destroy." As I deal with university officials smugly moving toward need-blind financial aid, the phrase "foolish prating knave" could come to mind. And finally, as I say on my answering machine, "Welcome to the darkling plain, swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight! The world, which seems to lie before us like a land of dreams, has really neither joy, nor life, nor love, nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain, so you might as well leave your message."

How did this happen to me? How did this language become my own? Do I love Shakespeare, Blake, or Arnold? Not really. Do I enjoy reading their work? Not too much. But I very much enjoy making their language my own. In this way, I make their language live again, live anew, and even if I oppose or reject features of these authors, I have overtaken their language and in this way I teach it to others. This teaching is not heavy handed or didactic. It is just easier to teach language when it is living within you, and you use it in regular exchange with others. You may say that I am showing off by reciting "poetry"; I think I am sharing *my* language. Wanting to hear a speaker is boring if we merely want to hear thoughts. But it is more interesting if we pay attention to how things are said and try to understand why they are said in just that way.

Maybe it is not "boring" to hear thoughts; maybe it is merely morally burdensome—we have a sense of obligation to "get" the thoughts. Certainly, when Jane Tompkins reported her discomfort in lecturing it was the moral burden that disturbed her the most—the burden of having to contribute her professional skill while ignoring the obvious fact that living people, with active thoughts, were there, thinking and responding. Yet only she was permitted to speak, day in, day out. And we know how empty the "discussion" usually is in the short time following a lecture. A lecture becomes textualized, as this is now, only because you can't answer. And to the extent that you can't answer, the text is sacred. Sacred texts have put language out of business. To prove this, consider the citing of the sacred text with due reverence and without it. To cite the text with reverence, you say to the bereaved person: the Lord giveth, the Lord taketh away; blessed be the Name of the Lord. To cite text without reverence but nevertheless with meaning and force, you say to the gambler who lost his shirt, the Lord giveth, etc. In the first instance you encourage the sufferer not to challenge fate; in the

second instance you communicate the foolishness of having invited the loss. When the text is no longer sacred, it lives, and so do we.

This discussion is not directly about desacralizing texts, though I *am* trying to do that. Rather, I am paying attention to social practices that perpetuate the constricting action of sacred texts, and as I have suggested, one of those practices is the sermon, or its academic counterpart, the lecture, where we “learn” from one person, justified as an authority, and not from everyone.

I derive the idea of learning from everyone from a Talmudic source, a rabbi, whose name I don’t remember and did not look up. My late brother, an ordained but not practicing rabbi, taught me the aphorism that first communicated this ideal to me. Who is rich? Those happy with their lot. Who is heroic? Those who conquer their passions. Who is wise? Those who learn from everyone. In Hebrew, these catechisms are given in the masculine gender, so literally translated my title would read: Who is wise? One who learns from every man. Recently, Daniel Boyarin in his book *Unheroic Conduct: The Rise of Heterosexuality and the Invention of the Jewish Man* has taken up the issue of Rabbinic androcentrism and has given an opinion that applies here: historic Jewish culture, which has many fundamental differences from the pagan and Christian cultures in which it lived, did find ways to share in the androcentrism of these cultures, and Rabbinic masculine privilege was one of these ways. So in its historical and traditional context, the idea of “learning from everyone” is an exhortation given by men to other men to respect one another’s pedagogical potential. Whether, in practice, this was done, I don’t know; it could have been as academic as any academic moral ideal issued today—meant to conceal a fundamental situation of cozy privilege and privacy.

The rule against copying is one of the ways, as Madeleine Grumet put it in her book, *Bitter Milk: Women and Teaching* that all teachers, male and female, collaborate to “deliver children to patriarchy.” The rest of the process of delivery takes place through testing and grading—the bureaucratic machinery that enforces a strict individualistic style in teaching and learning and that practically no one is in position to resist. I place the ideal of learning from everyone with, but also in opposition to, some of its historic Hebrew forebears, and I affiliate it with the more recent ideals of Grumet and teachers like her who say that the practices of learning from everyone, which continue in spite of an acculturation process that diminishes them, can now be followed more purposefully as part of our regular pedagogies.

Because the ideal of learning from everyone is grounded in self-consciousness about our use of language, this ideal is affiliated with the principle of the materiality of language. This too is a principle of historic Hebrew culture, but it is also a principle in other societies, especially those where writing has not overtaken the culture. Authorship has a different function in a materialist conception of language: Helen Keller is a legitimate “author” of a story she only memorized and placed in a journal. Similarly, Homer is the legitimate “author” of a poem he heard from others and then performed. And so on. If there were no original text for Hamlet, there would be different “authors” given by the readings of Hamlet in the different performances say, of Laurence Olivier and Mel Gibson. In the cases of anonymous premedieval poems, we stick doggedly to concepts such as

“the Beowulf poet,” when it will never matter or be determined that a single person is the author of this work. Harold Bloom has offered similar vain speculations about the authorship of the Old Testament. From a materialist perspective, the author is the person who *transmits*, whether in writing or in speaking, the work to others, not the one who invents the work, even if transmission entails some invention. Nonmaterialist literate cultures, certainly ours in any case, teach their children, erroneously, that if you write it down (or write it up), it is forever, and *you*, by God, did it. The plagiarist who passes in the paper taken from the internet is as much the author of that paper as the hack who wrote it for the internet. It is only because authorship has this unquestioned status that these transmissions are illegitimate in our schools. If you take both the internet and authorship seriously, you can see that soon it will simply be impossible to expect independent verifiable authorship from any student. What we call ordinary education will be routinely criminalized.

The materialist view of language is that it counts, so to speak, only when in use and in the service of its living situations. Language lives at its moments of performance, just as we live in these same moments. Yesterday and tomorrow are related to today and get their meaning for us from today. From a materialist standpoint, meaning is not separable from the action of the words in use. In the terms most of us were educated in, however, there is “meaning” over here, and language over there, and we can “apply” one to the other in a variety of ways. From a materialist perspective, meaning and language are always in the *same* place at the *same* time. Except in a superficial sense, a word doesn’t have a meaning prior to our use of it. It has only recognition value. When we overtake words and language in infancy, childhood, and later, we get, more or less accurately, how the use of the word created its meaning in our experience, and then we reproduce it, more or less efficaciously for each new situation, yet with incremental change that represents the responses to the new situations of use. The use of recognition value is that it makes change possible.

Another demonstration of materiality may come from the word spirit—in Hebrew and in German. In Hebrew, there is no word for spirit that has the same reference as it does in German and in the Latin-derived languages. In Genesis, the word for the “spirit” of God that “hovered over the face of the deep” is *ruakh*, which in modern Hebrew is also “wind” and “social feeling.” Both the German *Geist* and the Hebrew word refer to the breath of life, but in the German and Latin versions the meaning is also decorporealized: the bodily meaning of “breath” is extended with a transcendental and immaterial meaning, something like a “life principle” or essence of life that leaves at death. (That the word *ruakh* in Hebrew is gendered feminine and *Geist* gendered masculine may also matter, but I don’t know how.) The incorporeal meaning of “spirit” does not exist in Hebrew. The word *nishama* is also translated as the “breath” of life in Genesis, and refers in Hebrew sometimes to “the soul.” Yet “soul” is English and not Hebrew. In Hebrew, this life principle is identified as corporeal and not transcendental. As the Hebrew came into Christian culture, the materialist basis of the language changed in translations, and the materialist approach to language was forgotten in the West. It was revived by Wittgenstein and then later by Derrida. The bizarre character of most of their work is testimony to a kind of “lack of fit” of their own uses of

language within academic discourse and styles of reasoning. In a sense, Derrida's work may be understood as an attempt to force into academic genres a materialist use of language, where the moment of articulation matters so much. Wittgenstein, on the other hand, presented his thoughts nonacademically, in a series of informal observations that follow from one another. In both cases, the explanation of their difference rests on their materialist presuppositions. A third case of an attempt to move toward a materialist view of language is J. L. Austin's speech act theory. Noting the performance action of language, he, and later Searle and others tried to relate, in a systematic way, the various uses of language to social speech situations. So far, this project has not succeeded again because of its academic presumptions but also because its scope is too narrow. As we speak today, the materialist view of language is a small minority and has few advocates who are also interested in teaching the native language, the mother tongue.

Learning from everyone requires a materialist view of language and an approach to pedagogy that lets teaching and learning become reciprocal in each classroom. When a curriculum is brought into a classroom, it becomes contingent on how class members receive, study, criticize, change it, and contribute to it. The steps in this process that I am focusing on now are to show the collective value of class members' (1) sharing responses to texts, (2) overtaking the languages of texts and other class members, and (3) discerning the effects of our taking new language uses into our thinking, values, teaching, and learning. (Back fifty years: I'm sorry, Mrs. Levine [my fourth grade teacher]; not only am I guilty of copying, but I am now thinking it is a good thing.) We will see how it feels to take others' language and make it our own.

My case in point comes from classroom events in a course I taught in the spring of 1998. The course is "Hollywood and Jewish Values in America." It enrolled twenty-five students. The idea of the course was to consider how the fundamental genres and styles created by the Hollywood studio system, which was founded exclusively by the sons of East European Jewish immigrants, became overwhelming sources of social, political, personal, and entertainment values in America. The course featured reading four texts, including Boyarin's mentioned above, seeing a film each week, writing a one-page response to each film distributed on email to all other members of the class, three five-page essays distributed to groups of four or five, and one twelve-page essay. Because of technology, it is now easy for every student to see, read, hear, and know what the other students are writing and saying as contributions to this course.

A film of special importance was Billy Wilder's "Some Like it Hot" (1959). It is the story of two musicians on the run from gangsters whose crimes they witness. The fugitive pair disguise themselves as female musicians and go to Florida with an all-female group. The singer in the group is Sugar Kane played by Marilyn Monroe. The two musicians, the saxophonist (Joe/Josephine) played by Tony Curtis and the Bass player (Jerry/Daphne) played by Jack Lemmon, become members of the group. In order to chase after Sugar, Joe/Josephine meta-pretends to be Osgood (played by Joe E. Brown), a male millionaire; Daphne is chased by the real Osgood and begins to enjoy his female role. At the end, when the criminals have been eliminated, Osgood proposes to Daphne, and even when Daphne finally reveals that she is a man, Osgood says so what, "nobody's

perfect." Sugar accepts being fooled by Joe because she is "not too bright." As the four principals are seen together in the final scene, there is no other "realistic" resolution.

Here are the responses to this film given by upper level students at the University of Rochester, Spring 1998.

Fry: Joe and Jerry also show a hyper-intensification of heterosexuality through their dressing up. That they continually say to themselves (and to each other) "I'm a boy I'm a boy I'm a boy, you're a boy. . ." while in the women's clothing shows the heightened feelings of discomfort with homosexuality at that same time, a rise in heterosexual feelings.

Sin: Was I the only person who found that there was some sexual tension between Sugar and Daphne: the playful touching of the two in the water and the fact that Sugar seemed fairly anxious to hop into Daphne's bed led me to believe that something besides friendship was thought of between the two. . . . Sugar's attraction to Daphne surprised me.

Jo: Is Tony Curtis gay? Did he cross dress? These issues seem as if they are determined by individual interpretation to me, but I have to say, though, that Jack Lemmon sure seemed to enjoy his role as "Daphne" in the film . . . just as Ms. K pointed out. Can the theme of the film be summed up in the last lines of the film, spoken by Daphne's suitor, Osgood, that - "nobody's perfect."

Ho: They are the precursor to guests on Jerry Springer. "My Millionaire Son's Spouse is a Show-girl Cross-dresser!" Anyway I found it interesting that Tony Curtis, who is gay, played the more "masculine" of the two. He was always ragging on Daphne, and was the more physical of the two. He was typically the one roughing up Jack Lemmon, instead of the other way around. Although done comedically, this film was breaking new ground in the realm of publicizing drag.

Lav: This was the first time that I saw Marilyn Monroe in a film. Her voice was much higher than I expected and she seemed very 'breathy.' She also wasn't nearly as thin as I expected her to be. The image of what women should look like has drastically changed. . . . People in the movie were much more 'heteroflexible' than I had anticipated them to be.

Fri: I was kind of surprised at how she wasn't really thin. I remember watching the film and . . . none of us thought she was thin, although she did have a beautiful face.

- Pea: For those of you that don't know, I sew and have done costuming for four years now. So, I was very interested when I learned that the film won an Oscar for best costuming. The man on [television] said something that I found shocking. He said that the costumer's greatest challenge was that Marilyn was the largest that she had been her entire career in that film.
- Wei: The one performance I didn't enjoy in this film is that of Marilyn Monroe. . . . At least twice in the film she described herself as "not very bright." . . . It is obvious that the film-makers saw her as a feminine ideal. Her conversations about finding a rich man really bothered me. Perhaps the powerful men in Hollywood wanted to believe that all they needed to get a beautiful woman was a lot of money and a yacht.
- Whit: This was the first time in any movie that I've seen a character like me (Joe's fake Shell Oil persona) that's exactly how I feel about women; anybody wish to try and change my mind? . . . I'm just joking. That was probably the best way to try and pick up a woman. I was so impressed that he pulled it off, but of course he did, that's what Hollywood was about during that era, sex with Marilyn Monroe.
- Quin: What I found most striking (as Ms. G pointed out) were the parallels, often subtle, between Sugar and Marilyn Monroe. In her first speaking scene we see Sugar hiding out in the ladies room with her flask. . . . Monroe herself was a drinker and was hospitalized for her overdose on sleeping pills. . . . But the fans still loved her, just as the boys love Sugar in this film.
- Kal: Sugar was a pathetic character and if it were not for her looks, she would probably be in a lot of trouble. It is pitiful that she will always be reminded of her Shell millionaire friend at every corner when she sees a Shell station.
- Gra: However, Jerry likes the attentions he gets from Mr. Osgood because he is a wealthy man. He even tells Joe that "a guy dressed as a woman would marry a guy for security." This is when Joe brings him back to reality by telling Jerry that he cannot marry a millionaire because "he is a BOY."
- Kou: He seemed to completely forget that he was a man and started talking about the wedding, his soon-to-be mother-in-law, where they were going on the honeymoon, etc. . . . Then Daphne takes off the wig and says, "I'm a man!" and Osgood says, "Well nobody's perfect." THE END!!!! Unbelievable!!

- Ur: While *Sugar Cane* presents an unmistakable depiction of a Fallen Woman due to her single status, I believe that this image is more of a critical commentary on society-imposed gender roles. Instead of portraying Sugar's alcoholism as yet another immoral aspect of her being, the film appears to depict this habit as a direct result of societal sentiments. . . . While it may not be easy to perceive this film along the lines of *Gulliver's Travels*, I think that Joe/Josephine's quick but meaningful comment on learning how the other half lives dismissed my doubts as to whom the finger is pointed at in "Some Like It Hot."
- Cla: There is a thin line separating between love and abhorrence of the film, and thinking too hard about it will not only give me a headache, but will make me cross that line into abhorrence. . . . In "Snow White," she dreamed of riding off with the young charming prince, and in "Some Like it Hot," Marilyn dreamed of marrying a rich man with a yacht. The similarities between the two women are startling. Both naïve and dependent women expressed their emotions through song and dance, and both escaped a deplorable past life. . . . The dreams of women have shifted from love to economics, and I must say that I prefer the latter dream.
- Dac: The women in the film appear to be fragile little girls. . . . Daphne and Josephine are essentially the women and essentially the mothers of the ladies. . . . However, as we are seeing this, we are also seeing that even as a woman, man must continue on his reign of protecting woman. Man must have the controlling role in every situation.
- Cam: This movie was so fun!! I loved all the "girls" in the band because they did not seem stereotypical girlie. In fact Josephine and Daphne were the "real" ladies on the trip. It seems that a man's interpretation of a woman is more womanly than a woman really is. I hope that made sense.
- Bore: Joe and Jerry switched roles somewhat when they become women. While Joe was still the domineering one, "Daphne" allowed Jerry to step into a more adventurous character. Jerry had been the conservative, stay-at-home one, while Joe was the one who wanted to bet their work money at the dog track. When the duo became women, Daphne quickly became friends with all the other girls and was having a good time, while Josephine was trying to calm Daphne down and make sure she didn't do anything rash.

Gig: I did see where the two men had a relationship like a marriage. One being the dominant personality and the one to convince the other to follow. Jerry is the follower. He has the stable dependable personality but does not want to be alone. . . . The whole movie centered around the sexuality of Sugar.

Ben: Really I do not have a profound thought in my body at this moment. . . . sorry.

The foregoing responses are excerpts from the one-page responses sent out over email. They might suggest how the habit of mutual exchange in classrooms might become the prevailing convention. For some, though not for all class members, these habits continued into their final projects; they cited others' opinions, views, judgments to contribute to their own discussion of the course's issues.

In considering ways to understand these responses, consider the group of four that raises issues of non-hetero gender identity. Two respondents consider if Tony Curtis is gay, one notices lesbian moves, and one comments on the "intensification" of heterosexuality. The students commented on this film after noticing that at the beginning of his book, mentioned earlier, Daniel Boyarin characterizes himself in adolescence as "a sissy who did not like sports." The question then arose if Boyarin was gay. The students noticed that after all, there is no statement in his long book which discloses many personal facts and feelings, that says that Boyarin is either gay or not gay. So Mr. Jo asks "if" Curtis is gay, while Ms. Ho says he is. The discussion suggests that the assuming and guessing about who is or is not gay has moved from private to public zones. As we know, if you raise certain questions, others will say you have a stake in those questions: the students who asked about lesbian issues are eligible to be identified as having a stake in those issues. In this instance *it did not matter* to these students, as it did not matter to Boyarin, how their discourse identified them. The students succeeded in converting private uses—"is so and so gay"—into language others can adapt in inoffensive discussions. The private language has been converted into a curricular issue.

In the film, the question of whether anyone is gay did not matter, but for different reasons. The status of cross-dressing in society was different from what it is today, and its potential for raising issues of sexual orientation was ignored outright in the film. The prevailing assumptions led audiences to the purely comic reading of the cross-dressing. This situation, in turn, permitted something else important to emerge in the film, even if it were unacknowledged in society: the separation of marriage as a practice from gender identity. This separation is enacted by the conversation between Joe and Daphne after they return to their room from the yacht-seduction and from the tango dance floor. The separation holds at the end of the film, when Osgood refuses to allow that Daphne's being a man is an impediment to their being married. Daphne had established her female identity through gestures early in the film and underscores this identity in the tango scene. The coup de grace of her female identity comes when, climactically, she uses the *language* of the fiancée in the first conversation with Joe and in the final

conversation with Osgood. Only one student mentioned this move in this dimension, Ms. Kou:

He seemed to completely forget that he was a man and started talking about the wedding, his soon to be mother-in-law, where they were going on the honeymoon, etc. Then Daphne takes off the wig and says, "I'm a man!" and Osgood says, "Well nobody's perfect."
THE END!!!! Unbelievable!!

It is unbelievable to Ms. Kou, because she sees no expected resolution in which the traditional gender roles are restored. The situation is *not* brought back to reality, as claimed by Ms. Gra in the response preceding Ms. Kou's. In the film, Daphne ignores Joe's exhortation that he is a boy, and claims that even if he were a boy, marrying a millionaire is a very good plan. At the end of the film, this value is reaffirmed—and that is what is unbelievable to Ms. Kou. As given, the film, ostensibly with comic intent, has separated marriage from gender. It is, perhaps, the safest conclusion to draw from a critical reading of the film.

But that is too abstract a conclusion to explain fully the energy and appeal of the film. If I take seriously the universal praise this film received from my class, other conclusions might be drawn. A few students (Ms. Wei, Mr. Kal, and Ms. Dac) complained about the diminishment of women. There was barely a film in Hollywood that did not diminish women in some way. However, even the students who complained enjoyed the film, particularly the antics of Josephine and Daphne. Their performance as women was convincing, and extra-funny because it was so convincing. In spite of themselves, viewers believed that Joe and Jerry had become women, as, perhaps suggested by Ms. Sin, who thought she may be the only one noticing a homoerotic feeling on Sugar's part.

Viewers tended to say that "Jack Lemmon" enjoyed the role, a statement that may be meant to communicate their own enjoyment. Through their marketing techniques, Hollywood studios have encouraged identifying actors with characters. As a result, such identification has become a convention that encourages discussion about whether the actors themselves are gay, something irrelevant to the interpretations of the films, but not irrelevant to how people are predisposed toward issues raised by the films. Ms. Ho, assuming that Tony Curtis is gay, sees something progressive in his portrayal of the "more 'masculine' of the two." However, the correspondence between Sugar Kane and Marilyn Monroe raises interest in the film beyond, perhaps, its status as an entertainment piece.

At least six viewers commented on their viewing of Marilyn Monroe and not on Sugar Kane, the character. Four of the viewers commented on her weight or on how she was not thin as expected, how so much of her body was shown and that her voice was "breathy." Two of the viewers made a point of the actual parallels between the role played by Monroe and her actual life situations. In this dimension, the film is the product of the Hollywood Jewish (and other) men who, habitually, showcased a female star with special emphasis on her status as a sex object. This collection of responses shows that some viewers notice what is happening but are only marginally disturbed, like Ms. Wei, who was particularly impatient with the economy of clever, deceptive rich men looking for "not too

bright" excessively sexualized women, with the women looking for men in the same terms. Viewers, male and female, are taken with Monroe, perhaps even more today than in her time, as she has become mythologized. The visual spectacle of her performance distracted most viewers, as men, like Mr. Whit, identified "sex with Marilyn Monroe" as the theme of Hollywood, not just the theme of this film. If we believe the stories about the Kennedys as well, it was the theme of many heterosexually identified American men, for many years, and it is still a theme. Women continued to evaluate her in terms of the standard of beauty: now thin is considered to be more beautiful than it was forty years ago, or four hundred years ago. For many viewers, male and female, the issues of heterosexual sex and body image added up to the most serious weight of the film, while the meaning of what Joe and Jerry did was merely the "screwball" element in the screwball comedy.

What happens to Joe is the rationalization of the sexual obsession. The fickle and deceptive saxophone player turns out to be good. Because Sugar is "not too bright," she overlooks the deceit, as, thankfully, a good man in her own social class can be found to marry. What happens to Jerry, however, is unexpected. Concealed by its "screwball" identity, diminished in prominence by the presence of Sugar Kane, the transformation of Jerry into a woman is never denied. I think the widespread enjoyment of this film is explained by how Jerry's transformation makes the film evenhanded, balancing out the misogyny of the Sugar Kane plot with an ostensible joke that says it is OK to be a woman, *even if you are a man*. Viewers like Ms. Cam who said that "It seems that a man's interpretation of a woman is more womanly than a woman really is" helps all viewers to see the sense of Jerry's final transformation into Daphne. I think she says that you see the real woman more readily in Daphne through his overtaking of female language than you do in either the exaggerated woman or the unnoticed woman. The language is the key to the other.

Consider now the post-tango conversation and the final one somewhat differently. In the first conversation, Daphne is very happy, as we see her in bed singing and shaking the maracas. She says, "I'm engaged. We're planning a June wedding." Joe only says it can't be done, that there is a problem. In each case Daphne says there is no problem: his mother is not a problem, she doesn't smoke, and what to do on the honeymoon has been discussed. But even Daphne's language that agrees that the marriage cannot succeed is female. She will get a "quick annulment" and collect alimony. When Daphne repeats after Joe that "I'm a boy" she quickly adds, "I wish I were dead." Daphne simply does not stop being a woman. Yes, Ms. Kou, this is unbelievable. Joe, the "strong" or "masculine" man, is unable to persuade Jerry to rejoin him in "reality." Without surgery or fanfare, but with the help of good writing, Jerry, thinking in "female" language, has become Daphne.

In the concluding scene, Osgood is the loyal partner. Daphne tries to persuade Osgood that the marriage won't work. She can't wear Osgood's mother's wedding gown because she is not built the same way; she is not a natural blonde; she smokes, after all; she can never have children. Osgood is undeterred. But the punch line of this joke is not when Daphne pleads that she is a man, but that Osgood says, "nobody's perfect." Being a man is just an imperfect form of a

woman: a reversal of the myth, partially believed by Freud, that a woman is an incomplete version of a man. To some, this ending may be unsatisfactory, but to most it is not. It balances the misogyny present in the other parts of the film. In this sense it is not a joke.

In the same sense, it is not a joke that Jerry overtakes female discourse and *becomes* Daphne. The action of this new language is real. It is blended in with other actions and gestures, into the total scene, including the early situation of having to escape the vengeance of the mob. Jerry escapes completely into womanhood, including the escape from the domineering of Joe, his gambling, his irresponsibility. Joe was the profligate saxophone player that Jerry lived with, one who could not become a real partner or a responsible roommate. Perhaps Daphne as a desexualized Sugar is ridiculous; certainly that idea is part of the topical rationality of this film. But Sugar does find the right saxophone player, and by the rules of comedy, there is a double marriage at the end, and one of them includes acceptance of a man as being an imperfect woman. Unbelievable!

The materiality of language makes it possible to take other people's language without stealing it, to take it in a way that enhances it in its earlier contexts. To learn from everyone implies that we will take our language from unlikely sources, that we will be able to assimilate the seemingly intellectualized formulations of Ms. Ur (Sugar Kane is "the unmistakable depiction of a Fallen Woman"), the colloquialisms of Ms. Cam ("The movie was so fun!!), and the hip cultural parody of Ms. Ho ("My Millionaire Son's Spouse is a Show-girl Cross-dresser."), the judgments of Ms. Cla and Ms. Wei: "naïve and dependent women" who express themselves through song and dance, or those who think of themselves as "not too bright." The materiality of language teaches that we may prefer but will not privilege this one's language over that one; we will not judge it and give this one a higher grade than the respondent who said, "Really I do not have a profound thought in my body at this moment. . . sorry." We may if we overtake the language of Ms. Ben (the last comment) persuade ourselves that this film does not matter at all, that it is a self-indulgence by one zone of society: a possible description of many films or other works of art.

Sometimes, I can't believe how much work it takes to understand the minds of twenty-year-old students. Each year, they are different from me in different ways in time and culture. Yet because of this constant change of circumstances in my classrooms, something genuinely new takes place when even the same words leak out of lazy students who repeat clichés and don't bother to find new things to say. I can't always identify what is new about a student informing me that the printer broke down, but something is new about it coming from a different face at a different time for a different reason. The same conundrum holds for each member of the classroom. Once the new situation is acknowledged, the old words become new, and they are eligible to be overtaken with purpose and imagination. Go ahead! Copy from your neighbor! Covet your neighbor's language! Take it! Convert it! Play with it! Both you and your neighbor will be happier for it. ●

Works Cited

Boyarin, Daniel. *Unheroic Conduct: The Rise of Heterosexuality and the Invention of the Jewish Man*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1997.

Grumet, Madeleine R. *Bitter Milk: Women and Teaching*. Amherst: U of Massachusetts P, 1987.

Narratives of Pain: Trauma and the Healing Power of Writing¹

Lisa Tyler

*If he wrote it he could get rid of it.
He had gotten rid of many things
by writing them.*

—Ernest Hemingway (491)

Anyone who has taught students to write personal experience narratives has read narratives of pain—dark, horrifying stories of deadly car accidents, miscarriages, suicides, domestic violence, sexual abuse, life-threatening illnesses, and the loss of family members. In an article poignantly titled “What My Students Know is Hurting Them,” Ann L. Clark contends that in her experience, we community college instructors are perhaps more likely than instructors at universities to read essays on these subjects; certainly we seem very willing to write about them (see for example Clark; Morgan; Tinberg; Valentino). But it is assuredly not *just* community college instructors who face this situation. When specifically prompted to write about trauma, students at Southern Methodist University (who might reasonably be described as a fairly privileged population) produced stories of “profound human tragedies” that “stunned and depressed” the researchers conducting the experiment (Pennebaker, *Opening Up* 43-44). Carole Deletiner, an adjunct lecturer at Hunter College, writes in *College English*:

It's only a few weeks into a new semester and I know who the recovering addicts and alcoholics are; I know who's been battered and sexually abused; I know who's ashamed of being Salvadoran or Russian, of being from a welfare family; who had a child when she

Lisa Tyler is an associate professor of English at Sinclair Community College in Dayton, Ohio. Her essays have appeared in Teaching English in the Two-Year College, Hemingway Review, Woolf Studies Annual and Studies in Short Fiction.

¹ I am grateful to Kay Berg, Judy Dapolito, Ed Davis, Dana Frierson, Sally Lahmon, and Carol Nancarrow, all at Sinclair Community College, as well as Kristie S. Fleckenstein and Linda Calendrillo, co-editors of the *Journal of the Assembly for Expanded Perspectives on Learning*, and the journal's two anonymous reviewers for their comments on a previous draft of this essay.

was fifteen; who dropped out of high school and has never told her husband. (813)

As Deletiner herself acknowledges, "The line gets blurred between professional and personal when people open themselves up to you in this way. The departmental description of English 120 covers none of this" (811).

In response to Deletiner's plea that her students "write the pain" (817), Cheryl Alton worries that it is irresponsible of instructors to request such writing: "Whether we wish to or not, we become personally involved with confidences and dilemmas that we have not been adequately trained to handle. . . . Could my comments unwittingly push that potentially suicidal student over the edge?" (667). The emotional nature of the papers can sometimes result in writing of poor quality, she contends, and she is reluctant to grade these emotional outpourings: "I vividly remember one student who came into my office very upset and yelled, 'My baby is dead and you can only give that a C!' " (667). She goes on to recount an anecdote about a student writing about killing someone and serving jail time; a psychologist friend, "perturbed at [her naiveté]," points out that his choice of subject could have been a threat, that he could have been a psychopath, that she as his instructor could have been in danger (668). There is, she insists, "a very fine line we educators should be aware of, but never dare to cross" (669). A second response, from Kathleen Pfeiffer, echoes this one, only more vehemently, saying, "We are teachers, not therapists" and contending that "What [Deletiner] teaches in this weepy world of confessions and revelations is a fundamentally egocentric sort of self-absorption" (671).

Alton and Pfeiffer are not alone in their uneasiness about the morality of assigning autobiographical writing. Dan Morgan raises similar issues in an article in *College English*, mentioning another paper describing a murder as well as other papers describing students' attitudes which disturb and horrify the instructor. "As a teacher, how do I negotiate my written responses?" he asks, elaborating later, "So . . . do I work to help this student write a *better* paper about how a person should continue staying in a relationship with an abusive crack addict?" (320).

In an essay in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* entitled "The Ethics of Requiring Students to Write about their Personal Lives," Susan Swartzlander, Diana Pace, and Virginia Lee Stamler express grave concerns about this practice of asking students to write personal experience narratives. They argue that students feel pressured to write about painful experiences in order to be eligible for the top grades and that writing about trauma can cause further trauma. They are particularly concerned that "students who have been sexually abused often have difficulty understanding appropriate limits in relationships" and fear that "[s]uch students might respond to a writing assignment by making themselves completely vulnerable or else being extremely distant" (Swartzlander, Pace, and Stamler B1). They go on to propose a chilling theory: "Unscrupulous faculty members could use students' stories as a way of identifying the most vulnerable female students; this is a legitimate concern when we consider that, as some research suggests, about 2 out of 10 women report being harassed by their male professors" (Swartzlander, Pace, and Stamler B2).

These charges are admittedly serious, but not unanswerable. Writing about trauma does *not* cause further trauma. As I explain later in this essay, psychologists have conducted several studies in which student subjects were specifically asked to write about upsetting events—and sometimes about upsetting events which they had not discussed with others. *None* of the studies indicated that students who wrote about traumatic events sustained lasting damage. If psychologists, with all of their training in the workings of the human psyche, do not feel unethical or irresponsible in asking students to write about traumatic events, why should English teachers feel unethical or irresponsible if students do so voluntarily in response to a neutral prompt?

Students make *fewer* mechanical mistakes when writing about trauma than they do when writing about trivial topics (perhaps because they are more engaged?) and typically produce writing samples marked by their “quality, organization, and depth” (Pennebaker, “Self-Expressive Writing” 161), so Alton’s concern that the quality of the writing will suffer when students write about upsetting events seems unfounded.

As for Alton’s other concern, confessions of criminal behavior are rare and psychopaths even rarer. Surely most schools have counselors (and perhaps other resources) for instructors to call upon when faced with such a student and such a paper. Morgan offers a simpler alternative: “I have . . . begun to specify to students that I prefer not to see papers dealing with past or present illegal activities” (322).

And while I, too, am concerned about the possibility of instructors preying upon students who write of sexual abuse, it seems to me that there are better avenues for combating sexual abuse than letting it impinge upon academic freedom and letting our fear of its perpetrators limit the kinds of assignments we can make.

Part of what concerns me about these counterarguments is their blatant paternalism. Perhaps this approach plays better in a traditional university with 18-year-old freshmen, a setting in which administrators and faculty are *in loco parentis*; it seems ludicrous in a community college like mine, where the average age of the students is over 30. It seems to me odd that none of these faculty members had thought to ask students for their opinions.

I put some of these materials (Deletiner’s article, the responses to it, and the Swartzlander, Pace, and Stamler article) in a folder on reserve in the library and offered students extra credit for writing a position paper on this subject. The papers I received were often remarkably thoughtful and serious (if, alas, not as carefully proofread as I might like), and they presented a spectrum of opinions. One student who was asked to write an autobiography in his freshman year in high school confesses that as the son of a sharecropper he was too ashamed to write the paper. A straight A student until then, he abruptly dropped out of high school (Jones 2). Another student scoffs: “Personal papers aren’t evil or even a real threat to anyone’s life” (Ellinger 2). But the majority expressed opinions like these: “The writing subjects, first of all, should be up to the students. . . . Give students the freedom to choose and do not limit their creativity” (Murray 1, 3). Another writes, “Writing about personal situations shouldn’t be required nor should it be prohibited” (Wade 1). Another emphatically states,

"It should definitely be the choice of the writer as to what he or she wants to reveal" (Manzo 2). It is true that students are not always the best judges of what is good for them. But their voices are so insistent that I think it is necessary that we at least listen to them.

Although we may find students' narratives of pain difficult and depressing to read, there is mounting evidence that writing about traumatic events the way so many students do is good for them. Certainly it has proven meaningful to many professional writers: "Creative writers as diverse as D.H. Lawrence, Ernest Hemingway, Sylvia Plath, and William Styron have all remarked upon the mysterious healing power of self-expression. Writing cannot be reduced to therapy but it promotes both self-mastery and self-healing" (Berman 44). It can also be helpful for suicide survivors (relatives and friends of those who take their own lives) and for those who are themselves suicidal (Berman 48). Citing the work of a student as well as the writings of bell hooks, Paulo Freire, and Michael Dorris, Howard Tinberg contends that using writing to understand traumatic experiences is "liberatory" and "promotes healing and renewal" (284, 289).

After working with a community-outreach writing program for adults with multiple sclerosis, Jacqueline Rinaldi has concluded, "Though writing and revising narratives of disability could not restore the crippled bodies of these writers, the insights gleaned from the heuristics of writing did seem to have therapeutic value for those grappling with the darker issues of chronic illness" (831). In his book *Embracing Their Memory: Loss and the Social Psychology of Storytelling*, John H. Harvey writes that stories are "essential elements of effective grieving" (10) and argues for the development of college and high school courses specifically about writing about loss: "I believe that writing, teaching, and research on this topic will help people, including students, grow in their capacity to be empathic with others and give them greater strength in dealing with their own inevitable adversities" (207).

But in addition to these anecdotal and theoretical arguments, there are also quantitative experiments that prove that writing about trauma has lasting effects on the human immune system. James W. Pennebaker, a psychologist at Southern Methodist University, has conducted a series of experiments to identify and measure these effects. In what is perhaps the most startling of these studies, 50 undergraduates were assigned to write about either trivial topics (describing their plans for the day or the shoes they had on, for example) or "the most traumatic and upsetting experiences of your entire life" for 20-minute periods on each of four consecutive days (Pennebaker, Kiecolt-Glaser, and Glaser 240). Students who wrote about traumatic events felt depressed immediately afterwards. Nonetheless, on the fourth day of the experiment, they showed a significantly improved immune response (based on the response of white blood cells to foreign substances). Six weeks later, they had visited the health center significantly less often than had students in the control group. And *three months* after the experiment, they reported feeling significantly happier than the subjects who had written about trivial topics (242).

A similar, preliminary study had suggested that students were particularly likely to experience health benefits when the writing they produced integrated a description of the objective facts of the event with a report of their emotional

response—in other words, when they produced a good personal experience narrative—than when they wrote only about their emotions or produced an objective report of the facts alone (Pennebaker and Beall 278). A follow-up study indicated that subjects who wrote about severe traumas (ones which the writer rated at a 6 or 7 on a 7-point severity scale) reported fewer physical symptoms and visited a doctor or the health center less frequently in the two months after the experiment than did students who wrote about less severe traumas (Greenberg and Stone 80).

At the University of Miami, subjects who disclosed more information about their emotions when asked to write about traumatic events for half an hour had more antibodies to latent Epstein-Barr virus, indicating that their immune systems had better control (Esterling et al. 397). A New Zealand study which followed the same procedure outlined earlier included a new step—the administering of a hepatitis B vaccine—and the experimenters then measured levels of hepatitis B antibodies in the blood of the 40 third-year medical students who took part in the study. Students who wrote about traumatic events had increasingly higher levels of hepatitis B antibodies after each writing session (Petrie et al. 790).

College students are not the only ones who stand to benefit from writing. University employees who wrote about traumatic events for 20 minutes once a week for four weeks had slightly healthier liver enzyme effects and significantly lower absenteeism than those who wrote about trivial topics (Francis and Pennebaker 284-85). In a study of professionals (median age: 54) unemployed after an average of 20 years with their former employers, those who wrote about their trauma for 20 minutes each day for five consecutive days were significantly more likely to have found a full-time job after eight months than were those who had written about neutral topics or not written at all (Spera, Buhrfeind, and Pennebaker 729).

Writing, then, has the power to heal: “‘Healing’ is rarely heard in academic discussions of writing and teaching, perhaps because it has become the province of those credentialized to heal: physicians, psychologists, perhaps ministers—but surely not writing teachers. Don’t we already have enough to do?” (Campbell 247). All too often, therapeutic writing is banished to specialized workshops or community writing groups. “Why can’t people write to heal or to develop spiritually *on campus*?” complains James Moffett (260). Charles Deutsch, director of the Harvard-based National Committee on Higher Education and the Health of Youth, echoes this plea. He concedes that “health remains at the margins in most educational institutions” but insists, “If your college is about learning, then it’s also about health. What is it doing to create an environment that encourages healthy practices among its own students?” (25).

Teaching students about the healing power of writing is consistent with the classical rhetorical tradition: “Since antiquity, rhetoric has aimed, ideally, at the emotional as well as the moral and political health of its audience” (Baumlin and Baumlin, “On the Psychology” 93). In a pair of closely related essays, James S. Baumlin and Tita French Baumlin contend that *mythos*, which they define as including narrative and other forms of literary discourse (“On the Psychology” 108), is—along with *logos*, *pathos*, and *ethos*—a fourth proof of rhetoric. Its aim is

iatrology, which they define as “therapy” (“On the Psychology” 109) or “an uttering of healing words” (“On the Psychology” 93). They point out that Plato and Aristotle recognized this kind of proof, Plato implicitly through his use of the myth of the cave, for example, and Aristotle in the *Poetica* (“Psyche/Logos” 257), and that it is fully consistent with Jungian psychology. They call for modern rhetorical theory to expand its definition of rhetoric to include iatrology and thus recognize the value of “a healing story, a means of participation in the rhythm of the universe, its contrasting joys and pains” (“Psyche/Logos” 257).

Healing is not, of course, our primary responsibility. But it *is* consistent with our commitment to learning: “I know, the university feels it shouldn’t play doctor or priest, dirty its hands with therapy and its mind with religion. But if it has real live students on its hands, its hands are already dirty” (Moffett 261).

Clark writes that a committee at her college has identified a “need to revise the topics for the placement and exit essays because the topics currently used resulted too often in material that was ‘too emotional’ or ‘too personal’ “ (249). Her brief essay is a moving plea that we *not* ask students to “write ‘nice’ “: “By requesting such writing, or designing questions that will produce it, we deepen the chasm students perceive between their own writings and their own lives” (250). “Our students write about violence and substance abuse and broken families because they’re writing about what they have lived and witnessed firsthand, what they care most deeply about,” agrees Morgan (324). Deletiner asks, “In whose interest would it be if I insulated myself from the feelings and the histories in the room?” (815). The majority of students do not want to be “protected” in this way.

Like the committee at Clark’s college, Swartzlander, Pace and Stamler offer suggestions for improved writing assignments; they do not particularly approve of compelling students to share their work, for example, and they recommend future-oriented writing assignments about goals and dreams rather than ones about past experiences (B2). But many of my students’ goals are common and prosaic (wanting to pass English, for example, or get a date for Saturday night) or, given students’ current situations, necessarily vague (hoping someday to marry and have children or start a business, for example). Without extensive development (not to mention fortunetelling skills), these topics seem unlikely to interest others. And peer review of papers is an established and valued practice in most college composition courses.

It would perhaps be better to ask students to write about a significant experience and then spell out that it can be either positive or negative. After all, students can disclose painful experiences even in response to “safe, ‘objective’ prompts” about literature (Valentino 274). We should warn students that they will be asked to show their writing to others so that they can choose topics they feel comfortable disclosing to their classmates. Students should know that they can get an “A” writing about *either* traumatic or non-traumatic topics—and that they can get an “F” regardless of the nature of their topic, as well. No one should be *required* to write about traumatic or intensely personal experiences.

In her article “Responding When a Life Depends on It: What to Write in the Margins When Students Self-Disclose,” Marilyn J. Valentino has created sensible, practical guidelines teachers can use to determine how to respond appropriately to students’ anguished self-disclosures. Beforehand, writing faculty should

learn what professional support is available on campus and perhaps in the local community as well, indicate in course syllabi the phone numbers and locations of campus support services, and offer alternatives so that students are not compelled to share their most personal journal entries, for example (278). When reading papers in which students self-disclose, Valentino suggests that faculty “[a]sk questions before rescuing” and notes that sometimes students simply want to express themselves and don’t require assistance (278). For those that do, she suggests that faculty consult appropriate professionals—mental health counselors at the college, for example, or a supervisor—for objective advice. She advocates that faculty members “[k]eep a professional distance and set limits,” cautioning against feeling a need to solve a student’s problems, and recommends adhering to a contract for schoolwork from those in the midst of traumas during the school term (279–80).

Berman describes how to respond responsibly to papers about suicidal impulses as well as those written by grieving suicide survivors. He recommends that teachers respond to discussions of suicide “as empathically and nonjudgmentally as possible” and emphasizes that teachers should notify a campus counselor whenever a student discloses “the possibility of an impending suicide attempt” (49).

In his anguished discussion of how to handle papers in which students disclose embarrassingly personal experiences, Morgan advocates emphasizing audience and purpose “more thoroughly than ever before” (322), encouraging and sometimes insisting that students revise, and selecting assigned readings that would come closer to the kinds of writing our students typically produce: “The students I work with do not write about multicultural encounters or issues of ethnicity; nor do they relate much to shooting elephants or going to the lake . . .” (323). Models that more closely “[reflect] the actual concerns in their lives” would perhaps enable students to produce better papers on personal topics, he believes. Collecting samples of strong and weak essays about painful experiences from past students and allowing students to critique those before writing their own might also be helpful; students find it easier to be critical about trauma narratives when they know the trauma survivor is not in the same room as they do so.

Assistant professor of religious and pastoral studies Alan DeCourcy suggests an ingenious alternative essay assignment that could perhaps be adapted for use in composition courses:

In one course I teach, students write a three-part paper, which begins with reflection on a personal experience of suffering. The word ‘reflection’ is emphasized to stress that they must not simply describe it; they must reflect on it, using a process that they have learned in the course. By stipulating that they will not be asked to share this first part of the paper in class, the importance of privacy is stressed, and the freedom to write what they want is maximized. The other parts of the paper involve taking a second experience of suffering, as presented in a novel or literary memoir, and processing it as they have processed their own; and, finally, reflecting on both experiences from the point of view of a contemporary theolo-

gian, whom they then critique. The academic integrity of this exercise lies in the degree to which it helps students attend to, but also move beyond, the personal, toward deeper levels of thinking, reflecting, comparing, and analyzing. (B12)

DeCourcy's assumption that writing about others is somehow deeper than writing about the self is arguable, however.

"In my day, none of this was covered in graduate school symposia," Morgan writes, a little plaintively (323). He suggests that Valentino's article "should be required reading in teacher-training programs" (319). Making a similar case that future writing teachers need to know more about "the personal, therapeutic, and affective aspects of our field," which she calls "the least talked about and least researched areas of writing," Wendy Bishop outlines the first steps writing program administrators can take to better prepare teachers they train and supervise, arguing, "We need to include these topics and this training in graduate curricula because we need to listen to and respect the affective needs of our writing students and our selves" (np).

Writing about painful experiences is too valuable—mentally, emotionally, and physically—to abandon. For readers, a well written essay about a traumatic personal experience can help us find meaning in human suffering and enrich our understanding of the human condition. Ideally, it can provide us with an aesthetic experience and help us better understand the pain we experience in our own lives. For the writer, it is an act of courage and responsibility, a way of trying to understand and come to terms with one's past. Writing about pain literally has the power to heal, and we should not discourage our students from engaging in such writing projects. The resulting writings are often deeply moving pieces in which the student writers are fully engaged, rather than the half-hearted, dashed-off responses they all too often produce to impersonal prompts.

In an article entitled "When the Classroom Becomes a Confessional," Lucia Perillo is clearly ambivalent about how teachers should handle confessional writings, but she ultimately contends that, if teachers can overcome students' automatic, Oprah-inspired "public support for confession," students *can* learn from their classmates' writings about pain: "The writing lesson offered here is that if students can learn to distance themselves enough to make genuine art even out of life's most horrific subjects, then they are cultivating an artistic rigor that they can bring to all of their work" (A56). Her comment reminds me of Berman's essay in which he attributes his preoccupation with fictional suicides to his grief over the suicide of a beloved professor and friend more than 25 years earlier.

Her comment also reminds me of my own resume, which is haunted by papers about trauma—especially the traumas of girls and young women. I have written papers about a 16-year-old girl who falls asleep for nearly 30 years, a girl with an eating disorder, a young woman's date rape, a woman traumatized by her fiancé's sudden death in World War I, a young woman who is sexually abused by her father, women haunted by the voices of internalized demons, and an orphaned young English girl abruptly sent to an emotionally remote uncle whom she has never seen.

I suspect I am practicing what Lenore Terr calls "displacement"—"the trans-

position from one object to another” (210). In her informal analysis of mystery writer James Ellroy, she suggests that in his fascination with the famous unsolved Black Dahlia murder, he has displaced memories of his own mother’s murder when he was 10:

“If I suggested to you that it was too threatening to you as a child to stay obsessed with memories of your mother, so you picked the Black Dahlia instead, what would you say?” I asked.

Ellroy nodded and paused a moment before he spoke. “I’d say you were right,” he answered. (212)

I think I am displacing my father’s death when I was 13—only instead of focusing on dying fathers I am fascinated by the traumatized girl I once was (and probably somehow still am):

Of late, analysts are calling such a move “working through in the metaphor,” a displacement which allows the person to move the conflict from his [or her] current life into an arena which takes on a metaphorical function. Using the “distance of the metaphor,” he [or she] works through the conflict unconsciously without needing to confront in a direct, cognitive way the issues in his [or her] real life. (Allister 98)

I suspect I lack the courage my students have, the courage to write about my traumas without disguise. But all of us are trying, I suppose, to distance ourselves from our pain. Berman calls this idea of writing to save ourselves “writing as rescue” (44).

If we find writing about pain (however obliquely) useful, healing, or otherwise meaningful ourselves (and I suspect that many of us do), why would we deny such writing a place in the classroom, the only place where many of our students will be encouraged to write about their own experiences? We should nevertheless keep asking our students and ourselves the important questions. As Deletiner asks, “Do *I* elicit these personal revelations from students? Or is it something about the process of writing itself that unleashes the anger and the pain that appear in my students’ writing, as well as my own? Writing about our lives, writing in a personal voice, enables us to communicate, but not necessarily with one another. Writing lets us talk to ourselves” (814). ☹

Works Cited

- Allister, Mark. "Writing Documentary as a Therapeutic Act." *Literary Non-Fiction: Theory, Criticism, Pedagogy*. Ed. Chris Anderson. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1989. 93-106.
- Alton, Cheryl. Letter. *College English* 55 (1993): 666-69.
- Baumlin, James S. and Tita French Baumlin. "On the Psychology of the *Pisteis*: Mapping the Terrains of Mind and Rhetoric." *Ethos: New Essays in Rhetorical and Critical Theory*. Ed. James S. Baumlin and Tita French Baumlin. Dallas: Southern Methodist UP, 1994. 91-112.
- . "Psyche/Logos: Mapping the Terrains of Mind and Rhetoric." *College English* 51 (1989): 245-61.
- Berman, Jeffrey. "'The Grief That Does Not Speak': Suicide, Mourning, and Psychoanalytic Teaching." *Self-Analysis in Literary Study*. NY: New York UP, 1994. 35-54.
- Bishop, Wendy. "Writing Is/And Therapy: Raising Questions about Writing Classrooms and Writing Program Administration." *Journal of Advanced Composition* 13 (1993): 503-16. Rpt. *JAC Online*. Online. <http://nosferatu.cas.usf.edu/JAC/132/bishop.html>.
- Campbell, JoAnn. "Writing to Heal: Using Meditation in the Writing Process." *College Composition and Communication* 45 (1994): 246-51.
- Clark, Ann L. "What My Students Know is Hurting Them." *Teaching English in the Two-Year College* 18 (1991): 248-50.
- DeCourcy, Alan. Letter. *The Chronicle of Higher Education* 16 Jan. 1998: B12.
- Deletiner, Carole. "Crossing Lines." *College English* 54 (1992): 809-17.
- Deutsch, Charles. "Connecting Health and Learning." *Community College Journal* 67.3 (1996-97): 22-25.
- Ellinger, Shelly. "Personal Papers." Unpublished essay, 1994.
- Esterling, Brian A., Michael H. Antoni, Mahendra Kumar, and Neil Schneiderman. "Emotional Repression, Stress Disclosure Responses, and Epstein-Barr Viral Capsid Antigen Titers." *Psychosomatic Medicine* 52 (1990): 397-410.
- Francis, Martha E., and James W. Pennebaker. "Putting Stress into Words: The Impact of Writing on Physiological, Absentee, and Self-Reported Emotional Well-Being Measures." *American Journal of Health Promotion* 6.4 (1992): 280-87.
- Greenberg, Melanie A., and Arthur A. Stone. "Writing about Disclosed Versus Undisclosed Traumas: Immediate and Long-term Effects on Mood and Health." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 63 (1992): 75-84.
- Harvey, John H. *Embracing Their Memory: Loss and the Social Psychology of Storytelling*. Needham Heights, Massachusetts: Allyn & Bacon, 1996.
- Hemingway, Ernest. "Fathers and Sons." *The Short Stories*. NY: Macmillan, 1986.
- Jones, Thurman. "Lee." Unpublished essay, 1994.
- Manzo, Jody. "Extra Credit." Unpublished essay, 1994.
- Moffett, James. "Responses." *College English* 45 (1994): 258-61.
- Morgan, Dan. "Ethical Issues Raised by Students' Personal Writing." *College English* 60 (1998): 318-25.
- Murray, Michele R. "Personal Writings." Unpublished essay, 1994.

- Pennebaker, J.W. *Opening Up: The Healing Power of Confiding in Others*. NY: Morrow, 1990.
- . "Self-Expressive Writing: Implications for Health, Education, and Welfare." *Nothing Begins with N: New Investigations of Freewriting*. Ed. Pat Belanoff, Peter Elbow, and Sheryl I Fontaine. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University P, 1991. 157-70.
- Pennebaker, James W., Janice Kiecolt-Glaser, and Ronald Glaser. "Disclosure of Traumas and Immune Function: Health Implications for Psychotherapy." *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology* 56 (1988): 239-45.
- Pennebaker, James W., and Sandra Klihr Beall. "Confronting a Traumatic Event: Toward an Understanding of Inhibition and Disease." *Journal of Abnormal Psychology* 95 (1986): 274-81.
- Perillo, Lucia. "When the Classroom Becomes a Confessional." *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (28 Nov. 1997): A56.
- Petrie, Keith J., Roger J. Booth, James W. Pennebaker, Kathryn P. Davison, and Mark G. Thomas. "Disclosure of Trauma and Immune Response to a Hepatitis B Vaccination Program." *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology* 63 (1995): 787-92.
- Pfeiffer, Kathleen. Letter. *College English* 55 (1993): 669-71.
- Rinaldi, Jacqueline. "Rhetoric and Healing: Revising Narratives about Disability." *College English* 58 (1996): 820-34.
- Spera, Stefanie E., Eric D. Buhrfeind, and James W. Pennebaker. "Expressive Writing and Coping with Job Loss." *Academy of Management Journal* 37 (1994): 722-33.
- Swartzlander, Susan, Diana Pace, and Virginia Lee Stamler. "The Ethics of Requiring Students to Write about their Personal Lives." *The Chronicle of Higher Education* 17 Feb. 1993: B1-B2.
- Terr, Lenore. *Unchained Memories: True Stories of Traumatic Memories, Lost and Found*. NY: BasicBooks, 1994.
- Tinberg, Howard. "Theory as Healing." *Teaching English in the Two-Year College* 24 (1997): 282-90.
- Valentino, Marilyn J. "Responding When a Life Depends on It: What to Write in the Margins When Students Self-Disclose." *Teaching English in the Two-Year College* 23 (1996): 274-83.
- Wade, Ryan. "ENG 111." Unpublished essay, 1994.

Writer Motivation: Beyond the Intrinsic/ Extrinsic Dichotomy

Bradford A. Barry

Perhaps two of the most frustrating questions for writing teachers to hear are "So what do I have to do to get an 'A' on this paper?" and "Can't you just tell me what you want?" As frustrating as these questions are, they are valid questions for students who lack intrinsic motivation when attempting to complete the assignments we give them. Yet so often these questions seem to be *invalid* questions because they miss more important elements of education in composition classrooms: to be immersed in writing tasks which teach students about themselves and the world around them, all the while enabling them to think critically and write clearly. For many teachers, our assignments elicit respect, effort, stress and sometimes even intimidation and frustration. Yet how often are these reactions accompanied by (or overshadowed by) enthusiasm and interest in meeting the rhetorical challenges we set before our students?

The primary goal of this article is to articulate and develop a much needed theory of writer motivation which can be applied to a broad range of composition courses. In the process of doing this, I will offer an expanded vocabulary with which to name and understand the many factors that contribute to motivating and demotivating students' desires to learn and write. How, I will ask, can we nurture in our students *rhetorically-based intrinsic motivations*? I hope to begin resolving the tension between the fact that essays are indeed required by teachers and the fact that those teachers desire for students to momentarily forget about such mandates in order to become immersed in the excitement and challenge of writing. Ultimately this essay is for teachers who want their students to be more concerned with audience than with grades, more concerned with communicating ideas than perfecting commas, more concerned with the transformation of ideas than the propagation of ideas.

Although I will draw extensively upon the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, my primary purpose is to show that such a distinction is an inadequate dichotomy from which to view writer motivation. While intrinsic motivations are certainly beneficial to learning, we all know that students can be thoroughly immersed in writing tasks (because of intrinsic interest in a topic), but can have little sense of rhetorical purpose or audience and thus fail miserably at the task of *communicating*. While the development of intrinsic motivation is an important goal for teachers, we must consider that a student writer can be very

Brad Barry is an assistant professor of composition in the English Department at Dixie College in St. George, Utah. He can be reached at barry@cc.dixie.edu or from within his Web site at <http://litc.dixie.edu/barry/>

much intrinsically motivated—yet altogether uninterested in whether or not rhetorical, communicative goals are being met. Imagine, for example, a student writer who is thoroughly immersed in the process of expressing his or her ideas, as well as transforming those ideas through writing and revising. Such a writer might be in the thick of a meaningful process of self-revelation. This, most of us would agree, is good for any writer. Yet a comprehensive theory of writer motivation must extend beyond student-centered, intrinsic motivations in order to account for writing as a *communicative* act. We must go beyond the realm of intrinsic in order to develop a theory of rhetorical motivation that will help teachers improve the quality of student texts.

Thus, rather than replacing notions of intrinsic motivation, I will simply fuse them with notions of rhetorical communication. Ideally, rhetorically-based intrinsic motivation consists of internal *and* rhetorical motivations, such as a writer's desire to:

- be effective in the context of classrooms
- express thoughts, feelings and perspectives
- see ideas transformed during the writing process
- connect with and/or persuade an audience
- achieve *self-defined* goals set (or agreed upon) by the individual writer (or group of writers).

I will preview two motivational theories from the field of cognitive psychology: self-determination and autotelic flow. As Donald Keesey notes in *Contexts for Criticism*, "Disciplines are ways of seeing, not things to be seen. . ." (267). I will thus utilize cognitive psychology as a lens through which to examine rhetorical purpose and motivation. I will then propose and develop a new theory of writer motivation called *rhetrinsic introphy*. Rhetrinsic motivation, I will argue, synthesizes self-determination and flow theories from the field of cognitive psychology with predominant theories and practices of rhetorical purpose. *Introphy* is a word I developed from the scientific term *extrophy*, meaning the process of externalization. Introphy is akin to the word *internalization*, yet it denotes a circular process rather than a strict linear process of movement from external states to internal ones. *Internalization* implies that motivational transformation can eventually be finalized in an intrinsic state. Alternatively, *introphy* implies a continuous process of negotiation between intrinsic states and extrinsic ones, never entirely factoring extrinsic out of the motivation equation. It exists when writers become both internally *and* externally motivated. Introphy represents more of a protean process existing among many shades of internal and external, at times capable of reversing its direction in order to allow for an emphasis of external over internal. Finally, I will examine this notion of rhetrinsic motivation through the pedagogical lens of publishing-oriented pedagogies.

Motivation Theory from Cognitive Psychology

In *Intrinsic Motivation and Self-Determination in Human Behavior*, Edward Deci and Richard Ryan argue that self-determination is an essential ingredient to intrinsic motivation. They write that even "a modest opportunity to be self-determining in relation to one's learning appears to enhance intrinsic motivation and

facilitate learning" (257). In other words, the more students are able to determine for themselves their own challenges, tasks, goals and outcomes within the entire contexts of their educations, the more intrinsically motivated they will be.

What specifically are the components of self-determination? People are naturally inclined, they write, to succeed and to be competent in their endeavors. Deci and Ryan draw upon White's effectance theory, saying that "the feeling of effectance that follows from competent interactions with the environment is the reward . . . and [it] can sustain behaviors independent of any drive based reinforcements" (5). In terms of pedagogy, this is crucial because it implies that students come to classes already, always motivated to succeed in one manner or another.

In addition, Deci and Ryan argue that extrinsically motivated people tend to choose easier tasks while intrinsically motivated people tend to choose tasks which challenge them because the intrinsic rewards increase when success is achieved (27, 245). For example, in order to save time and energy, an extrinsically motivated student might choose to write a paper on the same topic he or she has explored in past courses. Yet an intrinsically motivated writer might instead choose an unfamiliar topic because he or she wants to learn more about it, thus risking the loss of time and energy in order to grow as a thinker, researcher, and writer. Such conceptions of intrinsic motivation are still based upon rewards, but not in the traditional behavioristic sense. Rather, the rewards are created and discovered by the individual rather than provided by an outside person attempting to intervene in the motivational process. In other words, the extrinsically motivated student who simply rehashes an old paper may only learn if a teacher requires him or her to re-see the topic from a new angle, thus imposing the external "reward" of intellectual growth on that writer. Yet the intrinsically motivated student would, in essence, seek out and create intellectual rewards by nature of his or her enthusiasm about learning something new—even if she or he were not required by the teacher to write or speak about a new topic. As Deci and Ryan note, intrinsic motivation is "persistence in the absence of immediate extrinsic contingencies" (39).

Throughout their text they also make a central distinction between controlling and informational learning structures, arguing that the more informational an environment is, the more it will allow one to be self-determining and thus intrinsically motivated. While controlling environments over-prescribe and over-define people's courses of action, informational environments give people more freedom, all the while providing feedback on how to better achieve their goals. Informational environments give students the greatest opportunity for self-determination, as opposed to encouraging in them compliant, pawn-like behavior (249). Consider teachers who are having students write movie reviews in order that they might learn about evaluation and critique. If such teachers were operating within a controlling structure, they might require all students to write about the same film, perhaps even determining for students the specific criteria to utilize in their evaluations. Yet, if the teachers desired to create a more informational learning structure, she could allow students to each write about a movie of their own choosing. In order to provide informational feedback which would help students achieve their goals, teachers could help them see how different genres call for different

criteria and how some movies might be more appropriate to a first-time movie review.

Ultimately, informational environments provide and encourage multiple and flexible courses of action rather than strict, predictable behavior. Deci and Ryan note that informational, self-determining environments clarify for individuals what the options are for increasing effectiveness in meeting flexible goals (38). In accord with the notion of *introphy*, informational environments acknowledge the flexibility of (and interchange between) internally and externally constructed goals, unlike controlling environments which tend to focus on externally constructed criteria and requirements. In other words, the teacher who allows students to write on movies of their own choosing acknowledges that students' *extrinsic* goals of earning a strong grade can flexibly interchange with their *intrinsic* goals of learning more about a movie—which can also flexibly interchange with their *rhetorical* goals of persuading readers to see their favorite movie. A teacher who requires all students to write about a single movie risks having them write with only the extrinsic motivation of earning a strong grade.

Each of the above issues—self-determination, effectance, and controlling and informational structures—are of extreme importance to motivational theory and pedagogy. So many of our students are young adults attempting for the first time to exercise significantly greater responsibility and control over their lives. Many are no longer surrounded by the behavioristic environments of mandatory public high schools and parents who seek to make their choices along with them (if not for them). Their everyday college experiences, academic and otherwise, entail the challenge of self-determination and most desire immensely to be effective in college's relatively new and free environment. The structures that we as teachers provide for them—structures which span the informational-controlling continuum—play central roles in their abilities to achieve their goals of academic and personal self-determination.

Much of what Deci and Ryan propose correlates with the task immersion studies of Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi. In his article, "Literacy and Intrinsic Motivation," he writes that the primary impediments to learning are not cognitive in nature but rather motivational. He distinguishes between extrinsic motivations (which he considers to be such factors as money, grades, and degrees) and intrinsic, autotelic motivations that are rewarding in and of themselves. He acknowledges that, while extrinsic, behavioristic motivation can greatly influence students' desires to learn, the *quality* of that learning does not necessarily increase. Only intrinsic motivation can create an atmosphere where students learn for the sake of learning, and thus carry with them skills which extend beyond their initial extrinsic reasons for study. Csikszentmihalyi argues that, rather than trying to improve the teaching of our various disciplines (which implies a teacher-centered approach to pedagogical problem solving), we instead ought to focus on better stimulating students' desires to learn (a more student-centered approach to pedagogical problem solving).

Csikszentmihalyi also explores some of the "universal characteristics associated with enjoyable activities" (131). He views enjoyable activities in terms of meaningful "flow" experiences. In short, these are optimal experiences in which

a participant in an activity becomes so immersed in that activity that she or he rises above the constraints inherent in that activity. An example might be a student who becomes so immersed in persuading an audience that she or he momentarily forgets that the writing process is mandated by a teacher who will eventually grade her or his persuasive essay. During most flow experiences, there exists what Csikszentmihalyi calls *optimal challenge*, the correct matching of challenges with skills (131). In the window of optimal challenge, participants are neither overwhelmed or bored by the flow activity. A fine and delicate balance must be created and maintained in order to constantly exist just beyond comfort zones and into the realm of optimal challenge. In connection with this, Deci and Ryan tell us that, in order for individuals to be spurred by effectance motivation, they must constantly be learning new skills:

[T]he reward for competency-motivated behavior is the inherent feeling of competence that results from effective functioning, yet the motivation is such that the feelings seem to result only when there is some continual stretching of one's capacities. With each new acquisition of a skill there is some room for playful exercising of that skill, but boredom soon sets in when one merely exercises the same skill over and over. (27)

This is perhaps the most difficult factor for writing teachers. We must seek to understand the capacities of each *individual* student within a class and how we can best enable them to reside in what is often a small window of optimal challenge.

Reed Larson's essay, "Flow and Writing," recounts the findings of his study which examined the role of Csikszentmihalyi's ideas in the writing process. Poorer writers, he notes, "wrestled with expectations for their papers that were greater than they could meet" (154). They therefore lost control of the writing process and developed "worry, frustration and internal anger." Their "psychic energy," Reed writes, "was wasted in trying to order. . . feelings rather than. . . thoughts" (157). Skilled writers, on the other hand, closely monitored their energy levels and adjusted challenges accordingly. Larson says of one skilled writer, "he seems to have been deliberately adjusting the challenges to his abilities. By moving cautiously through hard parts, by stopping when overexcited, and by monitoring his energy, he regulated the balance of challenges and skills, creating conditions for enjoyable involvement" (165). Unfortunately, Larson seems to posit good writing experiences as pain free (166), which is contrary to the findings of both Linda Bannister and Alice Brand who each acknowledge that there are *positive* anxieties in writing processes.

As noted earlier, Deci and Ryan elaborate upon White's effectance theory, which states that people naturally desire to excel within any given personal and social framework by way of competent interactions. Deci and Ryan argue that feelings of reward and satisfaction can be enough, in and of themselves, to continue intrinsically motivating people in their pursuits (5). Often with students—indeed, with any writers—the simple yet satisfying feeling of a job well done is enough to internalize those writing activities and continue in them,

even in the absence of any external, drive-based reinforcements. As Deci and Ryan explain it:

The development of competencies—walking, talking, manipulating abstract symbols, or formulating a story—are in part maturational, according to White, yet they are in large measure learned, and the learning is motivated. The need for competence provides the energy for this learning. Effectance motivation is broader in its scope than learning, however. Whereas the biological aim of competence motivation is survival of the organism, the experiential aim is the feeling of competence that results from effective action. (27)

Unfortunately, a central problem teachers have is that some students do not necessarily want to be competent; they simply want to get credit for a course or an assignment in order to receive a grade which will allow them to advance to yet other courses. Fortunately, this does not describe the majority of college students because most who don't like writing or speaking soon realize after a few weeks into a course that they don't want to spend the entire term just "getting by" with a bare minimum of work. Instead, most want to at least become minimally effective, regardless of how difficult it might be to attain that effectiveness. Whether or not students *enjoy* that process is usually secondary to their desire for effectiveness. Even some students who disdain writing are strongly driven by their desire to be competent, effective human beings in college's many academic contexts.

It is important to note that we can over-prescribe for our students the rhetorical contexts in which they write and speak. Writing teachers, for example, can controllingly tell students to "Write to the director of university planning in order to argue for better commuter parking" or "Show portfolio readers that you are proficient in grammar, organization and development." Such writing prompts imply stone notions of rhetorical purpose and exigence which can sap writer motivation. Deci and Ryan's notions of informational learning structures suggest that we instead provide students with the information they need in order to create their own rhetorical contexts. Rather than stone notions of rhetorical purpose, we can instead acknowledge clay and protean notions with comments such as, "So you want to write about the parking problem on campus? Then together we will find out who is involved in that issue, what their stances are on the matter and how you can best communicate your position to them (whatever it turns out to be after you've researched the issue and reflected on it)." We can acknowledge and encourage their self-determination in the learning process with comments such as, "So you want to impress portfolio readers? Together we'll research who these readers are, what they are interested in, how those interests can mesh with yours, and what you can do to best insure a passing grade." Here, the impetus for learning and communicating becomes more centered around matters of rhetorical audience and purpose.

As students operate within such informational learning structures, their increased opportunity to define their own rhetorical contexts will create a *rhetorically-based intrinsic motivation*. The more students can define rhetorical con-

texts and the more they can see that they have significant control of those boundaries then the more they will understand those contexts and the more likely they will feel effective as they operate within them. As the above classroom scenarios convey, informational learning structures can encourage protean notions of rhetorical purpose in writing classrooms.

Rhetrinsic Introphy: Toward a New Theory of Writer Motivation

While Deci and Ryan, as well as Csikszentmihalyi, seek to give a complex view of human motivation, there is nonetheless a trend in motivational texts and conversations to view dichotomously the matter as either intrinsic or extrinsic. Yet extrinsic motivations (such as grades, teachers, and parents) cannot always be neatly categorized as external and detrimental to learning processes. Nor can intrinsic motivations (such as desires to learn and communicate) always be categorized as solely internal. Notions of extrinsic and intrinsic cannot be so neatly separated and distinguished from one another. Such dichotomies are far too simplistic to accurately represent the complex phenomena of writing, speaking and human motivation. And while intrinsic motivations in writing can safely be considered more beneficial than extrinsic, there is nonetheless a need for a more comprehensive view of writer motivation—one which acknowledges both the legitimacy of external motivations, as well as the interdependent relationship between intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. Indeed, most rhetorical motivations are a combination of extrinsic *and* intrinsic motivations which skilled writers continually negotiate and transform.

The distinction between internal and external can prove to be a useful starting point from which to explore writer motivation. It enables us to ask questions that are, perhaps, all too familiar to us: What are our students' motivations for taking part in the tasks we assign them? To earn an A and maintain their GPAs? To pass a semester's end evaluation and not have to retake our class? Or are our students' reasons for writing to please us, the teachers? Or perhaps their exigencies revolve around parental expectations? At first glance, each of these motivations may appear to be extrinsic in nature. They are external factors which can impose themselves on students' reasons for taking part in a given writing assignment. Yet, more accurately speaking, they are *arhetorical* motivations—having little or nothing to do with writing or communicating.

For some students, grades always remain in the external realm. Perhaps their desire for an A stems from a desire to please parents. Yet other students might have more of a personal investment in grades. Perhaps their desire for an A stems from an individual goal to reach a certain GPA. Or perhaps it stems from a strong inner desire to prove to someone that they can indeed earn an A. In such a scenario, is the desire for an A only external in nature? While it may be arhetorical, it may very well be an internal desire and goal. In this latter scenario, grades can and do serve as internal motivations (as opposed to a student whose parents' goal is for the student to earn an A). While much of this has to do with the tension between wanting to please others and wanting to be self-determining, the point I want to highlight is that *it is beneficial to view external and internal motivations as always working in conjunction with one another.*

Because external and internal motivations are always in flux, I have developed the concept of *motivational introphy*, a process by which individuals transform external motivations into internal ones. As Csikszentmihalyi notes, people who continually experience autotelic flow don't seem to relegate extrinsic motivations so much as they *transform* them into more intrinsic states. Recall the previous scenario of an instructor who controllingly requires all students in a writing course to compose a review of the teacher's favorite movie, all the while expecting students to use predetermined and fixed criteria. Students who experience motivational introphy might be those who are able to momentarily adopt the teacher's enthusiasm for the movie (the extrinsic motivation) in order to find elements of the movie which they genuinely do admire (intrinsic factors). Students might then be motivated by a desire to write about elements of the movie which the teacher may not have previously noticed (a rhetorically-based, intrinsic motivation). Still another way students might transform the extrinsic demand is by using the required criteria to argue against the teacher's favorite movie rather than for it. Students might be able to transform the controlling, external motivation—the teacher's passion for the movie and the mandate to write about it with predetermined criteria—into the more meaningful rhetorically-based, intrinsic motivation of showing the teacher why a particular movie is flawed.

While this notion of transformation is important to motivational introphy, it is not necessary. Introphy also takes place when external reasons become overshadowed and subsumed by internal ones—retaining their original nature, yet simply less significant in relation to internal motivations. For example, if a given student needs to earn a B in a class to stay on a swim team, then that arhetorical motivation will be foregrounded when she or he writes about topics of little interest. When that same student suddenly writes about a topic she or he genuinely cares about, the need for a B does not disappear; it is instead subsumed and overshadowed by the writer's genuine immersion in the topic.

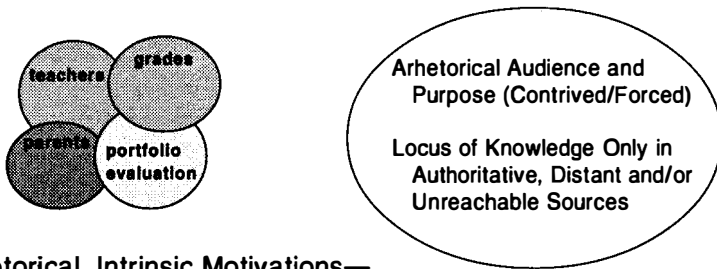
Introphy implies a continuous process of negotiation between intrinsic states and extrinsic ones, never entirely factoring extrinsic out of the motivation equation. Introphy exists when writers develop an agency in regard to both internal *and* external motivators.

Ideally, external motivations such as grades and the desire to please a teacher can be overshadowed by *rhetorical* motivations. Rhetorical motivations might, for example, be any of the following: the desire to communicate clearly and effectively with an audience, the desire to move a group of readers to action or to a new perspective, the desire to understand sources in order to represent accurately and expand upon someone else's ideas, or the desire to problematize constructively or to empathize with another's ideas. Such rhetorical motivations are most often very much *intrinsic* in nature. They reflect the intentions of a learner who has taken a kind of "ownership" of his or her learning process in the writing classroom. Although the focus of each of these motives involve audiences and sources that are in many ways external to individual students, the desire to operate effectively as constructive members of a discourse community is very much an internal desire. Thus, to represent rhetorically-based intrinsic motivations, I propose the theory of *rhetrinsic* motivation. Rhetrinsic motivations can increase as teachers allow for protean models of rhetorical purpose to flour-

ish in their writing pedagogies. Such protean models of purpose can encourage a greater level of self-determination in the formation of students' rhetorical contexts.

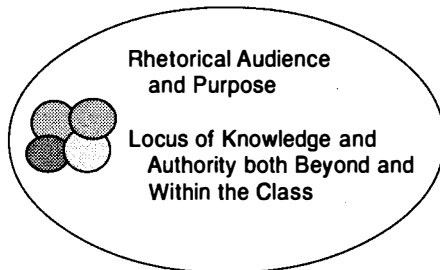
Certainly our students will always, to one extent or another, care about grades, GPAs and teachers' opinions of their texts—it would be unreasonable to expect any student *not* to care about these factors. But such factors are secondary to students who write because they have messages they care about and want to communicate effectively to an audience. Figure 1 illustrates the dynamic relationship I'm positing. The top half shows the relationship that intrinsic motivations have with students who write within contrived, arhetorical contexts. Both sides of the top half of this figure—the motivations on the left and the arhetorical context on the right—are listed above an *intrinsic* label. This is because even the most external exigencies can have internal elements. If the reason for doing well on an essay is because a parent says to get an A (external exigence), then the *internal* factor is that the student has a genuine desire to please (or accommodate) the parent. If the reason for doing well on an essay is to please a portfolio committee (external exigence), then the *internal* factor is that the student genuinely wants to be perceived by the committee as a passing student ready to exit the class.

Figure 1. Rhetrinsic Introphy: A Revision of the Intrinsic/Extrinsic Binary



—Arhetorical, Intrinsic Motivations—

Motivations are primarily tied to students' concerns with the arhetorical purposes on the left. Although the motivations on the left appear to be extrinsic, students may genuinely care about such matters, and they can therefore be considered internal in nature.



—Rhetrinsic Motivations—

Motivations are primarily tied to students' concerns with rhetorical matters. Although students now have audience and purpose as their primary concerns, "external" factors do not disappear; they are instead diminished and subsumed.

Both of these scenarios give exigencies that, on the surface, may seem external in nature; yet in reality, they can be very much internal to the student. Hence, the top half of the figure shows arhetorical, intrinsic motivations—or student-based intrinsic motivations. A transition from the top half of the figure to the lower half (Rhetrinsic Motivations) represents the process of rhetrinsic introphy. In this lower portion of the model, incentives stem primarily from the rhetorical context itself, all the while shrinking, relegating, and even subsuming some of the more “external” exigencies. If we view the Intrinsic-Rhetrinsic model conveyed by this figure as a continuum of processes rather than as a binary, it becomes a clear improvement over common internal-external dichotomies. It is also an improvement because it integrates *rhetorical* factors into the motivation equation.

Motivation Theory and Composition Pedagogy

Many scholars and teachers in the field of composition have examined ways in which we can increase student involvement in writing tasks by increasing the authenticity and relevance of the contexts in which they learn. Publishing-oriented pedagogies provide rich ground from which to view rhetrinsic motivation because they attempt to provide students with writing exigencies primarily through rhetorical purpose and audience. In his essay, “Why We Need to Publish Student Writers,” Paul Sladky writes that the effects of process-oriented publishing pedagogies are quite specific: “Writing for publication establishes a genuine purpose for the student writers by establishing a genuine audience to write for. Consequently, the outcomes are tangible: publication motivates students to write, creates a strong sense of self-validation for students as writers, and contributes importantly to the improved quality of their written texts” (3). In essence, publishing pedagogies attempt to develop rhetrinsic motivations for student writers by foregrounding matters of audience, purpose and even self-determination.

An example of a publishing-based pedagogy from which we can see an implicit motivation theory is Wilma Clark’s “Writing for Publication in an Advanced Course for Undergraduates.” In this article, Clark recounts the experiences of having her advanced students write for an editor of a Sunday supplement journal. A primary goal of the course was to actually publish an essay in the newspaper’s magazine insert. A month before the end of the course, she sent to the editor each of her students’ essays (which were geared specifically towards the insert). The editor then came to their class to respond to the essays and discuss how they were (and were not) applicable to the journal’s readership. Clark writes:

Knowing that an editor would actually read and discuss the papers with us added an exciting dimension to this class. It changed *writing for publication* from an abstract, school-time exercise to a concrete real-world challenge. It energized the class, making students and instructor alike stretch and grow to a degree that would not ordinarily occur in a school-contained writing course. (129-30)

Here the impetus for writing is a rhetorical purpose and audience which extends

beyond the structure of a single classroom. And, within this impetus, we can see the process of rhetrinsic introphy at work. Specifically, Clark's students learned how to create angles that would cause readers to want (if not need) to read their essays. They learned how to delay closure in order to globally revise towards rhetorically captivating angles. A key element with such a publishing-based pedagogy, Clark notes, is the contact with a real-world editor, and that *even rejection from an editor* can help students grow in their understanding of audience awareness (135-6).

Sladky insightfully notes that, in the end, "the principle behind publishing student writers is far more important than the form [the] publication takes" (8). What exactly are the principles implied in publishing-oriented pedagogies? For one, they help students along in the process of shifting from the status of pupil to writer (5). Such a shift in status reflects a shift towards rhetrinsic motivations as well: from one concerned with classroom matters to one concerned with rhetorical matters. Publishing pedagogies can enable students to see themselves as communicators in truly rhetorical contexts. They also provide, as Sladky says, "a rhetorically situated model of composing where students engage in discourse that invites socially purposeful utterance and response and, thus, initiates them into the larger academic discourse community" (9). In other words, publishing pedagogies call for writing and learning purposes which extend beyond the fulfillment of what are often the arhetorical mandates of our traditional classrooms. They can also call for writing audiences which extend beyond the student-teacher rhetorical context, and even beyond the immediate members of single classrooms.

Yet another strength of many publishing pedagogies is that they often seek to show students that multiple choices exist in meeting classroom writing tasks. The more choices writers have in accomplishing goals—whether those goals are writer-centered or audience-centered—then the more self-determined they can become. Even better, the more students' writing choices revolve around matters of rhetorical audience and purpose, the more their motivations will shift from intrinsic to rhetrinsic.

Ultimately, writers are best motivated to communicate by opportunities for self-determination and immersion in the rhetorical elements of the writing process. The more rhetrinsically motivated students' writing tasks are, the more such students will be able to immerse themselves in those tasks and the better their texts will be. Writing instructors can thus benefit from a knowledge of projects which help students along in this process of rhetrinsic introphy. As well, an understanding of rhetrinsic motivation can enable teachers to better guide students towards introphic modes of learning and writing—modes whereby motivations are transformed and negotiated. ☺

Works Cited

- Bannister, Linda. *Writing Apprehension and Anti-Writing: A Naturalistic Study of Composing Strategies Used by College Freshmen*. San Francisco: Mellen Research UP, 1992.
- Brand, Alice Glarden. *The Psychology of Writing: The Affective Experience*. Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1989.
- Clark, Wilma. "Writing for Publication in an Advanced Course for Undergraduates." *Landmark Essays on Advanced Composition*. Eds. Gary A. Olson and Julie Drew. Davis: Hermagoras, 1996. 129-36.
- Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly. "Literacy and Intrinsic Motivation." *Daedalus: Journal of American Academy of Arts and Sciences* 119(1990):115-40.
- Deci, Edward L. and Richard M. Ryan. *Intrinsic Motivation and Self-Determination in Human Behavior*. New York: Plenum, 1985.
- Keesey, Donald. *Contexts for Criticism*. 2nd ed. Mountain View, CA: Mayfield, 1994.
- Larson, Reed. "Flow and Writing." *Optimal Experience: Psychological Studies of Flow in Consciousness*. Eds. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi and Isabella Selega Csikszentmihalyi. New York: Cambridge UP, 1992. 150-71.
- Sladky, Paul. "Why We Need to Publish Student Writers." Ed. Paul Sladky. *"Free Falling" and Other Student Essays*. 3rd ed. New York: St. Martin's, 1997.

The Ethics of Empathy: Making Connections in the Writing Classroom

Kia Jane Richmond

A student recently came to me to discuss a problem she was having with her writing; she said that she felt “lost” when it came to starting a paper. I responded in this manner: “*I know exactly how you feel. Let me tell you what I do in those situations.*” While some might argue that my response was empathetic and ethical, after much consideration and research on empathy, I have decided that it was not. Rather than asking the student to tell me in more detail about her difficulties, I arrogantly assumed that my own experiences with writing would provide me with enough data to respond effectively to her request for help. This move on my part was not empathetic; instead, it bordered on condescension and manipulation, something of which I am not proud.

Empathy is an important part of teaching writing. David Bartholomae and Anthony Petrosky propose that we teach composition to help students gain access to the language and the practices of the academy (9). To do this, they argue, we must “value student writing” (14). To me, that also requires our valuing the students themselves. Empathy is a vital part of that valuing. The problem is that our own experiences are not enough to help us empathize with our students. We have to be willing to listen to them—to find out what they know and what they are feeling—in order to imagine where they are coming from and to recognize that it might be a place or a set of feelings with which we are unfamiliar. Instead of relying on our memories, we should listen empathetically to our students so that we can help them with their writing as individuals—and not as carbon copies of ourselves.

To be empathetic is to be in tune with another’s moods, emotions, and experiences. Often empathy is described as putting oneself in someone else’s shoes. However, the concept of empathy is slippery and hard to define (Oswald). In fields such as psychology, ethics, and composition, I have found empathy defined in a variety of ways. For example, according to C. Daniel Batson, Shannon Early, and Giovanni Salvarani in the 1997 *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, “empathy seems to reflect an other-oriented emotional response congruent with the perceived plight of the person in need; it taps feeling for the other.” This definition focuses on the ability of a person to imagine the feelings of another without depending on one’s own feelings as a touchstone. In a history of the term in *Empathy: A Social Psychological Approach*, Mark H. Davis contends that the concept of empathy began (in America) with Titchener’s translation of “*einfuhlung*” in 1909 as an “active attempt by one individual to get ‘in-

Kia Jane Richmond teaches composition and ESL at Illinois State University, where she is completing her Ph.D. in English Studies. Her focus is on the intersection between emotions and the teaching of composition at the college level.

side' the other, to reach out in some fashion through a deliberate intellectual effort" (5). In this sense of the word, empathy could be viewed as an intrusive, possibly invasive, act. However, the term was later interpreted by Martin Hoffman in 1987 as "an affective response more appropriate to someone else's situation than to one's own" (qtd. in Davis 9). In this sense empathy takes on a different aspect. Rather than trying to get inside another, empathy involves responding to the emotions of another without relying on one's own affective state. Ethically, I think, this view of empathy is more appropriate for teachers of composition to employ.

If we view empathy as a means of connecting to students based on where they are emotionally, rather than where we are, we would be more likely to avoid making assumptions and giving advice that might interfere with meeting our students' needs. In the situation described in the beginning of this essay, for example, I assumed that I knew my student's emotional state and that it was similar to my own. In responding without giving her an opportunity to elaborate on the specifics of her situation, I was not communicating empathetically. Instead, I was insisting that I could solve her problem for her, by telling her what I did when I felt lost. Ethically, I am responsible for helping students to improve their writing. However, when I step past my role as listener and into my role as advice-giver and problem-solver, I limit the kind of communication that Susan McLeod describes as empathetic in *Notes on the Heart: Affective Issues in the Writing Classroom*.

In that 1997 book, McLeod says that "empathetic understanding is usually seen not only as an ability to understand the other person's affective world but also to communicate this understanding to the other in a sensitive, caring way" (114). In doing so, she makes my own arguments about empathy more relevant. Ethically, we should employ empathy as a means of connecting to our students, not merely as a way of preparing to solve their problems but as a method of engaging them in a dialogue about their writing. As composition teachers, we must not assume that empathy is only a one-way communication process. We can be empathetic, but doing so involves our responses to students as well as our taking into consideration their affective states. The use of empathy in the writing classroom is not a new concept; however, the way I am imagining it being used involves both benefits for the students and risks for the teacher.

Carl Rogers and H. Jerome Freiberg explains that "empathetic understanding" is different from "evaluative understanding, which follows the pattern 'I understand what is wrong with you'" (158). Instead, empathy involves understanding students from their own point of view. Empathy requires dialogue. By listening to students to comprehend their points of view, teachers risk changing their role in the student-teacher relationship from one of evaluator to one of partner. Rogers argues, "If you really understand another person in this way [empathetically], if you are willing to enter his [sic] private world and see the way life appears to him, without any attempt to make evaluative judgments, you run the risk of being changed yourself" (qtd. in Young, Becker, and Pike 287). Perhaps this is really the fear that paralyzes us in our roles as teachers. Some teachers are afraid of stepping outside the identity that students have constructed for them. After all, it is a safe space to inhabit; the subject position of "teacher"

entitles the person to wield power that is rarely questioned. Teachers are judges, critics, and grade-givers. With these roles comes an identity that does not seem, to some, to allow for error. In responding to students empathetically, teachers risk being inexact since emotions are not constant from person to person. When we interact with students empathetically, we also run the risk of not being viewed as "teacher," an idea that terrifies some who are invested in their subject positions as judges rather than helpers.

Empathy calls for two things: sensitivity to the feelings of others and the ability to imagine something that is not actually happening to oneself at that moment. Carolyn Pool relates that being able perceive the feelings of others is a kind of emotional intelligence (12). Another name for this part of empathy is "affective recognition," defined in *The Journal of Social Psychology* as "the ability to identify and understand how another person is feeling" (Oswald). Being able to imagine something that is not actually taking place is a cognitive process, a kind of general intelligence. It involves prediction and a kind of analysis of a situation to be able to imagine something not involving direct experience. This could also be called "cognitive perspective taking" or "the ability to recognize and understand the thoughts of others" (Oswald). Even though empathy is typically categorized as an emotional activity, it is both affective and cognitive in nature. Viewing empathy in this light might help convince those who view emotion as "an inferior form of mental processing" to reconsider the relevance of such an "emotional" concept to writing and the teaching of writing (Restak 71). In the "Dedication to Alice G. Brand" in the most recent issue of *JAEPL*, we are told that "[m]uch of the work in our field has concentrated on *logos* – on the rationality of the word separate from the necessary leavening of emotion, thereby imperiling the ethicality of our endeavors as teachers and researchers" (vii). I find it useful, therefore, to go back to Aristotle's concepts of emotion in order to argue that he did not, as some would have us believe, privilege *logos* over *pathos*. Particularly in a discussion of empathy, we should endeavor to locate empathy as a concept whose roots are in both rationality and emotion.

Aristotle, in his categorizing emotions in *On Rhetoric*, of course, does not specifically include either the term or the concept of empathy as an emotion. However, he does hint at an aspect of empathy in his descriptions of "Praotes or Calmness." He argues that people are calm "toward those who are serious with them when they are serious, for they think they are being serious and not showing contempt" (131). In showing us how people tend to be reciprocal toward those displaying similar kinds of behavior, Aristotle is describing a kind of empathy; for it is only through being able to read the emotions of others that we would be able to determine whether or not people are being serious.

Similarly, Aristotle posits that "Pity or Eleos" is defined as "a certain pain at an apparently destructive or painful evil happening to one who does not deserve it and which a person might expect himself or one of his own to suffer, and this when it seems close at hand" (152). Being able to determine whether or not someone deserves pain or destruction is a cognitive act: One must think about whether or not someone has done anything worthy of pain or harm, weighing all the factors which might contribute to his/her guilt or innocence. But Aristotle says that "on the whole, [a person feels pity] when his state of mind is such that he remem-

bers things like this happening to himself or his own and expects them to happen to himself or his own" (152). Here, I believe, Aristotle is also describing one aspect of empathy. If we can imagine that something bad might happen to someone else – that we have felt before or can imagine feeling – we are empathizing with that person before we cognitively decide to feel pity for that person. In both situations, calmness and pity, Aristotle alludes to what we might now call empathy as a tool for gauging when to behave calmly or with pity.

In J.E.C. Welldon's translation of *The Nicomachean Ethics*, we are told that Aristotle says, "We are truly responsible for our emotions as for our reasoning" (73). In this sense, Aristotle separates the emotions from rational thought, but I don't believe that he is privileging one over the other. Rather, as Kennedy says in his translation of *On Rhetoric*, Aristotle recognizes that emotions are "an attribute of persons, not of a speech" (37). Both our students and ourselves as teachers bring emotions to our writing in any circumstance because as humans, we are emotional as well as rational beings. Kennedy tells us that "Aristotle's inclusion of emotion as a mode of persuasion, despite his objections to the handbooks, is a recognition that among human beings judgment is not entirely a rational act" (38). Thus, making judgments involves not only cognition but emotion as well. This is something that teachers of composition are likely to forget from time to time. When we judge a student's writing or conversational remarks, we use both rational thought and emotion to decide what to do. Empathy allows us to blend both kinds of judgment into one.

In her discussion "Aristotle on Emotions and Rational Persuasion," Martha Nussbaum attempts to clarify how Aristotle viewed emotions. She asserts that he saw emotions "not [as] blind animal forces, but intelligent and discriminating parts of the personality, closely related to beliefs of a certain sort" (303). She explains that the emotions, "while not 'irrational' in the sense of being noncognitive, are based on a family of beliefs about the worth of externals" (314). If we consider the emotional components of empathy in this way, as an emotion based on beliefs about what someone else is feeling or thinking, we would then assert that empathy is not irrational but merely a method of communication that is not only emotional but cognitive as well. Nussbaum states, "What is stressed [by Aristotle in *On Rhetoric*] is the fact that it is the way things are seen by the agent, not the fact of the matter, that is instrumental in getting the emotions going" (307). If we take Nussbaum's interpretation of Aristotle to heart, we will be able to see connections to our own teaching of writing. In order to understand our students' difficulties with writing, we must connect to the way they view the situation and not merely rely on our memory of situations that happened to us that might or might not be similar in nature. We must work more toward listening to students, using empathy as a method of communication that is not related to our power as instructors of writing.

Empathy is a specific kind of communication, one that seeks to minimize power relationships between discussants. This, I think, is what makes empathy a difficult concept for many writing teachers to employ. Our positions as teacher are filled with power – both real and assumed. We are grade-givers who exert our power over our students through our assessments of their finished products. We are also viewed as experts who are supposed to have all the answers to questions

about writing. As teachers, we exert our power over students when we encourage them to do (or not do) specific things with their ideas in their writing. Rarely do students ignore our advice; instead, they rely on us as experts to give them the appropriate information to help them communicate their ideas most effectively. We are assumed to have the students' best interests at heart, not our own. However, we are also responsible for the interests of the academy, as Bartholomae and Petrosky (and others) have asserted. Empathy need not negate that responsibility. By listening to our students empathetically, we are treating them as potential members of our community, as people whose ideas and feelings are just as worthy of attention as our own. By setting aside, but not abandoning, our roles as judges and experts when using empathy, we are not abdicating our responsibility to the academy. Rather, we are opening ourselves up to our students as dialogue partners through empathetic communication.

An ethics of empathy revolves around the idea that empathetic communication gives both the speaker (or student) and the listener (or teacher) an opportunity to be understood and to understand. The key is that empathy invites connection rather than coercion. Empathy displaces the power dynamic (at least to some extent) in the student-teacher relationship because the focus is on the speaker's message and emotional state rather than on the listener's position in relation to the speaker. This is sometimes a difficult distinction for teachers to make. For example, Wendy Bishop explains, "Students trust writing teachers with their thinking and their feeling" because their classes are usually smaller and more likely to tolerate close, interpersonal communication between student and teacher (512). Teachers who are not empathetic might be less willing to listen to students from a place of detachment because those teachers do not view their positions as listeners but as evaluators, or, as Bishop suggests, because they "have not been trained or encouraged" to view writing, or the teaching of writing, as "a therapeutic process" (506). While it is not my intention here to argue for writing as a therapeutic process, I believe it is necessary to talk about how conversations with students might involve a component of therapy, such as empathy, and the ethical implications of such an integral part of communication.

Listening empathetically to our students' comments might seem to some to border on emotional invasion of privacy. For example, in his discussion of ethical dilemmas related to students' "emotion-laden texts," Dave Waddell suggests that teachers can be viewed as unethical "when they coercively or voyeuristically prey on their students' secrets" revealed in open-ended personal writing assignments (67). One could expand Waddell's statement about texts to students' revelations about their writing difficulties. We are just as ethically responsible for maintaining emotional (and professional) distance from our students when we use empathetic listening as we are when we read their writing. In order to do so, we must remind ourselves that our students often come to us with their writing difficulties because of our positions of authority and not necessarily because they trust us as individuals who are invested in their personal growth. While some teachers might foster "a nonthreatening environment" or "a classroom that engenders a sense of safety" as Waddell predicts (68), it is reasonable to presume that others will not; nevertheless, both types of teachers must help students with their writing problems. Empathy allows any teacher the opportunity to interact

with a student without regard to the personal nature of the problem or to the teacher's own comfort with emotional issues. Furthermore, empathy does not require teachers to view teaching or writing as a therapeutic process; it only requires that they invest in empathy as a specific communicative process: dialectic.

Dialectic is a "particular kind of dialogue" that is used for "constructing and revising knowledge that its participants can share" (Clark 19). Empathy is a dialectic process that is comprised of listening and responding. One of the most effective ways that we can help our students is by separating these two components of empathy. When we listen, we should focus on what the student is relating, not thinking about our own similar (or disparate) experiences or about what we are going to say in response. Listening is an active process; it requires us to suspend our own agendas in order to hear completely what the other person is trying to tell us. Responding is secondary. Only after we have checked with a student to see if we have understood what he or she has said—using, perhaps, a Rogerian "restatement" technique such as the one explained in detail by Nathaniel Teich (22)—should we move toward considering how we will respond.

For example, when one of my students asked me for help with a paper for another class, she said that she was frustrated because she could not find much information to use in making an argument about a specific (and rather unknown) author. She said, "I don't feel like I am going to be able to do what the teacher is asking of me, and I don't know what I should do." While she was telling me about her search for sources, I had to remind myself (mentally) that I should be listening to her story and not thinking about my own difficulties with research. This allowed me to concentrate on her situation specifically and kept me from beginning to devise solutions for her problem until I had heard all she had to say.

From time to time, I stopped her so that I could summarize what I heard her saying about her struggle. By interacting with the student in this manner, I was able to suspend my own frustrations with research and focus on what she was trying to relate to me—that she felt inadequate and was scared to tell her teacher that she was having difficulties with the assignment. Instead of saying, "I know what you mean. I have often had trouble myself with finding sources," I said, "It sounds like you are really upset about not finding what you think you need to meet your teacher's needs on this assignment. That must be really frustrating." She nodded her head and went on to describe her dilemma. While I did not specifically make suggestions as to how she could find more sources, I acknowledged her emotions and then let her know that it was acceptable to share her feelings with her literature professor. Thus, I used both empathetic listening and a kind of inner dialogue to help me defer my own emotional response to her comments. This allowed me to reinforce my relationship to the student as a helping one—one without any strings attached to my power position as a teacher.

As dialectic, empathy provides us with the means to help students with their writing difficulties without having to depend on our subject positions as teachers for authority. We are given the authority to respond by the students when they choose to share their problems with us. This authority is not only given to teachers; it is also given to friends, classmates, and others who take the time to listen from a position of empathy.

When a student chooses to share with us her difficulties with a particular assignment or part of the writing process, she is inviting us to visit her world, not overhaul it. For example, one of my students recently asked me to talk with him about trouble he was having with incorporating quotes from external sources into his essay. In doing so, he was not asking me to write his paper for him, nor was he requesting that I change the assignment to help him avoid using quotes altogether. What he wanted instead was to have someone listen to him as he described how frustrating it was for him to blend his own ideas with those of so-called experts on the topic. If I had responded to him without listening empathetically—if I had merely said, "Here, put this quote here and reword the other into your conclusion"—I might have solved an immediate problem; however, I might have missed an opportunity to help him consider why he finds using quotes so difficult.

What I chose to do in this case was to restate to the student what I thought I heard him saying; this encouraged him to go into more detail. He explained that using quotes makes him feel that his own opinions are not as important or as valid as those of writers who have been published in authoritative texts. After he explained this problem, I asked him to consider whether the people who wrote the quotes he was using might have ever felt the same way he did, and how they might have dealt with that problem. I did not take over his job as creator of his text; rather, I encouraged him instead to use his own authority as a writer to decide when and where to use other people's ideas to support his own.

While listening empathetically, I was able to see into his world as a writer, but I was not able—nor should I have been able—to take over his world. My job as a writing teacher is to facilitate individual students' growth, not to dictate that growth based on my own (limited) experience as a writer or a teacher. Empathy, as I have defined it, does not allow us to invade our students' worlds. Instead, it helps us to communicate more effectively with our students in a dialectic that validates their experiences as meaningful to their growth as writers and as members of the academic community.

In a recent article in *Ethics*, Robert Gordon argues that "to predict or explain the actual behavior of other agents, it often suffices to call on our own emotions, desires, and practical reasoning, with little or no modification" (733). He discusses giving advice and its connection to empathy: "Typically, when we set ourselves up to give advice, we imaginatively project ourselves into the person's problem situation" (740). Gordon argues that it is important, when giving advice, to "hold back in certain ways from identification with the other person" (740). That is, in order to be able to help someone, we must be able to empathize with that person, to see the problem from his/her point of view, without mistakenly imagining what we ourselves would do in the same situation. For example, in Teich's suggestion that "empathy is *not* identification with the other," I interpret him as saying that we should use empathy to become aware of students' feelings but not attempt to feel the same thing ourselves (251). Teich's point is based on Carl Rogers' definition of empathy as an ability to understand another's "inner world of private personal meanings as if it were your own, but without ever losing the 'as if' quality" of the experience (Rogers and Stevens 89). Being empathetic requires a teacher to leave the responsibility of owning the emotions

and experiences to the students. "Empathy is many things," Lou Ureneck writes, "but first it may be an opening of the mind to other points of view." He suggests that before we can imagine the world as others view it, "before we can crawl into their skins to know their aspirations and anxieties...we need to let go, at least temporarily, of our own closely held views and experiences."

For composition teachers the connection is clear. We should empathize with our students when they have trouble, but we must not assume that our own solutions to similar problems will be applicable or even appropriate for them. We should remember that we should see the problem through their eyes, their emotions, and their experiences *before* we attempt to offer suggestions. This is, as Ureneck suggests, "a very difficult task indeed." For example, when a student comes to us having trouble with an introduction (as I related in my opening example), instead of telling the student what we would do in that instance, it would be more appropriate to ask the student to describe her feelings about the difficulty so that we could better gauge the student's emotional state. We might then offer several alternatives from which the student could choose. By not identifying with the student directly—that is, by listening to the student and thinking about the problem from her particular point of view—we maintain the emotional and critical distance required to help us be empathetic and guide the student at the same time.

When we stretch ourselves toward our students through empathy, attempting to make connections rather than corrections, we are embracing a student-centered pedagogy. Composition teachers who use empathy with their students release themselves from the power struggles often associated with traditional student-teacher relationships. Rather than listening to students with the goal of judging them or evaluating their words, empathetic teachers work to listen to students with the goal of discovering where they are in their thoughts and how they feel about their writing. A frustration for empathetic teachers may arise when we realize that our position as "teacher" within the university setting requires us, at some point, to evaluate our students' writing, the result of their cognitive and affective processing. We cannot step outside our roles as they are defined by the academy; however, at some points during the composing process, we can de-emphasize our roles as judges in order to let students know that their ideas and emotions have merit of their own. Peter Elbow argues that the basic subtext in a writer's text is likely to be "Listen to me, I have something to tell you" (81). I would add that students also want to be heard when they come to us for advice about their writing. By listening to students empathetically, teachers are helping students to be heard. This is essential if we are to invite them to become members of our academic community. When they are heard first, and then given advice (when necessary) about any changes required by a specific discourse community, students will acquire the confidence they need to participate in ongoing conversations.

As Christy Friend suggests, even as we make spaces in our classrooms for a variety of opinions, "we must also create spaces where students can forge alliances with us, with other students, and with others in the larger community" (562). By becoming aware of students' emotions, we open up our classrooms as places of connection. Empathy, employed as a pedagogical method of relating to and

responding to students and their writing, seems to offer a way for writing teachers to make connections between what they claim to value—cooperation, conversation, and critique—and what they do—teach, listen, and advise. Teaching empathetically builds a bridge between our goals and our ethics. ☺

Works Cited

- Aristotle. *The Nichomachean Ethics*. Trans. J.E.C. Welldon. Buffalo: Prometheus, 1987.
- . *On Rhetoric: A Theory of Civic Discourse*. Trans. George A. Kennedy. New York: Oxford UP, 1991.
- Bartholomae, David, and Anthony R. Petrosky. *Facts, Artifacts, and Counterfacts*. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook, 1986.
- Batson, C. Daniel, Shannon Early, and Giovanni Salvarani. "Perspective Taking: Imagining How Another Feels versus Imagining How You Would Feel." *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 23 (1997): 751-58. Online. Milner Lib. Illinois State U. Infotrac. 23 Sept. 1998.
- Bishop, Wendy. "Writing Is/And Therapy?: Raising Questions about Writing Classrooms And Writing Program Administration." *Journal of Advanced Composition* 13 (1993): 503-16.
- Clark, Gregory. *Dialogue, Dialectic, and Conversation: A Social Perspective on the Function of Writing*. Studies in Writing and Rhetoric. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1990.
- Davis, Mark H. *Empathy: A Social Psychological Approach*. Dubuque: Wm. C. Brown, 1994.
- Fleckenstein, Kristie S., and Linda T. Calendrillo. "Dedication to Alice G. Brand." *The Journal of the Assembly for Expanded Perspectives on Learning* 4 (1998-99): vii.
- Elbow, Peter. "Being a Writer vs. Being an Academic: A Conflict in Goals." *College Composition and Communication* 46 (1995): 72-83.
- Friend, Christy. "Ethics in the Writing Classroom: A Nondistributive Approach." *College English* 56 (1994): 548-67.
- Gordon, Robert M. "Sympathy, Simulation, and the Impartial Spectator." *Ethics* 105 (1995): 727-42.
- Kennedy, George A. , Trans. Aristotle, *On Rhetoric: A Theory of Civic Discourse*. New York: Oxford UP, 1991.
- McLeod, Susan H. *Notes on the Heart: Affective Issues in the Writing Classroom*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1997.
- Nussbaum, Martha Craven. "Aristotle on Emotions and Rational Persuasion." *Essays on Aristotle's Rhetoric*. Ed. Amelie L. Rorty. Berkley: U of California P, 1996. 303-23.
- Oswald, Patricia A. "The Effects of Cognitive and Affective Perspective Taking, Empathetic Concern and Altruistic Helping." *The Journal of Social Psychology* 136 (1996): 613-23. Online. Milner Lib. Illinois State U. Infotrac. 24 Sept. 1998.
- Pool, Carolyn R. "Up with Emotional Health." *Educational Leadership* 54.8 (1997): 12-14. Online. Milner Lib. Illinois State U. Infotrac. 26 Mar. 1998.
- Restak, Richard. *The Brain has a Mind of Its Own: Insights from a Practicing Neurologist*. New York: Crown P, 1991.
- Rogers, Carl R., and H. Jerome Freiberg. *Freedom to Learn*. Rev. ed. New York: Merrill, 1994.
- Rogers, Carl R., and Barry Stevens. *Person to Person: The Problem of Being Human*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1967.

- Teich, Nathaniel, ed. *Rogierian Perspectives: Collaborative Rhetoric for Oral and Written Communication*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex, 1992.
- Ureneck, Lou. "Empathy: Path to a Different World." *Nieman Reports* 49.1 (1995): 19-21. Online. Milner Lib. Illinois State U. Infotrac. 23 Sept. 1998.
- Waddell, Dave. "When a Student Ends a Wounded Silence." *The Journal of the Assembly for Expanded Perspectives on Learning* 4 (1998-99): 61-70.
- Young, Richard, Alton Becker, and Kenneth Pike. *Rhetoric: Discovery and Change*. New York: Harcourt, 1970. 273-90.

The Architectonics of Information: Ancient Topical Thought and Postmodern Information¹

Catherine L. Hobbs

It has been said that we are entering a new economic era in which the scarce commodity will be that of attention. Yet this scarcity of attention is not really entirely new. After all, reality for William James at the century's birth was that "blooming, buzzing confusion" with its attendant attention demands, and the vagaries of human attention have been noted since the birth of cognitive studies in the eighteenth century.

Nonetheless, rather than the benign and buzzing world of the early century, the information environment today is more often characterized as hostile or aggressive. Richard Lanham likens the stream of information turned our way to a firehose hitting us smack in the face. If information is so abundant, attention is at a premium. Anyone who understands how to structure attention in such a society will rule. Perhaps more, anyone who understands how to structure her own attention—who is capable of finding and capturing meaningful information and experiences and producing effective personal and shared meaning—must surely have a good chance for a satisfying life. If this last statement is not a provable proposition, it may yet be a relevant starting point for a 21st-century higher education mission statement.

Victorians complained last century about the swiftness of change and the volume of books to be read. Before that, as early as the first quarter of the eighteenth century, the Neapolitan rhetoric professor and philosopher Giambattista Vico was already feeling the first pressure from the "firehose of information" described in late twentieth-century electronic culture. Vico, an early modern living during the consolidation of the era of the printing press, relied on the

*Catherine L. Hobbs is associate professor in the Composition/Rhetoric/Literacy program in English at the University of Oklahoma. Her research is primarily in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century history of writing instruction. She is particularly interested in women's writing and has edited the book *Nineteenth-Century Women Learn to Write*, U of Virginia P, 1995.*

¹ An earlier version of this paper, first delivered as part of a panel at the Rhetoric Society of America meeting at Tucson in May 1996, was delivered and published as "The Architectonics of Information: Ancient Topical Thought and Postmodern Cognition" in *Proceedings of the Mid-America Symposium on Emerging Computer Technologies*, October 1996. (The published papers are available in "Information Problems" at <http://www.ou.edu/cas/english/agora/>.) I would like to thank Jana Moring and Dianne Juby for their collaboration on the panel.

ancient arts of speech and memory championed by Aristotle and Cicero. Having internalized these arts, he bragged that he had written his masterwork *The New Science* from his own memory and reflection, “as if there were no books in the world.” This statement seems to protest a bit too much. Perhaps the problem was that there were just then too many books to maintain the older Renaissance ideal that every man was a walking university representing the sum of knowledge in the world.

What was needed in those early days of accumulated book literacy, when arts and knowledge were carried in the head, were classifications and structures to chunk information, or architectonic arts. Architectonic arts are structuring arts: the architectonic system Vico claimed enabled this feat were the rhetorical arts, particularly that ancient art called “topics.” Topics were places in the mind where arguments were stored to produce an oration, or places in the mind where hooks for memory were created. Internalized after long usage, Vico’s topical arts of rhetoric enabled him to make connections between disparate fields and elements to produce singular insights resulting in a structural-historical view of human civilization. An architectonic art is creative, productive of or able to structure other arts. Perhaps that helps explain why Vico has been called the father of the social sciences and an inventor of modern historiography.

It may be that what we need today to manage our attention, to enable us to drift, surf, or dive through our postmodern ocean of information, is a similarly flexible system of inquiry or language arts that allow us to locate, internalize, and manipulate information to produce meaning. If such heuristic systems could allow us to float in the information stream without becoming disoriented, if they could help us produce knowledge from information as if there were no tsunami-force wave hitting us full in the face—this would indeed be refreshing and relevant and surely worthy of learning and teaching.

Such systems—heuristic guides, sets of “rules of thumb”—may be as pertinent as they are intriguing and seductive to consider. Such a set of highly portable internalized “arts” would be the best imaginable human-computer interface. This system—or systems determined by places or fields—would be organized by topics, by “terms,” and serve as aids to focusing an inquiry, helping both eliminate and elucidate possible moves. They are thus, in the rhetorical theorist Kenneth Burke’s language, “terministic screens,” sets of terms that focus our attention, both screening out and structuring in what they can and will. They are also “architectonic” in Richard McKeon’s Aristotelian sense: “A productive, architectonic art produces subject-matters and organizes them in relation to each other and to problems to be solved.”

How these portable interfaces and architectonic arts will work we can only imagine from our previous and current uses of topical systems in composition studies, some of which have already been incorporated into computer software and pedagogy. Rather than the old saw in the sixties that topics represented classical thought that arrived out of its time, too late, this information and attention-structuring view of topical systems may be just in time. They may also prove to be helpful for better indexing the web or creating intelligent agents that help limit our information overload by selectively presenting us with what we request.

Rhetoric and Topical Thought

I have been working on the history of this sort of “topical thought” for more than a decade. Today, the older metaphors in literary and composition theory have manifested themselves in the literal world of the Web and on-line databases. Previously, revolutions in information and thought were contrasted with the past in images of the multistemmed bush form taking precedence over the tree; the rhizome over the bush—the rhizome being that networked structure of crabgrass, or if you prefer, the root-branching strawberry plant. Cyberspace has now become the sixties’ “strawberry fields forever.” In such a network of free-floating information, a postmodern art may be needed to serve as a useable human-computer interface for information retrieval as well as information manipulation and knowledge construction.

As a former journalist and communication specialist, I have always been interested in the lateral thought processes and everyday logic described by the field of rhetoric, the classical arts of speaking and writing that were the center of education for more than 2,000 years. Unlike more linear formal thought, such as analytical academic philosophical argument represented in programlike if not programmable formula, rhetoric has always been used informally, flexibly, and pragmatically in the public, civic sphere. In fact, there was an ancient battle between the philosophers and the rhetoricians over the two thought styles. Philosophers were concerned with universals and the certain, while rhetoricians were concerned with the everyday, the situated, the contingent. To give importance to such an ancient battle of the humanities may seem, again, oddly anachronistic. However, it is just these sorts of seemingly off-beat, out-of-time connections that we may need to encourage in the present age, connections that may prove enormously productive, if surprising and unsettling.

Deferring the question “productive for what?” the issues closer to home in the writing classroom include:

- Can nonlinear patterns of classical topical thought be used helpfully to describe approaches appropriate to navigating through and finally successfully creating knowledge from networked information?
- If topical thought is helpful, how is it so, and what can and ought we to do with it and how?

These are some of the questions I have been asking as I teach writing and online research in my advanced composition classes. I aim to help my students be more flexible and diligent inquirers and to be more independent, able to take on ill-defined problems rather than the pre-digested problems offered them in much of their college work. I want to help them hold onto the tail of their inquiry long enough to turn information into insights and useful knowledge. I believe that teaching them some thought processes from the topical arts really helps.

History of Topical Thought

My teaching efforts drew me back to the Neapolitan professor of rhetoric I studied in the history of rhetoric class I took in 1985 with Prof. Janice Lauer at

Purdue University.² Vico, professor of Latin eloquence at the University of Naples in the early eighteenth century, reinterpreted the classical arts as appropriated by Renaissance humanism. His thought was based in the art of classical invention, especially two arts, those of topics and status. He describes flexible ways of using networks of information, writing about solitary and social inquiry as well as the speaker's performance of public persuasion. Vico's networks were in his memory and in the books he surrounded himself with, but his emphasis on creating new knowledge through making connections seems pertinent to the present issues.

What is a topical system? The Greek term *topos* and the Latin *locus* are often translated as "places" or "lines of argument." They refer to considerations that might possibly arise in disputation, and they existed to serve as flexible touchstones for helping advocates in classical courtrooms. Aristotle and other classical writers also discuss *topoi* of the legislative forum and public ceremonies. Vico later expands the Aristotelian system of court, forum, and public ritual to encompass more and more situations of human thought, including scientific inquiry.

Vico also is worthy of examination for his alternative conception of mind, alternative to the earlier "black box" computer model. As semiotician Marcel Danesi has written, Vico's model is based on the mind's ability to capture and manipulate imagery. This capability can be linked to the Web revolution based on capturing and manipulating images, making the Web environment more conducive to Vico's model of how the human mind works. For Vico, the ability to capture and manipulate images is the fundamental process that allows the external world to be internalized and the body and mind to be brought together. This ability can explain why we have anything "in mind" on which to reflect, with which to think at all (Verene). The image is in this sense a "middle term," an important technical term in Vico. The "middle term" originally referred to the middle term in a syllogism, the key statement linking the first and final propositions, but Vico uses it at times metaphorically as encompassing all linking.

The key imagistic move in Vico's model of mind is the human ability to produce metaphor. A metaphor is also a middle term, a point of intersection between two terms that produces new knowledge. When two images are brought together to produce a metaphor, a new node has been formed in a network of information. When we say the moon sailed across the sky, we have brought the images of a sailing ship and the moon in motion together in such a way as to make it difficult ever to see the moon in the night sky without thinking of a ship. We note with pleasure the whiteness of the moon, the specter of a sail on a summer lake.

Vico says through such processes, which operate alike in both aesthetic and scientific realms, we produce our worlds—although, like Marx, (or Marx like Vico), we don't make them just as we would like. We are constrained by our materials and our positioning within our technical/cultural networks. The existence of such net-

² Lauer's scholarship on invention is summarized in her recent entry "Invention," in *Theorizing Composition: A Critical Sourcebook of Theory and Scholarship in Contemporary Composition Studies*, in addition to practices outlined in the co-authored textbook *Four Worlds of Writing*.

works was the insight Vico came to from his topical pattern of thought—multiple, historically produced cultural networks, in motion. Structures in the process of producing themselves, perpetually in transformation or in catastrophe: this was the historical model Vico's own art of topics produced.

Vico's own contemporary cultural network was adjusting to the production of new instruments and methods—the telescope, the book, the Cartesian critical method. Vico liked his predecessor Bacon better than Descartes. Bacon was one of his four guiding lights—along with Plato, Tacitus, and the international natural law theorist Grotius. He liked Bacon's view of the total network of knowledge, but he didn't like Bacon's view of topics as useless for anything but memory retrieval. Vico also recemented Bacon's separation of classical arts of invention into two: scientific invention and invention of speech and arguments. As one who in young manhood flirted with Cartesianism, Vico knew and interacted with the Cartesians of Naples, who were primarily interested in natural phenomena, not in ancient texts or topical inventional strategies for discovery. Vico himself wrote on the circulation of the blood. But he wasn't happy that in the Cartesian paradigm the arena for the production of knowledge was shifting from the humanities to physics and mathematics, from moral philosophy to natural philosophy. We can never know the natural world because we didn't make it, he argued. He believed the paradigm for knowing should be the humanities: the study of human history, in particular, law, politics, and rhetoric. What humans have made, they can know with most certainty.

For Vico, a teacher of rhetoric, the premiere art of rhetoric was topics—an art he tried to refashion as relevant to the eighteenth-century world of sciences. In doing so, he made the sort of claims about topical thought we make here—that they are flexible and can be adapted for a variety of problems and times. Vico believed topics were valuable for surveying what other people have discovered about a matter as well as making humans more acute and quick in thinking on their feet in public persuasive situations. Vico thought they could even be adapted for scientific observation as well as the traditional invention of arguments. Applied thoroughly, this questioning became critical as well as creative, he claimed. They also could be used to validate, test or challenge knowledge. But their use to make connections that created new knowledge was their most important contribution.

Throughout Vico's literary corpus, which ended in his masterwork on human history, *The New Science*, his own topical thought functions to collect and recollect, make fertile and surprising connections, overcome divisions, and construct classifications having semipermeable membranes, or heuristic categories.

Vico had obtained his chair in rhetoric in 1699 by a disputation on Quintilian's *De Statibus Caussarum*, an etymology and explication of the term status. Status is a theory of judicial controversy that assists the rhetor in determining the point at issue or "center of gravity" of a case. This theory became a rich field of thought for Vico, incorporated in his topical scientific method. The Vico scholar Alessandro Guiliani argues that the classical theory of status made it possible to "go beyond an emotive and irrational rhetoric" because of its "objective, impartial, and neutral value" (38). With the structure of status, rhetoric becomes the "art of distinguishing" the nature of the problem. Understood as the center of argumentation, the judicial controversy can be seen in all its complexity as a site offering up a plurality of questions.

Vico's Topics in Process

Topical thinking to Vico was more and more closely identified with the construction of knowledge through language; from his earliest work it was set into opposition with the critical Cartesian philosophy of his day. In his 1708-9 *On the Study Methods of Our Times*, Vico protests the neglect of topical inventional arts for Cartesian critical thinking. Two years later in his treatise *On the Ancient Wisdom of the Italians*, he repeats his criticisms, advising a processual use of topics to generate questions to probe a matter, listing examples of his topical questions. Vico poses a number of questions which function not solely in law, but as a general heuristic for inquiry:

And first, he must examine the question "Does the thing exist?" so as to avoid talking about nothing. Second, the question "What is it?" so as to avoid arguing about names. Third, "How big is it?" either in size, weight, or number. Fourth, "What is its quality?" under which he considers color, taste, softness, hardness, and other tactile matters. Fifth, "When was it born, how long has it lasted, and into what [elements] does it break down?" On this pattern, he must take it through the remaining categories comparatively and set it beside everything that is somehow germane to it. The causes from which it arose and the effects it produces or what it does must be compared with other things like it, or different, with contraries, with things greater, smaller, and equal to it. (100)

These questions, based on transformations of Aristotelian dialectical and rhetorical loci as used in Cicero, cannot be criticized for being the narrow checklist for arguments into which topics are accused of degenerating. The first two questions are obviously from the determination of status, including the issues of fact or definition. Vico's third question reflects Aristotle's common requisite of degree or size, Cicero's comparison category. In the fourth, the question of quality, Vico's stress on the senses ("color, taste, softness, hardness, and other tactile matters") shows the influence of Aristotelian thinking as well as contemporary empirical science with its Cartesian and Baconian sensory emphasis.

Perhaps the most interesting question because of its manifestations in Vico's later work is that which highlights the temporal nature of Vico's thinking, the fifth: "When was it born, how long has it lasted, and into what does it break down?" This pattern of birth and decay shows up in *The New Science's* theory of corso and ricorso, in which the third era of human "progress" (following the "heroic" middle era) regularly degenerates, swept providentially back into the barbarism typifying the first era. The fifth question also allies itself with the status issue of quality.

Vico's key insight was that humans have not simply changed by degrees over time, but have passed through qualitatively different transformations, evidenced by changes in their use of language and parallel institutions. The topos of quality also concerns historical narrative because it was the primary strategy for determining the narrative portion of a legal argument. Therefore, topics of argument may help a thinker tell a story from a mass of facts or make an argument. Another

set of topics from a speaker's arsenal assisted with memory, important in an oral culture, and adding up to a complex system of arts for managing the unwieldy lifeworld William James described as a "blooming, buzzing confusion."

Contemporary Linkages

So how does a discussion of these arcane ancient arts connect to online searching in the near-21st century? There are some interesting parallels with Vico's anti-modern approach to information management and our current interwoven information revolution. For example, Linda Calendrillo at Western Kentucky University has argued that the more information we accumulate, the more we will need memory topics just to navigate through our own accumulated external memory files to retrieve and produce our own knowledge. I think she is right. We may need new topics for both memory and rhetoric. Any new topical art must first, like Vico's, be an art that is both creative and critical, with a both-and view of the world and binary oppositions in general—and, as in classical topical arts, such opposites will remain key.

The concept of "opposites" and contradictories was itself a key rational topos, along with other concepts such as causes, actions and consequences, means and end, processes, definitions, classification, authority, and other logical lines of thought and argument (logos). In addition, sets of topoi traditionally set out to grapple with character presentation (ethos) of the message producer. They also attempted to identify lines of thought concerning attitudes and emotions of the interlocutors in or audience of the discourse (pathos).

Navigating through the transforming cyberspace of WWW or an online database may call for a related art of stasis, the art of standpoint that is used to ensure a narrative begins well by sketching out the particular direction it will follow. Sometimes, my students who can keep their own questions uppermost in their Web searching, who have a center of gravity to their activities, end up with the best insights and information. Stasis as an art also reminds me of John Bender and David E. Wellbery's definition of rhetoric as "the art of positionality in discourse." Not only does one need to know where one is and where one is going at any particular moment, but one needs to know where the sources he or she uses are located—in what discipline, what methodological orientation, what political orientation. Who speaks? From what place? What is at stake here? We all need to know, and yet these complex questions are even more baffling in emerging electronic media.

One "real-world" example of the complexity of positionality emerged in my women's studies class on method and theory, where we discussed the nature of expertise. I brought in an AIDS skeptic, who made his presentation on what he terms the Center for Disease Control's "AIDS terror campaign" (Wright, 1996). Then and for the rest of spring semester, we asked ourselves how he and his information were positioned. Were we more in danger of dying of AIDS or of living a life whose choices and resultant emotions were based on irrational fears? Was Wright an expert or a crank? Was he a gay-basher, a libertarian, an anarchist? What was the quality of his information? When the statistics he had presented came out later in an article in the *Wall Street Journal*, some class members' views of the information shifted. The press carried a story using the same facts to point to the

AIDS campaign as trying to frighten women away from lesbianism. Student services personnel used the same information to make students aware of the risks of their behavior. Who speaks, from where, and why? In times of crucial decision-making, on AIDS, in this election year, we need such abilities to parse information, intention, and location, and we could do worse than the topos of positionality.

Positionality: Who produced this knowledge? How do they present it? What is at stake? What is their orientation to the academy, to industry, to the public? This art begins on the Web with the domain—.gov, .org, .edu, .com. But as in all positions, these domain names are contradictory: the non-aligned League of Women Voters is not located under “.org,” but under “.com,” in the space of the politically conservative *Daily Oklahoman* newspaper. This seeming exception, however, is the rule. The gaps and contradictions in positions, even, or especially Rush Limbaugh’s, allow us to make judgments of position that are more than simplistic identity-politics or stereotyping.

Such topical arts from classical rhetoric already have been flexibly transferred from linguistics to technical writing and general writing instruction in the sixties. In the fifties, Kenneth Pike’s structural linguistics developed a set of topics as part of what was called tagmemics theory. This topical system has been used extensively by linguist/missionaries encountering isolated, oral cultures to orient themselves enough to write down the language and translate the Bible. In the sixties, Alton Becker and Richard Young collaborated with Pike to develop a “tagmemic rhetoric.” They produced a technical writing text from their work at Michigan, *Rhetoric, Discovery and Change*, which adapted the tagmemics strategy as a general heuristic aiming to lead students to creativity and insight. James Kinneavy’s *Theory of Discourse* used the stasis art to analyze, critique, and retheorize the teaching of writing in English Departments. Recently Allan Megill, a historian at the University of Virginia, has used stasis as a heuristic to analyze historical discourse, aiming toward a study of “historics.” These diverse examples show not only the flexibility of topical thought, but how they can provide perspective on location in various ways. They may help in translating, inquiring, indexing, analyzing, critiquing.

Metaphor may be the queen of the topical arts of thought, helping people make many types of surprising connections. In creativity theory, Alfred Rothenberg has described the process of creativity in science and in the arts as involving metaphor as well as maintaining or manipulating the tensions between oppositions. This is a more subtle way of positioning oppositions, and much more promising than that of the monolithically oppositional Sunday morning news shows. Romantic ideology has it that creative thought cannot be taught. The very complexity of most creative acts makes many today argue that writing, an exemplary case of the performance of thought, cannot be taught. So what function can topics serve? What exactly might a flexible topical system do?

Pertinent questions, among others, remain:

- Can topical thought help us in indexing, in retrieving information on the Web and in online data bases?
- Can topical systems or arts help us orient ourselves and others in cyberspace?
- Can they describe or prescribe possible cognitive moves through cyberspace, or through various problem spaces?

- Are they useful for surveying various aspects of a problem?
- Are they useful for defining a problem, seeing how others have defined similar problems, seeing that no one has?
- Are they useful for evaluating the political implications of working on a particular problem, or of not working on it?
- Are they useful for evaluating the position or worth of information or a source?
- What might a particular system do, and will it really do what it aims to do?
- How can its effectiveness be judged?

Perhaps most practically, is any topical system capable of remaining simple and portable, comprising a truly helpful human-computer interface? Importantly, an art with a critical as well as creative edge is needed because the seeming free play of the internet is not really free. As my library science collaborator Jana Moring has written, it is controlled by controlled vocabulary—of indexers at the purest, of those with axes to grind, be they (post)industrialists or their politicians or public relations and advertising folk. A user can't find anything that's not there. What's been left out? I remember how frustrating it was just a few years ago to research women's history in history indexes—when the major history indexes were not indexing that work. Knowledge was being produced, but was not accessible, even when I knew it was there. What if I hadn't known it existed at all? We do not ask questions about what is invisible or imperceptible, closing off our possibilities.

In addition, as we consider topos, where are the gaps, the silences? What's not being talked about? Who's not online? What remains unlinked?

Vico's metaphor for the totality of knowledge was the university. He remembered when Socrates contained the wisdom of a whole university. Hermann Hesse's *Glass Bead Game* describes the unity of knowledge as a game with moves encompassing and relating all fields, all knowledge. Today the metaphor for the totality of knowledge may become the electronic network of all knowledge in digital form. But we should be careful not to confer on this age-old ideal of a unity of knowledge any more than a virtual reality. The free play of the totality of knowledge in cyberspace is neither free nor total (and neither is any heuristic or topical system of managing information and creating knowledge). Yet, as Vico admits of Cartesianism even as he critiqued it, it has its advantages, which should not to be dismissed or ignored. Mathematical thought has succeeded wildly, both inside and outside its own realm, as Vico acknowledged and predicted it would. Partly as a consequence, we have our currently exploding network of digitized information that, along with our existing print systems, may soon mean that the average citizen can find out more information more easily than ever before.

The implications for democratic culture are great, but only as great as people's ability to understand and reposition as well as to create information for their own uses. Democracy will succeed only as well as our ability to collect actively and connect knowledge and tell our own narratives from our own locations. Classically, a topos signified a "place," and the concept of positioning and place remains important in producing effective discourse.

But what if most people can't position themselves in cyberspace? Will this leave them in u-topia—literally, no place? To consider yet another danger of place, let us hope that teaching public discourse with the new technology means more than teaching an inert population simply to know their place. An active and effec-

tive critical literacy will be crucial in the next century. What is happening today suggests that the place of those without active and productive language arts and available technology will be determined by others more adept in the quickly evolving arts of focusing and structuring human attention in a variety of media. ☺

Works Cited

- Bender, John, and David E. Wellbery. "The Ends of Rhetoric: History, Theory, and Practice." *Rhetorality: On the Modernist Return of Rhetoric*. Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 1990, 3-39.
- Danesi, Marcel. *Giambattista Vico and the Cognitive Science Enterprise*. New York: Peter Lang, 1995.
- Giuliani, Alessandro. "Vico's Rhetorical Philosophy and the New Rhetoric," *Giambattista Vico's Science of Humanity*. Eds. Giorgio Tagliacozzo and Donald Philip Verene. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1976, 31-46.
- Lauer, Janice M., et al. *Four Worlds of Writing*. New York: Harper & Row, 1985.
- . "Invention." *Theorizing Composition: A Critical Sourcebook of Theory and Scholarship in Contemporary Composition Studies*. Ed. Mary Lunch Kennedy. Westport, CT: Greenwood P, 1998, 163-67.
- Kinneavy, James L. *A Theory of Discourse*. New York: Norton, 1971.
- Lanham, Richard A. *The Electronic Word: Democracy, Technology and the Arts*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1993.
- McKeon, Richard. "The Uses of Rhetoric in a Technological Age: Architectonic Productive Arts." *Rhetoric: Essays in Invention and Discovery*. Ed. Mark Backman. Woodbridge, CT: Ox Bow Press, 1987.
- Megill, Allan. "Jorn Rusen's Theory of Historiography: Between Modernism and Rhetoric of Inquiry." *History and Theory* 33 (1994): 39-60.
- Rothenberg, Alfred. *The Emerging Goddess: The Creative Process in Art, Science, and Other Fields*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1979.
- Verene, Donald Philip. *Vico's Science of Imagination*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1981.
- Vico, Giambattista. *The New Science of Giambattista Vico*. Trans. Thomas Goddard Bergin and Max Harold Fisch. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1984.
- . *On the Most Ancient Wisdom of the Italians Unearthed from the Origins of the Latin Language*. Trans. and intro. L. M. Palmer. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1988.
- . *On the Study Methods of Our Time*. Trans. Elio Gianturco. Indianapolis: Bobbs Merrill, 1965.
- Wright, Michael. Class presentation. Method and Theory in Women's Studies, University of Oklahoma, Fall 1996.
- Young, Richard E., Alton L. Becker, and Kenneth L. Pike. *Rhetoric: Discovery and Change*. New York: Harcourt, 1970.
- Young, Richard E. and Alton L. Becker. "Toward a Modern Theory of Rhetoric: A Tagmemic Contribution." *Harvard Educational Review* 35 (1965): 450-68.

Spirituality in Pedagogy: “A Field of Possibilities”

Susan A. Schiller

After six years of exploring a spiritual approach to teaching, I finally used all my courage and proposed my dream course: Contemplation in Literature and Writing. As a special topics course for juniors and seniors, English 395 relied on meditation and other sensory experiences as a means to explore contemplation. I wanted students (and myself) to discover why and how contemplation stimulates growth and allows art to manifest itself when applied to writing. I admit to feeling a little like Lewis and Clark traversing the winding rivers, but I knew the possibilities that lay ahead were important to discover. By the end of the semester, I knew, too, that their discovery would have been impossible without experiential learning. This article describes the activities, offers student responses as evidence for combining education and spirituality, and encourages other teachers who are about to enter this exciting field.

A spiritual approach to teaching enhances traditional pedagogy, which we know is based on reason and logic, by adding intuitive and subjective experiences that also improve cognition. Such an approach integrates time for inward growth; it draws on “the unconditioned being that sleeps within” (Moffett 10); and it subverts conditions that work against students’ spiritual development. These elements undoubtedly politicize the pedagogy and come with some risk if activities are not carefully planned and implemented. I will briefly add here that a spiritual approach is not for every teacher, for it takes a certain type of courage that comes from one’s own spiritual development and experiences in the classroom. I have success with it precisely because I have worked a long time at this kind of development, and I am convinced of its worth. I am also committed to designing pedagogy that produces the best possible outcomes for students but which does not compromise standard academic goals the university expects me to meet. As I would with any other theoretical base, I go to the experts to see what they advise. James Moffett, Parker Palmer, John Dewey, and Donald Gallehr have supported the efficacy of this pedagogy.

The theoretical position, for me at least, is not easy to define because it seems to shift each time I add another block of experience to my repertoire. Moffett says a spiritual pedagogy “works through deep feeling,” that “it honors the experiencer, and the range and depth of experience is the key to growth” (14). I currently believe that the theory can best be explained by understanding the degree of experience it elicits. Spiritual pedagogy, as I teach it, provides an experience of practicing awareness, of developing a greater range in our aware-

Susan A. Schiller is a professor of English at Central Michigan University. She is a former Director of Composition, and her work in spirituality as educational theory and practice dates from 1992.

ness. It offers a chain reaction of growth. One begins to become mindful, intensely aware of the moment by consistently drawing one's attention to the moment or the activity in the moment. One pays attention to the stillness and to the essence in the moment. With some practice, moments begin linking to each other like railroad cars or atoms in a molecule. Awareness increases. With greater amounts of awareness, there naturally exists greater amounts of attention and greater amounts of patience. This, in turn, stimulates growth in comprehension of subject matter. As one goes inward to focus on the moment, the inner being is projected like an artistic relief against the outer experience. The inner being of self is therefore essential in developing our ability to know and feel. As Parker Palmer explains:

At the deepest reaches, knowing requires us to imagine the inner standpoint of the subject—of that historical moment, of that literary character, of that rock, or of that ear of corn. . . . We must believe in the subject's inner life and enter with empathy into it, an empathy unavailable to us when we neither believe in nor cultivate an inner life of our own. (105-06)

A spiritual approach to teaching opens up a space in which the inner and outer are both recognized and valued. It brings together thought and emotion. It does not distance the knower from the known but integrates each as essential to one another.

In the case of choosing spirituality for the classroom, Jon Kabat-Zinn's words on meditation can easily be transferred as advice about such a selection. He tells us that "it is virtually impossible, and senseless anyway, to commit yourself to a daily meditation practice without some view of why you are doing it, what its value might be in your life, a sense of why this might be *your* way and not just another tilting at imaginary windmills" (75). In other words, we have to know why we choose. It is also quite simple. If teachers are drawn to pedagogy based in spirituality, they need a firm faith in its efficacy as well as courage to use practices that other teachers may question and challenge. Careful preparation and attention to documenting results will determine future classroom practices.

Course Description

One's drawing inward to awaken the being within requires practice *and opportunity* to reflect on the changes that occur as the process evolves. I designed Contemplative Approaches to Literature to do this and turned to mindfulness practice to provide the experiential basis in the course. I wanted to attract juniors and seniors who were interested in developing writing skills while also exploring literature that promoted a spiritual life. To introduce the rich and global aspect of meditation, I used Daniel Goleman's text, *Varieties of the Meditative Experience*. Goleman's overview of a variety of meditative practices (Concentration, Insight, Hindu Bhakti, Jewish Kabbalah, Sufism, Transcendental Meditation, Yoga, Tibetan Buddhism, Zen, Christianity, and Native American) places meditation into a legitimate historical and global context while also establishing the fact that

people all over the world practice some form of meditation in order to enrich their daily lives. I clearly emphasized that my purpose in presenting this information was not meant to encourage religious conversion, and that any future discussion of the religious would be limited to literary and rhetorical boundaries. This put the students at ease while also arousing their curiosity.

After this short overview, we read Thich Nhat Hanh and Kabat-Zinn. They provided a more detailed view of mindfulness practice, a practice I suspected would attract most of the students. Since our brief overview was insufficient preparation for them to use most of the various practices, students were then asked to develop a personal practice that they could commit to for the next fifteen weeks. I only asked that they attempt to practice at least fifteen minutes daily or if they found that too difficult, to practice three or four times each week. They were also free to simply use their "meditation time" in silence, like a "time out" from everyday activities. Those students that entered the class with an ongoing practice were free to continue or change it in any way they chose.

Thich Nhat Hanh is credited for introducing the gentle practice of "mindfulness" to American audiences. He defines "mindfulness" as "keeping one's consciousness alive to the present reality" (11). In other words, one attempts to give full attention to the moment. Kabat-Zinn further popularized the approach in *Wherever You Go There You Are*. His easy-to-follow guidelines for developing a personal practice are cleverly supported by numerous contemplative quotations, many of them from Henry David Thoreau. This rhetorical appeal increases Kabat-Zinn's ethos and encourages an American audience to become "mindful." Indeed, his book title has even become a popular euphemism for being in that "mindful" state. As I suspected, most of my students were immediately attracted to the apparent "ease" with which "mindfulness" may be practiced, and they proceeded to integrate it into their existing practice or begin it for the first time. I joined them and began a practice of "mindfulness" for myself. We began with five minutes of silence in the classroom after which we talked about what our minds and senses experienced during the five minutes. Periodically throughout the semester, we would share silence in this way. Mostly, however, we practiced meditation outside of class and in our own way. Class time was reserved for academic activities like discussion groups and writing workshops. We also regularly discussed aspects or challenges that were brought about by our meditation practice.

To maintain academic standards and meet curricular expectations, I chose to enhance the cognitive domain and move beyond it through experiential learning that integrated mind and body, as well as spirit. I believed John Dewey who tells us that "qualities of sense, those of touch and taste as well as of sight and hearing, have esthetic [sic] quality. But they have it not in isolation but in their connections; as interacting, not as simple and separate entities" (120). This meant I needed to develop activities that relied upon sensory stimulation and which would increase learning retention. During the course we drew mandalas following instructions suggested by Fran Claggett with Joan Brown as outlined in their book *Drawing Your Own Conclusions*. We used standing meditations outdoors with trees and walking meditations in the classroom. Students used an exercise that I learned from Joyce Hancock in a workshop she facilitated at the 1992 AEPL Conference in Colorado. Hancock's exercise asks students to hold eye contact with

one another in order to release endorphins in the brain. They repeatedly ask each other the question "Who are you?" It is an intense activity that breaks the ice as it also draws attention to the inner self. I brought in a crystal bowl for toning and moved back and forth between its rich loud tone with other softer tones from bells, drums and various tapes of ethnic instrumentation. We easily moved out of toning into chanting where we could feel the release of voice and the power of breath as we made meaning with sound. We also used essential oils to understand how the olfactory nerve directly links with the brain and determines much of what we find agreeable or disagreeable. We further explored the connections between scent and memory. All of these exercises were followed with writing assignments either in journals or formal essays.

I also invited two guest speakers who are recognized experts in their field. Dr. Guy Newland, professor of religion and meditation practitioner for many years, came to speak of his personal experience with his practice. Rev. Doug Welsch, Native American Healer, came to speak of alternative healing practices and of using a person's dream state as a way to understand our individual conditions. A third speaker came to us by chance, providence if you will, when we went on a retreat together.

For extra credit, I suggested that the students select and participate in an off-campus retreat, but the students instead requested that I organize such a retreat and that we go together as a group. I chose Nethercut Woods, a biological site with extensive acreage owned by our university. The lodge house there is used by many groups on campus and is perfectly suited for an all-day retreat. One Saturday, all but two of us left campus in a school van at 6:00 a.m. so we could arrive at sunrise. Upon arrival we discovered the site had been double-booked, but the Native American group already there invited us to share the space until they left after lunch. They also joined us in a drumming circle to welcome the morning and to honor our opportunity to share time and to grow together. Dr. Lloyd Elm, Native American Healer and Elder, had traveled from Minnesota to speak to the Native American group, and he welcomed all of us with great warmth. He did not lecture or have a prepared speech but rather relied on the natural flow of human curiosity to direct our conversation.

The extraordinary generosity which came to us and which we returned by sharing food we had brought set a special tone to our retreat. This is the charm that moved with this class. It happened because we needed it and because we were open to being mindful of the immediate reality. We moved beyond the normal range of a typical college literature class by enhancing it with experiential activity and a careful attention to finding appreciation in all we did as well as in each other.

In addition to the experiential and spiritual activities, we engaged in the more traditional forms of academic assignments. Students were required to read seven books,¹ analyze rhetorical structures used in those books, discuss writing tech-

¹ The required texts were Henry Beston's *The Outermost House*, Thich Nhat Hanh's *The Miracle of Mindfulness*, A Manual on Meditation, Bear Heart's *The Wind is My Mother*, Jon Kabat-Zinn's *Wherever You Go There You Are*, Thomas Merton's *New Seeds of Contemplation*, and Henry David Thoreau's *Walden: or, Life in the Woods*.

niques and literary choices used by the authors and then select and apply various techniques in their own writing. They used literary and rhetorical techniques when writing that ranged from standard organizational choices and modes to more creative and sophisticated concerns like perspective, voice, metaphor, symbolism, motifs, rhythm and sound. Since I thoroughly explained the objectives for each non-traditional and traditional assignment, students easily accepted both types and blended them without hesitation.

Students' Reflections

Based on self-reported data gathered from end-of-semester reflective essays, the benefits were many and covered a broad range. Students reported improvements in their cognitive abilities, in their daily lifestyles, and in their spiritual lives. Almost all of them wrote about stress management and the way mindfulness taught them to maintain greater awareness in general. This increase in awareness led to other benefits such as increases in creativity, heightened energy levels, greater calmness and patience, and perception shifts. They began to see the world in new ways that helped them cope and which taught them to see their future adult lives as a time of lifelong learning. Their writing took on stylistic elements of writers we were reading. Their willingness to engage in reflective discourse grew as did their attention spans. While all of the students reported important changes in their lives, two in particular, Angie and Susan, experienced dramatic personal growth. Their cases seem striking because their starting points were so starkly polarized; they also are representative of two extreme types of students teachers might expect to be openly critical of, or even hostile to, a spiritual approach.

From a previous course Angie had taken with me, I knew her to be a serious young woman who was mature beyond her years. She was editor of the student newspaper and active in her church. As a charismatic Catholic, Angie openly and frequently spoke of her deep faith in spirit. It served her well; she easily identified herself as a Christian every chance she got. However, Angie also was interested in learning additional ways to develop spiritually. She desired to further improve her writing skills and was motivated to take English 395 because it met both her needs.

Prior to the class, Angie believed she "would not gain anything by nurturing the personal part of her life." As a result, she often worked seven days a week. On Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays she would work until 11 p.m. She also worked every day at a daycare from 6 a.m. to 11 a.m. and was a member of several groups. To top this load, she carried fifteen credit hours of coursework. During English 395, mindfulness initiated a major shift in her worldview. In her words, she came to see herself as "spirit." This large shift compelled her to "unplug" from many of her activities in order to allow more spirit to enter. She wanted to "have time to concentrate on one, solitary task rather than being forced to concentrate on several." She wrote:

It is sort of like electricity. If you have seventeen cords going out of one outlet, you are bound to have a problem. Each time you plug

another thing in, the electricity flickers and more juice is sucked out of the outlet. As a result of one outlet having seventeen plugs, the lights are dim, the iron is warm rather than hot, and the television screen flickers at will. Eventually it blows a fuse and can do nothing. This is the reflection of my spirit. So, as an outlet is only capable of two plugs, my spirit is only capable of tackling one task at a time in a state of mindfulness. . . .

Ever since the song "I'm Every Woman" aired, Angie says she had been "trying to live up to the song's lyrics of being every woman: a mother, a daughter, a worker, a student, a writer, a wife, a learner, an artist, a daycare worker, a counselor and a mentor." She writes,

I was doing five tasks at a time and doing them mediocre. This is not the case any longer. Mindfulness has made me more conscious of my limits and through this I have learned how to achieve my goals. Now I work on being mindful and simply being the best me, the best Angie.

According to Angie, these changes led to a number of benefits: improved relations with her husband, friends and family; better decision-making abilities; a heightened awareness of those around her; stronger listening skills, particularly during college lectures; additional time for prayer; a new awareness of nature; fewer distractions during study time; changes in her writing process; and an increase of patience with the multiple and simultaneous tasks newspaper editors face in their everyday routine. While Angie's profile may be considered extreme by some, it cannot be denied that Angie changed in dramatic ways as a result of the contemplative and spiritual base in English 395. Were these long lasting results?

Four months after the course ended, I conducted telephone surveys (see Appendix A). At that time, I found that Angie was still meditating twice each day (morning and night). She reported benefits such as decreased stress, more focus, better sleep, a higher quality in her work, and an ability to settle into a calm state that assists her concentration during classes. She particularly valued the multiple forms of meditation we had studied at the onset of the course and appreciated the broader knowledge of other cultures and the religions within which many contemplative practices are founded. It is not surprising in her case to note that she disliked the lack of depth in our discussion of various religions. She considered these discussions to be too superficial, citing them as the least useful part of the course. Even so, she was determined to state that everything in the course had a purpose and was beneficial on some level.

A second example, nearly as extreme as Angie, comes from Susan, a non-traditional student with a family. Susan quickly established herself as the "class skeptic who was nearly an atheist." Of herself she writes:

I have a strong image of myself as a practical person, without religious superstitions or any need for them. I feel somewhat superior

to those people who depend on the 'crutch' of religion—often just a cop-out for personal responsibility—and I have resisted the idea of accepting contemplative practice into my life in any permanent way. Why should I? I am not looking for God. But there is something I'd like to find, something already in me. I recognize some elusive part of me that has yet to emerge, like a shadow which can't be seen until I step into a light. I know it's there. I'm looking for that.

Many adult students who return to school are motivated by the element of "elusive self" that Susan describes. Already established in a hectic life, balancing family, work and school, Susan's questions reflected her need to filter out non-essential information and activity that would most likely compound her overly packed life. Resistant to contemplative practices and teachings, her critical eye and voice caused all of us to sift carefully through the course material in order to harvest the essential. Mindfulness practice became an "essential" for Susan and led her to develop new personal habits that also supported her academic demands.

Due to employment responsibilities, Susan was one of the students who could not attend the day-long retreat at Nethercut Woods. To compensate, she decided to create her own retreat, a day of silence at her parents' home during a time they would be absent. She arrived at their home just after six a.m. During the first four hours, she occupied herself with breathing exercises, watching the sky, taking out the garbage, raking leaves, and browsing through several books about contemplative practices. She considered the nature of her "wandering mind" Dinty Moore describes in *The Accidental Buddhist*. He tells readers not to be discouraged by the wandering mind for it is "very normal." In response to this she says:

I haven't become discouraged. Instead, I have developed a sincere commitment to the contemplative process that surprises me. Maybe it is the influence of others in my Contemplative Practice course that has affected me. In *The Miracle of Mindfulness*, Thich Nhat Hanh writes, "If in one class, one student lives in mindfulness, the entire class is influenced." (64)

After reaching these conclusions, she spent time at her mother's computer where she felt "something close to relief at allowing [herself] to communicate again." She began a list of words to "indicate what was important" to her. A list of questions came to mind about life goals, jobs, aspirations. Thoreau's words "Simplify, simplify, simplify!" arose in her mind. She tried a breathing meditation, "but missed the motion of [her] walking meditations and began to move through the house" resisting various temptations to distract herself from the silence she was attempting to live. She went back to the list, and finally "I am a writer" came to her mind as "a typed image, white courier type against a black background. Period. Like this: I am a writer."

Susan treated this image as an epiphany. When she left her silent retreat, she believed she had reached a new life goal to become the writer she had always

postponed.² At the end of the term, four weeks later, this new goal was still strongly in place. She concludes the course (and her reflective essay) by writing:

By conscious endeavor, I have been able to admit to myself a life-long longing I had suppressed for “practical” reasons. By conscious endeavor, I will work to realize the dream. Through contemplative practice, I not only broke down my prejudices about what is essentially prayer but was able to gain personal insight. If I never write—I will, of that I am newly confident, but even if I never did—the realization that it is all I ever really wanted to do is reason enough to consider this class experience successful. It turns out I just wanted to get to know the Self who lives in my innermost house.³

Even though these realizations may seem monumental and staggering in terms of life changes, they weren’t the most useful to come out of the class for Susan. She came to value the “half smile” as the most useful because it was simple, easy, and accessible moment by moment.

Nhat Hanh writes of the half smile in *The Miracle of Mindfulness: A Manual on Meditation*. It is one of several exercises he recommends that form the foundation of meditation. The half smile serves as a reminder to take hold of breath, to refocus on the moment, and to grow calm again (79). Since we read Nhat Hanh during the second week of the course, Susan had nearly the entire semester to use the half smile, and use it she did. She used it to relax herself, to ward off irritation, to lead her into patience and tolerance, to prevent stress, to facilitate better human relations with co-workers, to increase mental focus, and to ease her into the day upon waking. The innocuous little half smile, seemingly innocent and insignificant, burrowed itself into Susan’s daily habits, causing self development that she never expected. Being of a skeptical but reflective nature, Susan was careful to observe it and record the outcomes at the end of the term.

Four months later, Susan was meditating three to four times weekly, but she indicated that she would like to do it more. She said her meditation practice calmed her down, helped her to slow the pace and keep things in perspective. It helped her organize thoughts, especially when writing. She found it easier to juggle multiple thoughts and actions without getting tense. It helped her stay focused. She did not notice any direct increase in creativity, but said she had more confidence in what she did express. Meditating also allowed her to ignore the clutter in her mind, and thus she was able to focus on the things that are really important

² Susan has written short stories. *Playboy* published a joke she wrote. A magazine indicated it would publish a story after revisions, but she was working overtime and never revised it. One of her instructors contacted her parents to ask that they encourage her writing ability, but she was pregnant at the time and financial concerns kept her from developing her talent. At the time she took the silent retreat, her life provided her with sufficient income and time to pursue writing.

³ Here Susan alludes to Henry Beston’s *The Outermost House*, required reading. In her final essay she refers to Beston’s style of contemplative living, likening it to her own, as a method of meditation that asks for one to simply “pay attention.”

to her. She still did not consider herself spiritual in the religious sense, but the class helped her develop her own spiritual acts without being religious. Time taken for meditation helped her be more confident in her creativity and in her intelligence. She was able to organize priorities and was not bothered by small things she called "the daily irritations." In fact, she said meditation helps her enjoy and appreciate daily chores. She thought the reflective essay at the end of the course was the most important part of the class, because it "provided cohesiveness to the meditative life." Surprised by the development of a long term practice, she said "the class changed [her], and [her] husband agrees."

Outcomes reported by the other students, while not so extreme in terms of whole life changes, are similar to outcomes described by Angie and Susan. Other students reported the following:

- a growing ability to stay focused, particularly during lectures;
- a new calmness and patience when coping with stressful situations and people;
- a new appreciation for education that went beyond "learning just for the grade";
- a greater value for nature and environmental issues;
- increases in cognitive skills such as creativity, listening, speaking, reading, and writing;
- an ability to clear the mind of chatter.

For example, Andy said that, prior to this course, he couldn't access his creativity on demand, but now after meditation he could. John said that the course had been a unique experience because it allowed an opportunity to develop wisdom rather than just acquire knowledge. Craig reported a "liberation of the mind," a stronger sense of curiosity and a new attentiveness in other classes. These ideas became refrains that repeated in the students' assessment essays. Annie and Courtney said that the static in their minds was the primary distraction that prevented focus. Annie reported that she did not even realize her mind was "full of static" until she had read Kabat-Zinn. Then she learned how to clear it out through mindfulness practice. Like Annie, Courtney said she "felt almost as if [she were] doing mind-cleaning by getting rid of unnecessary thoughts and making room for the thoughts that really mattered." Greg became more "focused on the moment at hand and thought about that moment, considered the significance of that moment, and tried to get enjoyment out of that moment." Before he had considered everything to be a burden on his time. Mindfulness taught him to see everything as an opportunity for something good to happen. He had begun to develop a major shift in the way he saw action that affected his life. Dillon, who had a similar reversal in perspective, phrased it more metaphorically and with a bit of humor. He wrote about a dog and a person playing fetch:

I believe that oftentimes a person thinks that the dog is quite stupid, for every time the master throws a stick, the idiot dog runs and retrieves it. This pattern occurs over and over again throughout the world. Now what if every time a person throws a stick and the dog goes and fetches it, the dog is thinking to himself how stupid the human is, every time I go and get this stick he goes and throws it again.

These are profound changes, to be sure, and while the course can account for stimulating them, the students themselves deserve special recognition because they were ready for and open to change.

Students' responses to the telephone survey further support the efficacy of a spiritual pedagogy and suggest that long-term benefits are a reasonable expectation. Dillon was the only student to stop meditating, but he said his practice had never been firmly established during the course. He also told me that the *notion* of mindfulness was the longest lasting benefit because he developed a greater awareness of being "rooted in the now" and that he still does things with greater attention as a result.⁴ Andy, Greg, and Craig reported that they meditated occasionally, perhaps three times a month or whenever stress became too unmanageable. All the other students were meditating several times each week, if not daily. The long-term benefits were much like those they had experienced at the end of fifteen weeks. In hindsight, they especially valued the overview and exposure to various forms of meditation as well as being part of a group who could openly talk to each other; the readings from Thoreau emerged as the least favorite part of the course.

These results were gathered at the four- and eight-month junctures of the students' experience with contemplative living. The results seem to bear out what Nhat Hanh tells us to expect. He advises:

In the first six months, try only to build up your power of concentration, to create an inner calmness and serene joy. You will shake off anxiety, enjoy total rest, and quiet your mind. You will be refreshed and gain a broader, clearer view of things, and deepen and strengthen the love in yourself and you will be able to respond more helpfully to all around you. (42)

The basic nature of spirituality is rooted in mystery, grace, and altruism. On the surface, as such, it seems far removed from education. Yet I believe that we educate and become educated for the same reasons, for in education, mystery is answered by the accumulation of knowledge, grace is received every time we reach insight, and altruism is practiced when our knowledge is applied in our communities. Therefore, it seems only natural to blend spirituality and education.

Teachers using a spiritual approach need to shape carefully their pedagogy from a well-informed basis and to identify clear objectives. A spiritual approach is an extremely political act and as such may be risky if not well thought out. At every conference where I have spoken to audiences about the spiritual approach to pedagogy, there has been at least one strong voice of opposition. Some people have called this voice, "the heckler," for this voice demands accountability and

⁴ As a philosophy major not far from graduation, Dillon demonstrated a great affinity for ideas rather than for experience. While willing to participate in class activities, he struggled with developing a personal meditation practice. I respected his natural tendencies, never pushed him into a practice, and waited to see how the course might affect him. Of all the students, he strongly held on to ideas and challenged all of us with intellectual argument as a means of persuasion.

believes that the spirit of our students is better left to the church(es), to the priests, rabbis and ministers. Rather than fear this voice, I try to listen and to respond with evidence from a solid information base. Often, several if not many people in the audience are aroused by the opposition and defend the spiritual approach along with me. However, most times this strong form of opposition cannot be appeased, for people in this camp seem unable to broaden their working definition of what it means to be a spiritual person in education. I've come to expect such resistance and my final answer to the hardline naysayers repeats what I wrote earlier in this article: a spiritual approach is not for every teacher (just as deconstruction is not for every teacher). To those I always say, leave it alone, but give me the professional courtesy to develop and practice my own teaching theories.

To those who are drawn to a spiritual approach, I say start the same way you do for other approaches. Use a working definition of the theory, select specific and concrete objectives, devise ways to assess your success, be prepared with reasons and answers when skeptics challenge you. Expect your working definition to change and grow, expect your practices to shift in demand to the definition as it changes. Know that your way is part of your professional integrity and capability. Be certain you are not just tilting at imaginary windmills. And, like in any situation of risk (academic and nonacademic), document, document, document. Data, such as I present here, can be very persuasive, as well as encouraging. It can inform you about what works in your course and about what should be dropped. A well planned course is defensible to all those who might question it, whether they be friends, members of promotion and hiring committees, your department chair, your dean, your students, or your hecklers. After six years of teaching this way, I have explained it to many different interest groups and have been able to do so because the planning and the outcomes were carefully shaped and documented. Attitude helps a lot, too. I answer the opposition with confidence and facts, rather than with fear and platitudes.

A spiritual approach is really very much like what we have been doing for years already. It includes the same mechanisms, the same processes, the same content. The difference lies in addition. When we add non-cognitive experiences, we meet innate needs in our students, needs that have been too long neglected by isolating learning to cognitive regions. By adding to a firm cognitive base, we do not leave this base behind. We simply enhance it. And when we are successful, we help students find the Self who lives in their innermost house. We establish a field of possibilities. ☺

Works Cited

- Beston, Henry. *The Outermost House*. New York: Viking, 1967.
- Claggett, Fran and Joan Brown. *Drawing Your Own Conclusions*. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook, 1992.
- Foehr, Regina Paxton, and Susan A. Schiller, eds. *The Spiritual Side of Writing*. Portsmouth, NC: Boynton/Cook, 1997.
- Dewey, John. *Art as Experience*. New York: Putnam, 1980.
- Gallehr, Donald R. "Wait and the Writing Will Come: Meditation and the Composing Process." *Presence of Mind: Writing and the Domain Beyond the Cognitive*. Eds. Alice Glarden Brand and Richard L. Graves. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook, 1994. 21-30.
- Goleman, Daniel. *The Varieties of the Meditative Experience*. New York: Dutton, 1977.
- Hanh, Thich Nhat. *The Miracle of Mindfulness, A Manual on Meditation*. Boston: Beacon, 1976.
- Heart, Bear. *The Wind is My Mother*. New York: Clarkson Potter, 1996.
- Kabat-Zinn, Jon. *Wherever You Go There You Are*. New York: Hyperion, 1994.
- Merton, Thomas. *New Seeds of Contemplation*. New York: New Directions, 1972.
- Moffett, James. "Soul School." *The Spiritual Side of Writing*. Eds. Regina Paxton Foeher and Susan A. Schiller. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook, 1997. 5-14.
- James, William. *The Varieties of Religious Experience*. New York: Macmillan, 1961.
- Moore, Dinty W. *The Accidental Buddhist: Mindfulness, Enlightenment, and Sitting Still*. Chapel Hill, NC: Algonquin, 1997.
- Palmer, Parker. *The Courage to Teach*. San Fransico: Jossey-Bass, 1998.
- Thoreau, Henry David. *Walden: or, Life in the Woods*. New York: Signet, 1980.

Appendix A: Telephone Survey Questions (Administered 15 weeks after ENG 395 ended)

1. Are you now meditating?
2. If so, what are the benefits?
3. If not, at what point did you stop?
4. What did you consider to be the most important part of the course?
5. What did you consider to be the least important part of the course?

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank the students who participated in this study: Susan McIntosh, Dillon Moorehead, Andy Partlo, John Lybeer, Annie Heitjan, Angela Cook, Courtney Sutherby, Greg Becker, and Craig Porubsky.

REVIEWS

Starkey, David ed. *Teaching Writing Creatively*. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton-Cook/Heinemann, 1998.

Anne E. Mullin

Each of the 17 short essays David Starkey selected for his collection, *Teaching Writing Creatively*, gives value to the reader. But the value of the book to writing teachers is far more than the sum of the selections. Starkey has chosen and arranged the contributions so that they speak to each other as well as to readers.

And speak they do in voices that are familiar (Toby Fulweiler, Wendy Bishop, John Boe, Art Young, and Muriel Harris, for example) and perhaps less familiar (Lee Martin, Alys Culhane, Hephzibah Roskelly, among others.) These are all compelling voices of obviously fine teachers, candidly telling us what they do and why, what works and what sometimes does not, in a kind of call and response of practice alternating with theory. Swelling the chorus are voices of students, also, liberally represented to give refreshing testimony about how they are learning to write.

Starkey's underlying premise for the book is the need for "polyculture" or "cross-pollination" of areas of writing too often "isolated from each other"—in other words, the need to break down arbitrary and unfruitful distinctions between creative writing and composition pedagogies. Will Hochman, in his essay on using Richard Hugo's creative writing legacy (specifically *The Triggering Town*, 1984) states the position plainly:

Whether you are a teacher of creative writing or composition, or both, is not important . . . good student writing is only marginally about genre. It has more to do with intelligence, creativity, and language skills. (44-45)

Indeed, teachers of freshman composition, introductory literature courses, creative writing workshops for beginners or advanced students, as well as those who might like to foster writing activities in, say, a history or anthropology course, will find the discussions and examples engaging and useful.

Both newer and experienced teachers will appreciate the diversity of strategies discussed. For example, while veteran writing teachers may have been assigning collage writing or process notes for years, treatments of such techniques in *Teaching Writing Creatively* lead to fresh thinking and connections to other strategies we may not have tried before. Toby Fulweiler's "Writing Snapshots," written as a series of "crots," demonstrates such an alternative approach. A few pages later, we find Sheryl Fontaine and Francie Quaas demonstrating their use of collages; this chapter now seems more appealingly "new" because of its rela-

tionship to the Fulweiler piece and because of connections between the two groups of students quoted. In its turn, Starkey's own article on using the Language Poets in his writing classes—even freshman composition classes—gains in meaning and possibilities for application because it follows Fulweiler and echoes Hochman's piece on using Hugo. Further, Hans Ostrom's "Carom Shots" also invokes Hugo in describing some uses of imitation as a liberatory technique for writing teachers.

A reader revels in such cross connections. Michael Steinberg's piece may raise questions about student writing that appears to be off-the-wall fabrication; Boe's "The Degrees of the Lie" helps us understand that situation. Boe also gives us insightful ideas about requiring students to deliver their rough drafts orally, while Alys Culhane describes responding to student writing orally, on tape.

Several authors are concerned with developing students' sense of themselves as writers and as playing other roles in their own writing process. Muriel Harris applies a version of the Myers-Briggs Personality Type Inventory to spur self-aware talk and writing. Patrick Bizzaro draws on Ann Berthoff's concept of "triadicty" to make students consciously aware of their "interpretant" role (a C.S. Peirce term). Lee Martin has his students seek to discover their role as subjects or sources for writing by means of a "dialogue" with their stories. Wendy Bishop tells of getting her students to take on a teacher role in writing responses to their own work, in dialogue with themselves as writers. John Paul Tassoni likewise writes about dialoguing with his students' journals, in which they "dialog" with readings, class discussions and their own writing. And so it goes.

Starkey's metaphor of cross-pollination certainly plays out generatively as the chapters unfold. Three main divisions of the book are posted as "The Writing Class as a Site for Creativity," "Classroom Practices: Teaching Creatively" and "From Discovery to Response: New Approaches to Creative Writing." These divisions are easily (and best) ignored, however, by readers who want to indulge in the pleasures of ideas buzzing among the different contributors. *JAEPL* readers, especially, will want to follow up many of the relatively sparse but choice references at the ends of chapters to maintain this buzz.

JAEPL readers will also appreciate an important issue that Starkey touches on in his introduction, when he pays tribute to Donald Murray and Peter Elbow as teachers and writers (not included in the book) "who have transgressed against conventional notions of style, voice, and genre." Noting that "expressivists are generally out of favor in rhetoric and composition graduate programs, and the murky, still largely ill-defined world of creative writing may seem theoretically defective," he posits (citing Susan Hunter and Jane Tompkins) a certain amount of anxiety about "teaching composition in a departmentally or institutionally unapproved way."

Will *Teaching Writing Creatively* help relieve some of that anxiety for graduate students, who may be feeling (as one confided to me recently) a push to conduct her freshman composition course as a site for the production of corporate-inspired documents? Yes. Will the book help confirm and stimulate those of us long committed to the integration of "creative" practices in our composition classrooms? Yes. Will it encourage more collections documenting even more novel approaches to teaching writing in creative ways? One hopes so. ☺

McPhail, Mark Lawrence. *Zen in the Art of Rhetoric: An Inquiry into Coherence*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996.

Keith Rhodes

This book made me want much more than it gave me. It is still hard to sort out if that is praise or blame. The compromise I want to suggest is praising the author but blaming the book. Ultimately, the book cannot live up to the standard and promise it constructs for us; but then few books could. That it comes closer than most is a credit to its author's impressively broad and deep understanding.

Any discussion of McPhail's book has to start with a nod at the sheer audacity of his effort. His courage starts right in the title, a clear reference to both Eugen Herrigel's *Zen in the Art of Archery* and Robert Pirsig's *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*, two landmark texts in the history of Zen in the West. Just in case we might miss the point, quotations from Herrigel and discussions of Pirsig run throughout the book. Meanwhile, McPhail has aims even grander than his title suggests. McPhail means to explain not just the genuine nature of Zen, Sophism, rhetoric, postmodernism, and quantum mechanics, but also their merger in a radically different paradigm of rhetoric. Even beyond that, he means to demonstrate how this new paradigm might help us resolve troubling issues not just of theory but of race, gender and other social divisions.

While McPhail's book is not entirely up to meeting these grand ambitions, those ambitions produce valuable, if sometimes frustrating, results. The best of those results relate to a more limited aim, the further explanation and exemplification of McPhail's key concept of coherence. This seems to be a powerful idea in its best moments, genuinely too subtle to be summarized briefly here. The book is most inspiring in the moments when McPhail explains directly what he means by this concept of coherence. Nevertheless, too often McPhail settles for general waves in the direction of what seems a more complete and vital internal scheme in his own mind. In the end, distracted by much more extensive repetitions of less original postmodern arguments, many readers will find it difficult to be sure that they grasp McPhail's often sketchy explanations of his tantalizing idea.

Had its presentation been different, less traditional, one might suspect the book of a very Zen-like minimalism and organic form, meant to inspire insight more than to articulate concrete concepts. As it is, the book seems merely difficult, mostly following traditional scholarly models but doing so a bit inconsistently. Perhaps this is in part because, like so many traditional scholarly books, it is entirely constructed of pieces that have been published before, in a variety of journals. While McPhail has tended scrupulously to transitions and internal references between them, the chapters still diverge and overlap enough that it becomes hard to remain charitably aware that McPhail seeks a more specialized connotation of the term "coherence."

Ultimately, the paradoxes of the book come to seem less necessarily artful and more simply frustrating. For a book that urges us toward cooperative dia-

logue, it often insists on its own arguments, sometimes with cascades of fervent “musts” insisting upon immediate acceptance. For a book that hammers on the paradox by which criticism often takes on the qualities it criticizes, it—perhaps too predictably—very often shows the qualities it criticizes. Most deeply ironic is its dualistic trope of pitting all-bad dualism versus all-good coherence. Perhaps most puzzling is the consistent pummeling of traditional philosophical “seriousness” done in the unmistakable tones of traditional philosophical seriousness, if with a postmodern slant to its jargon. As Derrida, Cixous, and Barthes have best demonstrated, the most attractive way to present a genuinely new paradigm credibly is at least to attempt to use its methods. Given McPhail’s apparent ambitions, it is simply odd that instead he so often uses the very techniques of “essentialist” rhetorical argument that he repeatedly criticizes.

Toward the end, McPhail seems almost to address the tension created by these paradoxes of style and substance. He points out that he still believes in having students “honor the form” of traditional rhetoric, analogizing his belief with the way martial arts students rehearse traditional movements before leaving them behind in advanced, actual performance. Still, he never articulates an open argument for his own obvious use of the very forms he criticizes; and since he uses them in an advanced argument, not an exercise, any simple analogy with the martial arts breaks down almost as soon as the inference is drawn.

Even so, to focus only on this book’s failure to meet its own apparent ambitions would be to give McPhail far too little credit. His effort to define a rhetorical coherence that is genuinely constructive, of better communities and better ideas, arises out of a profound understanding of the inadequacies of both cultural critique and postmodern criticism in their main current forms. As he shows so well, these popular approaches too often ignore their implicit and even complicit furthering of the very problems they aim to solve. He understands clearly how Zen might help both forms of criticism to sort out some of their current problems, making them more fruitful by leading their practitioners out of more shallow, oppositional stances into a deeper, if messier, acceptance of paradox.

Further, McPhail is a consistently clear and broadly knowledgeable translator of Eastern thought. Interestingly in light of the title, Taoism often provides McPhail critical guidance for examining rhetoric itself, with Zen alone more completely supporting his examination of critical theories. In any event, McPhail not only understands Eastern thought as a whole well enough to explain it clearly but also knows how to use Eastern thought as a powerful clarifying lens for examining the nature of rhetoric. When he does this directly, shown best in his explication of the nonviolent rhetorical coherence of Gandhi and Martin Luther King, McPhail genuinely does extend our understanding of rhetoric and point the way toward the creation of a new paradigm out of existing, if scattered, potentials. McPhail seems to indicate that a resurrection of old Sophistic practices in light of Eastern thought could well support a kind of non-violent rhetorical martial art form. This, in turn, could help us understand tangibly the greater value of coherence—here perhaps roughly interpreted as a spirit of arguing toward wisdom rather than striving only for victory.

The good parts, then, are very good indeed. Moreover, the good parts genuinely do follow McPhail’s own advice about finding common ground, about see-

ing the complementary point of *yang* in every *yin*. Particularly effective in this regard are his limited sections of personal narrative, always warm and engaging even while being carefully applied to the book's larger purposes.

Still, even after accepting the likely value of the book's mysterious yet powerful core, I found its discussion too often diverted by an almost dogmatic faith in postmodernism (a paradox indeed). It seemed strange beyond the other quirks that someone writing about unique sources of wisdom should conform to this almost stereotypical feature of so much recent critical work in rhetoric. The attitude that postmodernism would eventually cure all rhetorical ills has probably crested and passed, but it runs all through these articles. Perhaps that is largely because they are revisions from the heyday of that attitude in the late '80s and early '90s, but the problem seems worse than that. In long stretches, McPhail's text exemplifies the circular barrage of jargon that has given postmodernism more force as an argumentative stance than as a way to accomplish anything.

Further, since McPhail's yearning for solutions to what Ann Berthoff has famously called "killer dichotomies" is so close to Berthoff's own passion, it is almost mysterious why McPhail does not examine her approaches to these same problems. In his best moments McPhail reminds me greatly of Berthoff, at once intellectual, constructive, and rigorously humane. I found myself hungry for more of those moments, dreading each new cycle of "deconstructing essentialism." Berthoff's own resort to the mediating power of American pragmatism seems much more likely to reach McPhail's ends than does his own attachment to a circular, "theoretically correct" version of postmodernism. In a crucial passage just before his discussion of King and Gandhi, where his ultimately mysterious vision of coherence seemed most nearly at hand, I felt as if McPhail was on the verge of this discovery and lacked only a better sense of his real allies.

That result is easily understood in the context of what gets published in most of our scholarship in the field, however. Ultimately, I see the worst parts of the book as flowing from the fashion trends in an entire discourse community and the best parts as written from McPhail's own understanding. Thus, I come away disappointed by the book but impressed by its author. I look forward to future works in which McPhail spends rather more time on his own insights and central message. My intuition is that at such a time we could point back to this book and find in it the beginnings of the larger understanding it made me crave but ultimately could not articulate satisfactorily.

This book is still well worth reading—a paradox that I hope is not too troubling by this point. Perhaps I want too much. I do wonder if that degree of plain statement of anything so doubly ineffable as the "Zen of rhetoric" is even possible. Yet the very form of McPhail's book argues that we should at least be able to derive a stable concept of coherence out of the explanation, something I found hard to do in any reliable way. If McPhail's real intent was to leave readers wanting more, he has succeeded admirably. ☺

Hirshfield, Jane, ed. *Women in Praise of the Sacred: 43 Centuries of Spiritual Poetry by Women*. New York: HarperCollins, 1994.

Ellen Davis

While listening to "All Things Considered" on National Public Radio one afternoon, I heard part of a story. It was about Indian women who, in a state of radical undress, appeared at the marketplace, shocked merchants and shoppers, and then disappeared back into the woods. These women, according to the broadcast, were mystics, seers, prophets. The images were of women as outcasts, of women as figures who shock others into a new kind of sight, and of the market as a gathering of an abundance of earthly pleasures that also points to a spirit world. Soon afterward I wrote a poem about such a female apparition.

It was with great pleasure, then, that while reading poet, translator and essayist Jane Hirshfield's anthology, *Women in Praise of the Sacred: 43 Centuries of Spiritual Poetry by Women*, I learned more about the tradition of shedding conventional dress. "*Bhakti* (devotional) poets" (77) devote their lives to the ecstatic praise of Shiva. Mirabai of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries is the most well-known of this group; Robert Bly translated several of her poems in this collection. A twelfth century poet, Mahadeviyakka, wrote the following about her practice and belief:

(On Her Decision to Stop Wearing Clothes)

Coins in the hand
Can be stolen,
But who can rob this body
Of its own treasure?

The last thread of clothing
Can be stripped away
But who can peel off Emptiness
That nakedness covering all?

Fools, while I dress
In the Jasmine Lord's morning light,
I cannot be shamed—
What would you have me hide under silk
And the glitter of jewels?

(78)

The theme of giving up worldly goods to refine and redefine the mystic's soul is one that transcends culture and geography. Hirshfield's book equally represents the tradition of immanence, of refusing the philosophy of dualism between sacred and profane. Many of the poets here embrace physical love, revel in nature and cherish beautiful things, and find good and godliness in the world rather than looking beyond it.

As she does by way of introduction to each of the poets in this chronologically organized anthology, Hirshfield gives a brief personal history of Mahadeviyakka, the *bhakti* poet who died in her twenties in a burst of light according to the stories. Lal Ded, a fourteenth century Kashmiri poet, followed the Shiva-worship path of "oneness between God and the phenomenal world" (118). In her travels, she was teased by children for singing and dancing in a state of undress. A sympathetic cloth merchant sold her two batches of fabric of equal size. Each time someone taunted her, she tied a knot on her left shoulder; each time someone gave her praise, she tied a knot on the right shoulder. At the end of the day she returned to the cloth merchant to show him that "nothing had changed: whatever praise or blame she received, they were of equal weight, and she accepted both with the same attitude of equanimity" (118).

Through her writing, scholarship, and spiritual practice, Jane Hirshfield is eminently qualified to edit this powerful anthology. While many of the translations were completed by such writers as Willis Barnstone, Robert Bly, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Langston Hughes, Michael Hamburger, Stanley Kunitz, Jane Kenyon, and Ariel and Chana Bloch, Hirshfield translated about half of the poems herself, either by knowing the language or by using many scholarly translations. In addition to her four books of poetry, including the highly praised *The October Palace*, Hirshfield also translated, with Mariko Aratani, the beautifully titled *The Ink Dark Moon: Love Poems by Ono no Komachi and Izumi Shikibu*, two Japanese poets included in *Women in Praise of the Sacred*. In her exquisite collection of essays, *Nine Gates: Entering the Mind of Poetry*, she writes of her admiration for Japanese poetry:

The Japanese women's concerns—love and transience—paralleled my own, and despite the passage of a millennium since its composition, their poetry held for me an immediacy and power that was life-altering. Not only did it affect my own writing, it led me three years later to undertake the study of Buddhism; in 1979 I was lay-ordained in the lineage of Sôtô Zen. (69)

As promised in the title, forty-three centuries of women's spiritual poetry are indeed on display in the collection. The title can only suggest the range of cultures, experiences, and systems of belief these women's words convey. The first entry is by Enheduanna, ca. 2300 B.C.E., "the earliest identified author of either sex in world literature" (3) and daughter of a Sumerian king. Her hymns to the moon-goddess Inanna survive on cuneiform tablets. From ca. 1000 B.C.E. appears Makeda, Queen of Sheba, who bears King Solomon's son despite her request that he not take her to bed. Through his trick, the Queen must release him from his promise. But she turns the advantage to her grown son, whom King Solomon greets as his own. When he leaves the court to establish Solomon's lineage in Ethiopia, he takes God's Tabernacle. Hirshfield's commentary is as follows: "Again we see that wisdom lives not only by 'light' but also by the shadowy ways and skillful means of the Trickster" (12).

Hirshfield selects two beautiful fragments from Sappho, one an invitation to Aphrodite to visit Sappho's island: "...come to this / sacred place / encircled by

apple trees, / fragrant with offered smoke” (16). From the sixth century B.C.E., she offers the work of two of the earliest female followers of the Buddha. As Hirshfield points out in the introduction to the section of the Song of Songs that could have been written by the Shulammitte in a lovers’ exchange with King Solomon, poetry that mixes physical and spiritual love is not limited to Western philosophy. The idea appears in Tamil, Indian, and Sufi poets’ work as well: “[W]e also find the seeker and God portrayed as lover and Beloved in language that is openly erotic” (22).

In addition to great Chinese and Japanese poets, Hirshfield presents Ly Ngoc Kieu, 1041-1113, the earliest discovered woman writer from Vietnam. Here is her poem in full:

Birth, old age,
Sickness, and death.
From the beginning,
This is the way
Things have always been.
Any thought
Of release from this life
Will wrap you only more tightly
In its snares.
The sleeping person
Looks for a Buddha,
The troubled person
Turns toward meditation.
But the one who knows
That there’s nothing to seek
Knows too that there’s nothing to say.
She keeps her mouth shut.

(tr. by Thich Nhat Hanh and Jane Hirshfield)

(63)

The thread of seeking-through-not-seeking is one that is also woven across cultures and centuries in this anthology. Chinese Taoist Sun Bu-er of the twelfth century, considered one of the Seven Immortals, puts it this way:

Cut brambles long enough,
Sprout after sprout,
And the lotus will bloom
Of its own accord:
Already waiting in the clearing,
The single image of light.
The day you see this
The day you will become it.

(73)

The accomplished composer, scholar, and abbess Hildegard of Bingen’s songs

and antiphons are on display here, pieces that were sung to her own music. Another German poet of the thirteenth century, Mechtild of Magdeburg, saw “‘all things in God, and God in all things’” (85). Other Christian mystics whose poems are represented are Catherine of Siena, Teresa of Avila (who told her nuns “the Lord walks among pots and pans”) (144), Maria de’ Medici, Queen of France, the Austrian Catharina Regina von Greiffenberg, and Sor Juana Inèz de La Cruz.

Vittoria Colonna, to whom many of Michelangelo’s sonnets were addressed and whose work he believed was written in “sacred ink,” has two spiritual poems in the anthology. “A Georgia Sea Island Shout Song” and “Penny Jessye’s Death-bed Spiritual” reflect the voices of a slave and a former slave in North America. Two Nahuatl invocations, two Kwakiutl women’s prayers, an Osage woman’s initiation song, and a traditional Navajo prayer appear as well.

It’s fascinating to consider Hirshfield’s selections of poems by Anne Bradstreet, Emily Brontë, Emily Dickinson, H.D., Anna Akhmatova, Gabriela Mistral, Nelly Sachs, and Marina Tsvetaeva in the context of women’s spiritual writing. These magnificent poets, who each faced personal and political struggles, produced poetry that transcends the limits of their individual situations and speaks to the spirit level in all of us. ☺

Wagner, Betty Jane. *Educational Drama and Language Arts: What Research Shows*. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton-Cook/Heinemann, 1998.

Jean R. Trounstone

I wish I'd had Betty Jane Wagner's book, *Educational Drama and Language Arts*, a few years ago when I was on a legislative task force recommending courses for women in prison. "We need skill based courses," was the cry from most opinion makers, "substantive" classes in computers, or "something that will help them get jobs." Drama, long thought of as an "extra," a "frill" in many educational communities, was certainly not on the short list of considered courses. Even if my ten years of producing plays with women in prison had convinced a senator or two that such a program might be as valuable as Life Skills, most—who took themselves to plays on weekend and encouraged their children to get involved in after school theater productions—had no idea of the many ways that dramatic arts can be embedded in the curriculum to effect one's thinking and language abilities. And at the time, without such a book, I had no ready reference from which to draw for studies that show the power of drama's influence on learning. For that is the greatest strength of Wagner's text. Just as Writing Across the Curriculum courses changed the face of many institutional approaches to writing, Wagner's book, because it is cumulative, comprehensive, and, at times, instructional, has potential to be an advocate for infusing drama into the curriculum.

Wagner, a professor at Roosevelt University and prolific author of articles and books on writing and the educational uses of drama, speaks for the need to produce educated students who undertake learning more than "just the facts, ma'am." She also reinforces the need for teachers who want their students to understand more fully "history, human interactions, scientific discoveries, the role of persons in various professions, the texture of the lives of characters in literature—in short, the larger school curriculum"(8). Her book is an antidote for those teachers told to teach for tests, for it shows that the most obvious route to a point is not always the most effective.

Wagner's expressed goal in what she calls a "user-friendly resource for doctoral students and others who are jumping into the icy waters of research on drama" (1) is to answer the question of "Does classroom drama actually teach anything?" (3). Her book focuses on improvisational drama, and Wagner aims to show how it can be used as "an intentional teaching strategy to enhance learning" (5). The book is organized into four parts: an overview where Wagner defines her terms and helps us see that she isn't suggesting creative drama classes per se, but the more radical idea of utilizing drama throughout the curriculum; a section presenting results and experiences from research studies on uses of drama and its effects on language and thinking; a third section based around the implications from studies involving drama and writing; and a final portion in which she looks at research paradigms and the future. Although drama "has remained marginal in American language arts classrooms" (11), Wagner's research indicates that it

should not be so. Drama studies presented in Wagner's text show it can improve reading, writing, and thinking skills.

Wagner spices up what sometimes becomes a fairly dry presentation of research results with detailed examples of drama in the classroom and chapters written by other educators, scholars, and pioneers in drama in education studies. David Booth's excellent chapter, "Language Power Through Working in Role," gives us an interesting case study from a Canadian junior high classroom where students engaged in a three-month study of the Holocaust. Booth watched students playing roles and the results of their learning from such role-playing in an eighth grade class at an alternative public school. Students studied the "resulting emigration of survivors to North America... based on the equity and diversity components of a curriculum document, and focusing on the Holocaust" (57). Some played filmmakers or families of survivors, while others took on the roles of immigration officers. Through writing, talking and performing, they gleaned insights that might not have been learned without the use of drama. For example, taking on the role of immigration officers "demanded that they [the students] accepted being members of a group that, in history, had resented and resisted the immigrants" (60).

Likewise, Anne Haas Dyson intrigues us with her chapter "The Children's Forum: Linking Writing, Drama, and the Development of Community in the Urban Classroom." She observes how drama can enhance "learning to write and learning to participate in a complex community marked by sociological differences" (149). Children performing their own texts in an urban elementary school dealt with tensions that in some ways paralleled the larger culture. Working through those texts, children under their third grade teacher's tutelage, talked through their conflicts in creating, casting, performing, and writing about a play based on super heroes. Haas shows us—again, in an experiential study that gives classroom details and conversation—how the children managed the use of drama and issues arising from it.

Wagner makes sure that her chapters involving theoretical framework, definition of terms, charts and hard data are interwoven with experiential studies. She realizes that the research material is understandably dense. Wagner and her contributors draw upon the complex work of psychologists such as Lev Vygotsky and Jerome Bruner as well as drama educator Dorothy Heathcoate and theorists Howard Gardner and Jean Piaget. But Wagner and her contributors, on the whole, make their theories accessible to us.

I was least fond of the chapter by FranCina Conard, "Meta-Analysis of the Effectiveness of Creative Drama," which was an empirical study designed to measure results that make a "case for drama" (211). Wagner herself admits a quantitative study doesn't seem to have the power of the experiential, ones like those she later tells us will define future research: "studies of cases, classroom ecology and teacher cognition and decision making, just to name a few" (346). She seems to include it because it has some use for those who need empirical research results in order to get funding, but frankly, it did not add much to her case.

This is not a book to show novices how to set up the use of drama in their classes, and research seems to be somewhat lacking in that area. Wagner empha-

sizes this point in a later chapter when she speaks to the need for enlivened research studies and for explicit drama in the classroom techniques: "We need to look at what good drama teachers do and need to know, which methods of introducing drama...are effective" (241). But even without being a how-to, *Educational Drama and Language Arts* is successful in conveying its potential for the development of language skills, particularly for K-12 students.

Sometimes I had to remind myself that Wagner's intention is to show the data. I wanted the writing to be less stark, more fanciful like theater itself. I wanted to learn more about the studies, glean more of the techniques than she actually presents on the page. I also wanted to jump into the text and add my own comments about information that might help the teacher less informed in drama technique. I imagined the uninitiated asking for more details about how David Booth got his students to use "their bodies to create two still dramatic pictures or tableaux" (59). Why, I wondered, was there no mention of Augusto Boal, one of the founders of such image theater, a practitioner known throughout Europe and Canada (*Games for Actors and Non-Actors*, New York: Routledge, 1992)? He would have been a great help in understanding how to set up some scenarios. When I found reference at the end of Brian Edmiston and Jeffrey Wilhem's chapter, "Repositioning Views/Reviewing Position: Forming Complex Understandings in Dialogue," pointing me to a "more detailed analysis of how teachers...create dialogue among students and teachers in drama" (117), I wished there had been even more finger-pointing towards good drama in education pedagogy.

These minor weaknesses aside, Wagner has a terrific list of references for those of us who want to read more, and she does convince us that drama can teach a great deal. Through her thorough presentation of the research, she implies that the average teacher who seeks to use drama in the classroom can get results. One such average teacher is delightfully presented in Philip Taylor's chapter on "Reflective Practitioner Research." Taylor develops a case study of Carl, a teacher who doubted the use of drama and shied away from it as a "growing within type thing" (214). A workshop with a drama practitioner and a professional development project spurred him to discover that he could use drama in his curriculum but also provided a way for him to assess his own teaching. This chapter also shows how valuable it can be when experienced specialists work with other teachers, stimulating them to add drama to their curriculum.

Although I missed my opportunity to use Wagner's book to promote drama in prison, I won't fail to bring it with me this year to meetings at my college about developing our Arts in Mind program, where I plan to promote classes utilizing theater techniques to enhance other areas of learning. *Educational Drama and Language Arts* is not a book I'd take to read on my Spring Break, but it's definitely a book to be armed with in the slings and arrows world of educational assessment. 🍷

JAEPL REVIEWERS

(1999-2000)

Martha Alcock	Stephen Dilks	Hildy Miller
Lauryne Alexis-Boyd	Christopher Ferry	Anne Mullin
Chuck Anderson	Sharon Gibson-Groshon	Laurence Musgrove
Linda Bannister	Jane Greer	Sheryl Mylan
Bette-B Bauer	Judith Halden-Sullivan	Janice Neulieb
Jerome Bump	Eric Hobson	Susan Schiller
Betsy Burris	Sue Hum	Sherry Swain
Fran Claggett	Fern Kory	Nathaniel Teich
Thomas Dean	Michael Kuhne	Leslie Owen Williams
Mary Deming	Marian MacCurdy	Demetrice Worley

Manuscript Submission Information

Deadline	January 31, 2000
Typing	Double-spaced, numbered pages, including works cited and block quotations; at least one level of internal headings, when necessary; wide margins for feedback; author's name to appear on title page only
Title Page	Title of Article; Name; Address; E-mail Address; Home and Office Phone; Institutional Affiliation
Abstract	1-2 double-spaced sentences on title page
Preferred Length	Articles, 12-15 typed pages, including references; Book Reviews, 3-4 typed pages
Citing Students' Work	Written Permission, even when citing anonymously
Documentation Style	<i>MLA Style Manual</i> , 4th Edition
Copies	Four, letter-quality
Envelopes	One SASE if you wish your manuscript returned; Unattached stamps for mailing 3 manuscripts
Editorial Report	Within 6-8 weeks
Compensation	Two complimentary copies
Copyright	<i>Assembly for Expanded Perspectives on Learning</i>
Address	Linda Calendrillo, Co-Editor, JAEPL, Department of English, 1 Big Red Way, Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, KY 42101

The Assembly for Expanded Perspectives on Learning

announces its
Sixth Annual Conference-Symposium
for Educators

Mount Madonna Conference Center
Watsonville, CA

June 22 – 25, 2000

CREATING A CULTURE OF PARTNERSHIP

Keynote Speaker: Riane Eisler

OTHER FEATURED SPEAKERS:

David Loye
Jane Tompkins
Martha Simmons

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION:

Conference space is limited. To register, contact:
Helen Walker
Dept. of Language, Literature and Composition
Messiah College
Grentham, PA 17027
hwalker@mcis.messiah.edu

FOR MORE INFORMATION and WORKSHOP PROPOSAL FORMS:

Bruce Novak
5237 S. Kenwood
Chicago IL 60615
bjnovak@midway.uchicago.edu

CALL FOR PAPERS

Journal of the Assembly for Expanded Perspectives on Learning (JAEPL)

Dedicated to teaching and learning beyond traditional disciplines and interests, JAEPL invites submissions for its sixth annual issue. We solicit theory-grounded manuscripts that discuss pedagogical concerns focusing on topics that extend beyond currently accepted attitudes toward, and paradigms of, language. We invite an exploration of subjects that range over a spectrum of interests including but not limited to emotion, imagery, kinesthetics, ecofeminism, situated knowledge, meditation, healing, inspiration.

Send by Jan. 31, 2000, four copies of letter quality manuscripts (attach postage for mailing three copies to readers), MLA style, approximately 12–15 pages including works cited to:

Linda Calendrillo, Co-Editor
JAEPL
Department of English
1 Big Red Way
Western Kentucky University
Bowling Green, KY 42104
e-mail: linda.calendrillo@wku.edu

Send editorial inquiries to:

Kristie S. Fleckenstein, Co-Editor
JAEPL
Department of English
Ball State University
Muncie, IN 47306
e-mail: kflecken@gw.bsu.edu

Visit our website at: <http://www.bsu.edu/english/jaepl/>

