

CODA

Anne Ruggles Gere

University of Michigan

Reading through this book reminded me of a film where a teacher of long-standing sits on her porch as a parade of former students comes to greet her. As I turned each page, memories of classroom discussions, meetings about a piece of writing, collaborative projects, joint appearances on panels, shared meals, and ongoing conversations floated by. The faces of former students who have become colleagues and dear friends, along with precious colleagues who have been interlocutors across the years, all paraded through my mind. At the same time, though, I realized that the film got it wrong: it represented the former students and colleagues exactly as they had been years earlier—the same gestures, the same youthful faces, as if they had been frozen in time.

In contrast, one of the many pleasures of reading through this collection was—and is—being reminded of the shifting specializations, emerging interests, and new perspectives that the writing in this volume represents. Thinking back to my earliest encounter with each of the authors, at the University of Washington or the University of Michigan, at CCCC, or NCTE, or MLA or WPA, I am reminded of how the questions being asked, the specific language chosen, and the terms of arguments have shifted. We have all changed our words and been changed by the words of others as we've read new things, written in various publications, and participated in different conversations. I am deeply grateful to each contributing author for recalling moments and ideas shared, for recollecting projects initiated years ago, for recounting recent conversations, and for citing emerging concepts.

My most profound appreciation goes to Jim Beitler and Sarah Ruffing Robbins, who imagined this book and undertook all the labor of recruiting, organizing, and editing to create this capacious perspective on my work. The 25 chapters they have organized under eight different categories touch on the ways my work—and the work of so many of us in the related fields of writing studies, rhetoric, and teacher education—has evolved during more than three decades. This book is a gift.

It is a gift to me, but also a gift to other scholars and researchers because it offers new perspectives on several related areas of study. Lewis Hyde reminds us that a gift must always move, and in so doing it creates connections that bind communities together. My fondest wish is that this gift, this collection, will

move across groups of readers to affirm existing bonds and create new ligatures within our several related fields as we continue to deepen understandings of teaching, learning, language, literacy, and writing.

WORK CITED

Hyde, Lewis. *The Gift: How the Creative Spirit Transforms the World*. 3rd ed., Vintage, 2019.