Chapter 1. Double Standards and Sunshine: Exploring Expectations for Professional and Student Writing in FYC

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Reflect Before Reading

Before reading Doug's chapter, think about your professional writing and the process in which you engage to produce this writing. How did you learn this process? How has this process evolved over time? Have you shared how you write with your FYC students? Or any of your writing—drafts or polished pieces? What value might be there in doing so?

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It's no secret that one of first-year composition's primary roles is enculturation: for students with little idea of the workings or purpose of "academia" as an activity system, FYC is one place they begin to become acquainted with systems of scholarly inquiry and "higher education." James Paul Gee's notion of Discourses as a way of understanding literacy has been helpful in letting us understand students' encounters with academe in terms of a meeting of primary and secondary Discourses—those of university administration, major disciplines, and other disciplines encountered through general education. FYC is often center-stage for the clash or convergence of students' "saying (writing)-doing-being-valuing-believing combinations" ("Literacy" 6) with those of the institutions they're attending. We can take, for an example pertaining to FYC, Keith Hjortshoj's prediction that students holding to earlier-learned discursive values may universalize "good writing," while FYC will often teach that the features of good writing vary from one situation to another (33). Prima facie, then, there is value in comparing these "identity kits" (Gee, "Literacy" 7) brought by students and offered by institutions, and in building FYC to be a site for such reflexive encounters.

As we do so, however, it is not sufficient to explore what the academy says it values in student writing at the college level. FYC should also be a site for investigation of double standards, the inconsistencies between what new college students are told the academy values in academic writing and the academy's—that is, its faculty's—actual writing practices. In this chapter, I catalog elements of writing processes and textuality in which we can find striking distance between

how faculty actually write and how students are instructed to write. I derive that catalog by following an imaginary "composite" faculty member who embodies a typical range of faculty writing habits and practices, dramatizing elements of her writing processes which conflict with messages students receive about how writing works and how it should be done. I frame these elements themselves as Discourse markers and analyze the roots of double standards in the different activity systems which students and faculty are perceived to be members of. I argue that one way FYC can help students begin to acquire their chosen Discourses within academe is by presenting a critical and even resistant front to the academy's own stories about writing. Following this analysis, I show how writing-about-writing approaches to FYC—in which students read scholarship on writing and then design small-scale primary research on questions of their own—allow students to investigate firsthand the gaps between the stories this Discourse of higher education tells about writing in the academy and the actual writing practices of its members—a simultaneously subversive and supportive pedagogy. There is power for student writers not only in recognizing moments of "Do as I say, not as I do," but even more in seeing instances where some of their own struggles—which the academy's stories about writing often frame as student *deficit*—actually are simply a function of writing itself, or of unjustifiable faculty demands. In any such cases, greater awareness can translate to greater self-efficacy and improved dispositions toward writing, as well as offer key invitational moments to help students believe that they truly can be (invited to be) knowledge-makers in the academy.

I'll begin by introducing my composite faculty writer, and then divert briefly to lay out some framing theories and premises that undergird this chapter. Then I'll create a set of categories, drawing on the example of the faculty writer, that suggest what FYC students can study in terms of faculty behaviors, standards, and habits of mind. Having seen what's available for students to study, I'll briefly outline some curricular designs for such a course.

It Was Professor Plum, with a Candlestick, in the Library

To dramatize and embody a "professional academic writer" whose writing habits and circumstances can be juxtaposed with those of student writers, I've written a character who amalgamates trends demonstrated by various studies of professional academic writers, such as Susan Peck MacDonald's studies of research and writing practices in the humanities and social sciences and Dorothy Winsor's studies of engineering writing. This prototype professor-writer is built as well from anecdotal observations on two campuses where I've been employed as a professor of English and have encountered faculty-as-writers both as guest speakers in my own classes and in various offices and committees on campus, from grant-coordination to Institutional Review Board (IRB) to college and university promotion-and-tenure committees. The resulting composite professor may not reflect every reader's "typical" faculty writer (if there is such a thing), but will, I

hope, be generally recognizable to readers who have a range of experiences with faculty writing across their campuses.

Meet, then, Gina Plum. She's an associate professor of Climate and Meteorology, and she has an article to write. Her small research team of three has been working on the problem of classifying local climate zones—such as "urban heat islands," the comparative warmth of a city to its surroundings.[1] Previously, the field of climate studies has only differentiated "rural" and "urban" regions, and much finer-grained differentiation is needed in *kinds* of rural and urban regions to help explore the causes of heat-island effects. Plum and her colleagues have a refined taxonomy of climate zones to propose. Their paper, targeted to a field-leading journal such as *Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society*, will be multimodal—graphics- and color-intensive, including color photographs of actual research sites, multi-color data tables, and figures such as color diagrams and charts. Unlike some articles in the natural sciences, it will also be lengthy—as long as thirty pages including appendices, which will also be highly graphical. Its reference list will number over seventy. Plum will, of course, use a "writing process" to create the piece, and while it might not involve a candlestick in the library, it will make for an interesting comparison to students' writing practices and the constraints on them.

Being tenured, Plum is hardly writing such a piece for the first time. But *how* does she know her task? Good answers to this question draw on a number of social theories of writing that serve as premises for my chapter, so I'll pause the narrative long enough to overview them. I've already broached Gee's sociolinguistics-based literacy theory centered on Discourses. These (always written with a capital D) are "ways with words, feelings, values, beliefs, emotions, people, action, things, tools, and places that allow us to display and recognize characteristic *whos* doing characteristic *whats*" (*An Introduction* 19). As such, a Discourse comprises "a sort of 'identity kit' which comes with costume and instructions on how to think, act, talk, and write, so as to take on a social role that others will recognize"—the "saying-doing-being-valuing-believing combinations" that tell people how to *be* in given situations ("Literacy" 7). People performing a Discourse, Gee says, are those we'll take to be a "real" *X* (e.g., hero, president, plumber) (*An Introduction* 18). Gee offers us a social theory of writing—understanding the rhetorical notion of *audience* as "discourse communities"—that is grounded in shared *languages* ("ways with words"). How does Professor Plum understand her writing task? In part, as conversation within her Discourse of climate studies. My discussion takes these principles as given.

This chapter is also grounded in activity theory, a lens on Professor Plum's knowledge of her writing task which looks less at language and more at the *activity* she is collaborating to accomplish. Culturo-historical activity theory, according to David Russell, "analyzes human behavior and consciousness in terms of

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1.   For an example of just such research, see Stewart and Oke.

activity systems: goal-directed, historically situated, cooperative human interactions" which are mediated by tools, including language and writing ("Activity" 53). Over time—through laboratory apprenticeships, graduate studies, postdocs, professional meetings, and reading and writing scholarly texts—Professor Plum has been enculturated into an activity system whose goal is to better understand the workings of climate and its sources and influences. She's learned the genres—"typified rhetorical actions based in recurrent situations" (Miller 27)—which are some of her activity's most common writing tools for creating, sharing, and building consensus around knowledge toward that end. As Cheryl Geisler et al. note, the nature of the activity helps shape the writing both directly and by shaping the rhetorical situation that shapes the writing. If Gee's Discourse theory gives us a much more sophisticated lens on the traditional rhetorical category of "audience," then activity theory as Russell, Dorothy Winsor, and Charles Bazerman use it provides a significantly more sophisticated lens on the traditional rhetorical categories of rhetorical situation, context, and exigence identified by Keith Grant-Davie.

A final premise to my thinking in this chapter involves the nature of the course in which Professor Plum would have gained some of her earliest academic writing experience: first-year composition. I proceed with specific understandings of the purposes and roles of FYC, which I've written about at length in a number of other collections.[2] I advocate for a radically different role for and look of FYC than Plum, as a composite *typical* faculty member 20 years out from her FYC course, would probably have encountered. As evidenced by the foci of the most popular FYC textbooks, by taxonomies of composition pedagogies such as Richard Fulkerson's and Gary Tate et al.'s, and by critiques of first-year composition including Sharon Crowley's and David Smit's, Plum's 1990s FYC course likely focused, in one way or another, on how to write researched arguments, and was designed in response to what I call college composition's *public charter* ("What" 51). This charter—our various stakeholders' agreement to make a massive public and private investment in college writing instruction because of the value it adds to a college education—is based on stakeholders' convictions that writing is the basic, transferable, grammatical skill of transcribing speech to print, and that this skill is essential to both social standing and employment prospects. FYC courses that teach these skills are therefore a wise investment. Importantly, however, this charter is neither a necessary purpose for writing instruction—there is a wide range of others—nor the most achievable purpose, because the charter contains faulty premises about the nature of writing. Because writing is *not* a basic grammatical transcriptive skill, attempting to teach it as such is likely to yield frustration. The current volume, in contrast, premises that another valuable and achievable purpose for FYC is to help student writers find their voices by developing them as members of the academy itself. This is an achievable purpose, should we choose it, and accords well with

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2.   See Downs, "What"; Downs and Robertson; Mallory and Downs; Wardle and Downs.

what I unequivocally *do* see as a central purpose of FYC instruction: creating "a space, a moment, and an experience—in which students might reconsider writing apart from previous schooling and work, within the context of inquiry-based higher education" ("What" 50). Rather than "teaching writing," we can teach students (about) the principles at the heart of our work as writing scholars: access to the resources and benefits of higher education, writing as interaction (rather than one-way transmission of information, another faulty metaphor), valuing of student and writerly voices, the nature of textual production and "how texts got that way," and the nature of rhetoric and writing as a rhetorical activity. The rest of this chapter will take these roles for FYC as a starting point.

Plum's Process, Products, and Writing Lifeworld

In the interest of brevity, my analysis of our composite faculty writer's experience will focus just on areas of most obvious divergence from what students frequently experience when writing at the college level. While much of what follows I'll assert as typical differences, not all readers will agree either with the degree or the typicality of what I identify. That's fine—my goal is to raise questions rather than support any single claim beyond dispute. Any of my claims may be treated as investigatory hypotheses that we should probe with further research, as long as they can be read as plausible areas of question. Rigorous research related to a number of questions that I'll raise is limited; I will be clear when I'm working from anecdote and acknowledge its limitations. At the same time, anecdote will often be amply sufficient for asserting the plausibility of a given question or area of inquiry.

Collaboration

Beginning at the beginning of Plum's writing process—before any writing on her article, before she even knows what to say—perhaps the most obvious observation is that Plum is involved in collaborative writing to begin with, both synchronically and diachronically. First, synchronically, Plum knows from the beginning of her project that she does not have sole responsibility for the writing she'll produce; she is not producing in isolation. Plum begins her research with a team. They've had to collaboratively generate grant proposals to fund their data collection and analysis. They've had to divide the labor of review of literature, data collection itself, and data analysis. Working in the sciences, they've understood since graduate school that these writing tasks are shared, divided, or otherwise distributed. They've had to learn their field's conventions for who is named first author and what that means. They've learned to strategize when to divide drafting by section, co-draft, or hand all first-drafting to one writer.

By contrast, students throughout their schooling are assumed to be working alone unless otherwise specifically instructed by a "special" assignment. As a re-

sult, even though collaborative writing and team projects are increasingly common features of college education across majors, these experiences are "marked" as unusual. The typical educational experience still leaves students conceptually "backward" on the fundamental nature of "writer," in comparison to how most (though perhaps not all) graduates are re-socialized by professional writing after school.[3] Most early college students are educated to believe that writers *by nature* (if not always in practice) work alone and independently. Unassigned collaboration is treated as *cheating* at many schools, including my own institution, whose student code prohibits collaboration unless explicitly assigned: "Unless otherwise specified, students may not collaborate on graded material. Instructors are encouraged to provide collaborative learning opportunities but must state, in writing or by electronic means, the limits of assistance permitted between and among students in a course assignment or academic evaluation" (*Conduct* 120.00 B). This expectation—explicit sometimes, and more often implicit—parallels the written reflection of one of my own students, Megan Evans. Evans wrote, "While faculty are expected to and encouraged to work with their peers . . . students are expected to do the exact opposite … produce … a piece of writing that is singularly their own."[4] Students like Evans perceive—and I would argue that there truly exists—a double standard: collaboration is lifeblood for professional writers but suspect and alien for students.

Diachronically, this writing of Plum's will not be independent of her other recent writing. Her article will not stand detached from the grant proposal which yielded funding for her team's work, the massive set of project-management documents that accompanied the grant and the research, the field- and lab-notes that assisted in data analysis, and the rounds of emails between researchers that guided the project to the state in which it currently stands and which will guide its drafting. The article to be written is related to various conference papers and posters that have presented other findings along the way and likely directly builds on previous publications. Just as it will never occur to Plum that she stands isolated as a writer, the piece to be written is inherently "in collaboration with" the maze of texts that precede and will stem from it. This incredibly complex network of texts and writers—even for a relatively "small" project such as Plum's—exemplifies Russell's principle of polycontextuality—multiple activity systems and complex genre systems creating the context for any single piece of writing.

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3.   See Beaufort's *Writing in the Real World: Making the Transition from School to Work* and Winsor's "Genre and Activity Systems: The Role of Documentation in Maintaining and Changing Engineering Activity Systems" in *Written Communication*.

4.   Following Amy Robillard's enjoinment to use students' real names, when I quote my prior students' writing in this piece, I've obtained their permission to use their real names. Students' writing quoted from IRB-approved datasets gathered under promise of anonymity made during informed consent is quoted anonymously.

Activity and Genre

By contrast, Russell's analysis demonstrates relatively impoverished polycontextuality in the realm of student work. Many student projects begin and end with a single written assignment or several repetitions of the same assignment. Only more rarely do assignments create a "project arc" so that students work on separate but related pieces of a large project across a course. Dan Melzer's *Assignments Across the Curriculum* provides rich data on the relative rarity of such integration of multiple writing assignments into larger projects. Projects that span multiple *courses*, Melzer finds, are vanishingly rare in the typical college curriculum. One reason for this difference, of course, is that the activities in question are different. Professor Plum is engaged in ongoing professional research which runs on a clock of years rather than weeks, includes funding in six or seven figures, and spans several institutions. The richness of genres that stand in and behind her research articles exists because many kinds of very large-scale work must be mediated by different writing tools over long periods of time.

Furthermore, Plum experiences one of the oldest saws of rhetorically-savvy writing instruction—"*know your audience*"—very differently than most students. She actually *does know* her audience, literally and specifically: it's highly likely she has met professionally and even socially with the handful of readers qualified to peer review her work, in the course of professional meetings and other collaborations over the years. She might count the editor of the journal her article will go to as a colleague, or even a friend. Academic-research worlds are quite small, and Plum probably personally knows many of her individual readers. Nor is this phenomenon necessarily limited to professional writing in academic research. In many—probably most—professional writing scenes and activities, from marketing pitches to engineering proposals to land management grants to feasibility studies for city councils, writers can know their audience members individually and even actively consult with them during drafting.

Compare that to a student writing an assigned history essay, philosophy paper, lab report, or music review, where they are encouraged to write for "their peers," an "educated reader," a "general audience," or the teacher alone. "Knowing" these audiences is usually much more difficult and vague. Data I collected with a research team in my writing program in 2014 suggest that, for most of the 135 first-year students whose reflective writing we've studied, "know your audience" tends to mean "try to get a sense of the *type* of person who you mean to speak to." One representative student, for example, writes that "The audience is important. This decides the style, format, and writing style of the paper. In some cases, mainly for lay audience, any general style is acceptable. Writing must be planned for the discourse community you are writing for." There's a certain level of "audience awareness" here, but stark lack of refinement in comparison with how experienced insiders think about their audiences as, for example, seen in Ann Beaufort's and Dorothy Winsor's descriptions of professional and academic writers.

Of course, the activity system of climate research is vastly different from the activity system of college education. Unlike with expectations for collaboration, this difference in activities is not necessarily a "double standard." There are student-only genres, and limitations to what can be assigned, that the activity system of higher-education simply necessitates. Where double standards may arise, however, is when we deny students the ability to *study* professional activity systems because they're "only students," or when we ignore that these differences exist.

Sources and Research

Before Professor Plum and her colleagues can write seventy-plus references into their article, they have to find and read them. Plum's deep knowledge of her Discourse means that the research team has already read many of these references—the list might not look terribly different from that in the project's grant proposal. The important principle here is *accretion*: with time, Plum has built up a quickly accessible, deeply layered cognitive network of source texts. That first-year college students lack the same rich network is not what constitutes a double standard in the use of sources; what does is the different reasons for their use. Students are widely taught to use sources to "back up" their arguments. Frequently this translates to students as a conviction that they are not believable unless sources make their arguments for them, as I point out in *Teaching Our Own Prison*. Findings from both a 2010 dataset in which I observed 12 students searching for and reading sources online and a 2014 dataset of pre-FYC and post-FYC reflective writing from 135 students are consistent with my earlier findings: students understand sources as factual, informational, and primarily for the purpose of "backing up" arguments. A very typical "planning question" students ask in the 2014 dataset is, "Is this paper completely factually based? Or can I muse over ideas that are not proven with sources?" Many students seem to see research as a problem of transmitting stacks-of-facts to the teacher in order to "prove" whatever the student writer wanted to say to begin with. In contrast, Professor Plum and her co-writers are citing sources in order to contextualize their work in a vast network of ongoing conversation, a process noted by Carol Berkenkotter and Thomas Huckin. For them, sources are *relational*, rarely included simply to "back up" a claim. Maureen Mathison articulates this relationship with sources as more often one of *critique*: "Scholars evaluate each other's projects as they sustain and transform disciplinary information" (315). Professor Plum's claims are mostly grounded not in the "proof" offered by prior research but in her primary data—something students are often not assigned to collect or develop to begin with.

Another significant double standard around the use of sources relates to "avoiding plagiarism," a greater risk for students than for professional writers because students repeatedly quote at length from source material while professionals (in fields outside the humanities, at least) are much more likely to briefly summarize it. Put a student's paper on climate research next to a piece by Pro-

fessor Plum, and one of the most significant differences in uses of references is likely to be that Plum states the work of her sources in a one-line or few-line very high-level summary, while the student writing will tend to rely much more on extensive quotation or paraphrase, as Rebecca Moore Howard, Tricia Serviss, and Tanya K. Rodrigue point out. Rebecca Moore Howard and her "Citation Project" research team have shown that this pattern in students' source use leads to frequent instances of patchwriting and plagiarism, as students tend to write "from sentences selected from sources" instead of writing globally *about* their sources (187). Plum does the latter. Because students learn from an early age that "research writing" means quoting sources, we have instructed them to do a thing that professional writers go on to learn *not* to do.

Invention and Authority

Professor Plum's inventional process as she arrives with her colleagues at a draft also probably looks significantly different than her students'. How do these faculty writers come up with what to say, and what will be understood as giving them the right to say it? To say that they draw on extensive reading to help make sense of what they see in their primary research, and to say that they build their sense of what to say *from* what those data enable them to report, seems like an obvious statement. And because this inventional ability arises directly from their Discourse and activity system, it may seem another area where no double standard exists between student and professional writing. Until we look at the messages students receive throughout schooling, which seem much different in perhaps unnecessary ways. As critiqued by Paulo Freire and now scores of others, educational settings tend to treat students as blank slates, empty minds to be "filled" with "material" that is "delivered" to them. (The national discussion of the past several years on MOOCs comes to mind.) In the eyes of many college instructors, students write from *deficit*: they are not believed to know what they're talking about unless their writing proves they do. They are presumed to have little *of their own* to say, a conviction which subtly tinges the very purpose of assigning writing to begin with: judgment about distance from *incompetence*. Readers skeptical of this point should explore standard practices for assigning lab reports at their own institutions. In our own literature, the expressivism of the 1970s was born in Mina Shaughnessy's, Ken Macrorie's, and many others' critiques of this faculty attitude. That the attitude remains with us can be seen in the testing mania which swept primary and secondary education over the past decade and now threatens higher education.

Such a presumption is clearly in the back of Emily Jo Schwaller's mind when, as one of my writing students, she reflected on how refreshing a particular FYC course had been in comparison to other college courses. "We began to challenge the [expectation] that [student] writing is meaningless writing, scripted writing," and instead created "a [primary] research method . . . designed to fit our ques-

tion." What Schwaller's reflection describes is the difference between students as *tabula rasa* learners and students as *makers of knowledge*. Professor Plum's writing, in contrast to that of students in many college classes, will be met with an initial presumption of competence and value. It may be read *very* critically and perhaps even with a presumption of inadequacy—is it "good enough" to be in X journal?—but that is much different from an opening presumption that the writers don't know what they're doing or that they have nothing to say.

At the same time that the work of student writers is frequently read from a deficit perspective, student writers are held to high standards of invention: they are nearly always expected to work alone, using only "their own" ideas except when "borrowing" those scrupulously cited from sources. (The use of sources then becomes its own admission of writerly knowledge deficit, citations becoming confessional.) This expectation of independent invention creates a strong double standard with professional researched writing, which would be seen as incompetent if it *were not* developed in intense interaction with other professional writers and readers. (For example, submitting an NSF grant without consulting with the program officer throughout drafting is *verboten*.)

Objectivity and Voicelessness

Can Professor Plum use "I" in her article? Many, probably most, students learn throughout secondary schooling that research writing may not use "I," may not be based on personal opinion, and requires objectivity, and that the writer may not be present in the writing. I assume this claim will be acceptable to any writing instructor who has faced endless raised hands about whether it is "okay to use 'I' in this paper." A truism among many FYC instructors is that this is the first belief we begin trying to break students of, but Hyland finds many best-selling college research textbooks that explicitly condemn first-person reference in research writing. Questions about whether the use of "I" is allowed, and the negative correlation in students' minds between "I" (authorly presence) and objectivity, are rife throughout student writing. My student Adam Schreuder wrote a representative comment: "Before every paper in every class I will ever have for the rest of my life, the question must be asked, 'Are we *allowed* to used "I" in our paper?'" In our 2014 dataset, the most common question that students both at the beginning and at the end of their first-year composition class believe they need to ask in new writing situations is, "Can I use 'I'?" It arises for more than 90 of 135 respondents in their post-course reflections, in one form or another. Across our dataset, the use of "I" is associated with informal, unprofessional, un-factual, un-researched writing, attending the premise that the absence of "I" renders the writing "objective."

These findings have remained consistent over two decades of my research (see *Teaching Our Own Prison*). Students are taught relentlessly in primary and secondary school that schooled (academic or researched or informational or formal)

writing must be objective and that it may not use "I," and students' college experiences more often than not reinforce that perception rather than overturning it. High school teachers teach students to remove themselves from their research writing because they believe that's what will be required in college: students are given to believe they must remove themselves from their researched writing because this is what the "grownups" do. Scientific writing is famously imagined to be so scrubbed of personality that it takes place almost entirely in passive voice and third-person.

Yet according to genre researcher Ken Hyland, "Academic writing is not just about conveying an ideational 'content', it is also about the representation of self. Recent research has suggested that academic prose is not completely impersonal, but that writers gain credibility by projecting an identity invested with individual authority, displaying confidence in their evaluations and commitment to their ideas" ("Authority" 1091). Hyland bases this conclusion on large-corpus analyses of research articles across a range of natural science, engineering, social science, and humanities fields, which he says demonstrate that "while impersonality may often be institutionally sanctified, it is constantly transgressed" ("Humble" 209). First person pronouns are used with regularity in the humanities and social sciences and increasingly in the natural sciences, Hyland shows, to explain self-benefits, state purposes, explain procedures, elaborate arguments in ways that emphasize what the writer believes are most important aspects, and state results in the form of claims ("Authority" 1100-06). Examining the ways that researchers blend claims of novelty with integration of their work into existing knowledge, Berkenkotter and Huckin show that writers' claims often demonstrate a "highly contingent and tentative epistemic status" (49). That is, scholarly articles typically negotiate the integration of what is essentially *personal* knowledge with more widely established knowledge that has gained consensus within their Discourses.

In short, should Professor Plum and her coauthors wish to use first person references, state a personal opinion, acknowledge and front the motives behind their writing, or even crack a joke, they will be in good company. That freedom establishes a clear double standard in comparison to the notions students' early educational experiences leave them regarding what personal presence is permissible in academic writing, and there is no evidence that college writing education uniformly or even widely overturns this belief.

Workflow

I noted earlier that Professor Plum has different timelines for writing than do most college students, as it would be rare for her to move from "topic" selection to final draft in five weeks. Beyond timelines, however, Plum's collaborative writing process created with an eye toward peer review by a high-level journal will be radically different from the typical student writing process in ways that may constitute double standards, different expectations for students simply *because*

they are students. Primary and secondary education routinely wind up teaching students "the" writing process: prewriting, drafting, revision, editing. In schools, though, this process is rarely able to be truly implemented as professional writers experience it: genuinely iterative, recursive, developmental, and chaotic. Rather, it is usually presented as stepwise and linear: we do not draft until we have pre-written; we do not revise until we have drafted. Many college writing courses begin to chip away at such stepwise linearity conceptually, yet assignments designed to promote or require truly non-linear processes (not merely multiple revision loops) are rarely described in our literature. As writing student Kelsey Weyerbacher notes of many of her college writing experiences in which faculty *did* attend to process:

> What still bugs me, though, is the expectation of "drafts." As a peer tutor at the Writing Center at MSU, I have learned over and over again from students that everyone's writing process looks different. It made no sense to me when I would turn in my drafts, when my professors in my literature classes would comment, "This is not a draft." Umm, excuse me? Do you see my writing? Do you see my drafting? . . . Why is it the professor's idea of time management that is the deciding factor in my drafting?

Weyerbacher sees some faculty "beginning to change this ideal," but believes the older, rigid ideas about process are still dominant when teachers pay attention to drafting at the college level.

Professional writing processes, in contrast—particularly collaborative ones— are much less likely to proceed stepwise and linearly. Rather, different parts of Plum's article will be drafted at different times by different writers, and often not in order. (A methods section might be drafted weeks before an introduction or background section.) Different parts of the article may be in different "stages" of the process at the same time—and what *is* a "stage" of writing once "a" process is divided and iterated through an interactive collaboration with other writers and readers? More contemporary process language calls these *phases* of writing, and more complex models of writing process, such as Daniel Perrin and Marc Wildi's looped phase-progression model, graphically demonstrate how numerous phases of writing can be happening simultaneously or jumped into and out of repeatedly (380).

Again, if students are not assigned work that demands such complex processes, it would in one sense be unfair to label the expectation that student writing proceed stepwise and linearly (as often constrained to by assignment design and deadlines) a double standard. But there seems to be a double standard if we don't demonstrate, and invite students to participate in, writing tasks *complex enough* to require such processes. (Or to acknowledge professional publishing's fairly ubiquitous laxity with deadlines, as compared to the strict ones students are held to.)

Similarly, we may be failing to strongly enough resist a popular misconception among students that every act of writing should be a unique and inspired act of creation, and any acts that aren't result in bad writing. Students seem slow to become aware how little completely original writing happens in professional, particularly business, settings. I see little awareness among college students—and humanities professors—I encounter that good writing in most professional settings *can* in fact result from boilerplate, from patterns and templates, from *formulas*. This unawareness creates a double standard whereby professional writers identify texts, patterns, and strategies that work and endlessly reuse them, while students themselves imagine or are explicitly instructed that every individual text is to be a unique creative act.

Editorial Assistance

Suppose that Professor Plum and her co-authors have by now proceeded to a full draft, in the same way that students, in vastly less time, with vastly fewer resources, starting from scratch, enjoined not to put themselves in their writing, but to use a lot of sources to back up their ideas, have reached a draft of their own. What happens to these drafts now? Plum, as a professional writer, has a wide array of editorial resources available to her. Colleagues, mentors, journal or book editors, even freelance copyeditors to help her finalize her piece for submission. She has some assurance of having a significant number of "tries" to get the piece right. A certain level of difficulty in her piece will actually be expected for early drafts, because so few scholarly articles are accepted without substantive revisions. Plum and her colleagues could say, "I just can't get this paragraph to work right, so I'm going to leave it as is and see what my editor says about it," and "get away with" that.

Students in many college-writing circumstances have some analogous level of peer review and teacher assistance with their writing, but even at best such editorial assistance would be inconsistent across classes, and limited. Many a teacher will grade what they get on first appearance; some will not even allow revision. I've taught writing in five institutions of higher education over the past 23 years, and directed writing programs at two of those, directly overseeing the work of more than 150 fellow writing instructors over time. The majority of my colleagues in every program I've observed do not use portfolios, and they grade drafts the first time they collect them. The majority of my colleagues also have not required revision after they've read a piece, instead making revision optional if the piece is poor enough to demand it. And these are the writing instructors on campus; are faculty in other fields any more likely to do differently? We have no evidence to say so. Even campus writing centers routinely refuse certain kinds of editorial assistance to students as a principle of sound writing center theory (see every issue of *Writing Center Journal* ever), because writing centers are working to correct the misimpression that grammar is the most important part of writing. In the vernacular: "We don't edit." Well, who does edit, for students?

Professor Plum meanwhile need not fear that mildly problematic work will fail to go out for peer review so long as the potential value of the manuscript is clear to editors and the prose is clear enough to prevent misreading. Particularly in a world where increasingly large proportions of scholarship in English are written by second-language writers, and where many academic fields simply expect poor writing from their practitioners, syntactic standards are well below "perfection" or even steadily quality fluency. For any moderate difficulties Plum's work shows in this regard, she can expect either to have some editorial assistance in preparing an accepted manuscript for publication, or to be producing "camera-ready" copy which will go into print flaws and all.

Indeed, faculty writers—with their vastly greater experience with textual production, greater knowledge of the subjects they're writing on, longer timeframes for producing writing and ability to bend deadlines, their workload and agency frequently distributed through collaborative writing, and with the presence of significant editorial assistance—even with all these aids, faculty writers face no expectation of perfection in their drafting, while student writers with very limited time, subject-matter expertise, writing experience, and outside assistance will frequently receive grade-killing criticism for even minor infelicities in reasoning, research, presentation, or editorial polish. There's a reason the world's best writers have the world's best editors—but therein lies one of the greatest double standards of all for students, because for a student, to be edited is to be cheating.

Product Measures

Suffice to say, the world is not replete with instances of poorly edited reference pages keeping a scholarly paper from being accepted for publication and then professionally copyedited, but many a research paper has missed an A because a teacher noticed too many proofreading errors and violations of MLA style in a student's piece. Students are powerfully aware of this double standard, and in reflections I see from my writing students, it receives some of the most comment. Nathan Voeller, for example, noted a case where students were prohibited from using a list of "dead words" in their writing by an instructor. "I once found, to my bitter amusement, one of the infamous dead word combinations in a prompt written by the list's creator." Sadie Robertus spoke of "a couple professors [who] are sticklers for perfect syntax, perfect grammar, perfect everything. But then they pass out their syllabus, and I discover errors everywhere!" She went on to speak of a second-year FYC instructor who encouraged students to "provide plentiful details, a strong thesis, and clear, concise sentences in their papers. Yet this same professor only gave his assignments verbally"—didn't even write them out. Angie Mallory encountered a professor who promised students they would not be graded on correctness but rather on out-of-the-box thinking, and yet resulting grades were low and the vast majority of feedback on the papers related to correctness. At the time, Mallory, in preparation to be a teacher, wrote, "If you claim you aren't

going to grade on something, then the focus of your feedback can't be on that thing." Even more telling regarding cultural expectations for perfection in student writing, Mallory wrote: "It takes a lot of effort for a student to believe that correctness is not the goal, and if we want students to come along with us on the semester journey we intend, then we have to safeguard that fragile trust. If we preach 'Shitty First Drafts' then we have to be prepared to receive them, and praise the messy learning." Certainly many FYC classrooms do so; but just as clearly, many more classes, in the experience of our students, are headed by faculty who hold students to higher standards than their own editors hold them. My favorite response when a faculty member on my campus complains about the quality of student writing is to ask if I might see a copy of that faculty member's most recent draft that went out for peer review. I have seen successful, high-publishing faculty literally blanch at that request—and then back down from their criticism of students.

Bob Broad and Richard Haswell have both demonstrated exhaustively just how much attention teachers continue to pay to mechanical correctness in student writing, while Joseph Williams long ago showed with chilling effectiveness how professional writers "earn" greater forgiveness for errors in their writing simply because of their professional status. It is an astounding double standard—though an understandable one—that while Professor Plum might limit most of her comments on a student's paper to pointing out its syntactic infelicities, her own article will rise or fall on the merits of its argument, methodology, data quality, and impact. Student work is frequently read in relative haste and in a surface fashion, and teachers (as Broad and as Haswell show) tend to grade on mechanical correctness both because of its high visibility and its relative objectivity. It is far easier to see, critique, and explain a comma error than it is a multi-link logical flaw. So there's a reasonably good chance that the grading of writing in a typical college course revolves on surface-level errors, so much so that as Broad found, teachers who sense but cannot explain a flaw in a paper's argument tend to mis-diagnose the problem as a grammatical error. I think it likely that the same widespread attention to and misunderstanding of surface error that Broad's and Haswell's studies find also accounts for the truism in WAC work that time will initially need to be spent getting faculty across campus to define "writing" more broadly than *grammar* and to talk about aspects of students' writing beyond correctness.

Professor Plum's paper, in contrast, will tend to be peer reviewed more patiently and deeply, with most attention focused on *the work it is meant to accomplish* within its activity system, and how it indeed accomplishes that work.

Sunshine and Access: FYC as a Space to Study Double Standards

In sum, the narrative of Plum contrasted with student voices and experiences suggests that there are significant differences in faculty and student writing expe-

riences that would cast writing in a richly different light for FYC students, were they only aware of those differences. I advocate that we consider such awareness-building crucial for FYC courses whose purpose is understood as enculturating students into academia as practitioners of academy inquiry. And FYC can certainly be built to do so.

Take, for example, a writing-about-writing approach to FYC, where writing becomes the studied subject of a writing course by integrating the reading of composition research with small primary research projects on questions about writing and writers.[5] To study double standards, such a course would have students encounter some of the issues this chapter demonstrates by reading the same research I've cited in my discussion of these issues, and then designing their own small-scale primary research on resulting research questions of their own. A student could study, for example, recursion in "real-world" writing processes by interviewing professionals who write to get descriptions of their habits. Student research on the professional writing practices of a discipline could enact Lave and Wenger's community-of-practice social learning theory and its emphasis on apprenticeship[6] as students shadowed faculty or other professionals for a semester, observing and interviewing about their writing. Or, from a discourse-studies angle, students could collect and analyze artifacts of professional writing processes—developing, for example, a map of the various written genres that led up to or contributed to a given publication.

FYC cannot be a site where students can begin becoming true participants in academe if our teachings are rife with mischaracterizations *of* the writing practices of academe. By encouraging students to investigate faculty's writing practices, we create a kind of apprenticeship. More importantly, we could call out and hopefully reduce or eliminate the double standards that have throughout FYC's history tended not simply to go unchallenged, but be actively reified and reinscribed by FYC. Lighting up these inconsistencies between the writing practices to which education relegates students and those of actual faculty thus becomes a significant step toward the inclusion of student voices in the academy that this book advocates.

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5.   For more information about a writing-about-writing approach to FYC, see Downs' *Teaching Our Own Prison* and "Teaching First Year Writers to *Use* Texts"; Downs and Wardle's "Teaching About Writing, Righting Misconceptions: (Re)Envisioning FYC as Intro to Writing Studies" and "Reimagining the Nature of FYC: Trends in Writing About Writing Pedagogies"; Wardle and Downs' "Looking Into Writing-About-Writing Classrooms"; Wardle's "Creative Repurposing for Expansive Learning"; and Downs and Robertson's "Threshold Concepts in First-Year Composition."

6.   See Artemeva's "Toward a Unified Social Theory of Genre Learning" in *Journal of Business and Technical Communication*.

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Questions for Discussion and Reflection After Chapter 1

1. Doug's chapter demonstrates that he has carefully considered the questions that Maxine Greene identifies as being essential for teachers to ask as they enact their professional identities: What shall we teach them? How shall we guide them? In light of what Doug shares in his chapter about the disconnect that can exist between what we tell students about writing and what we actually do as writers, along with what you have learned from reading this chapter, how might you answer these questions?

2. Doug maintains that "FYC should . . . be a site for investigation of double standards . . . " and he goes on to note the inconsistences that are present between what students in FYC are told about academic writing and how it is actually practiced, using a story that relates how Professor Plum plans and drafts a scholarly piece. What double standard related to writing might you ask your students to investigate and reflect on? For example, is there a writing "rule" that they have been taught that is often broken in real-world writing that they could investigate?

Writing Activity After Chapter 1

Doug states that the "awareness building" that he describes is "crucial" to the FYC course "whose purpose is . . . enculturating students into academia as practitioners of academic inquiry." He goes on to suggest ways that this "awareness building" can be accomplished. Choose one of the ideas for awareness building that he shares that you believe would work well for your FYC course. Write a draft of this assignment for your students. What are some objectives that you believe students would meet through their engagement in this project? How might the assignment lead to wide-awakeness and agency?

Further Reading

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