Introduction. Seeing Literate Action with a Lifespan in Mind: A Disciplinary Opportunity, a Theoretical Reconceptualization, and a Methodological Challenge

In August 2016, a group of international scholars met for the 50th Dartmouth Institute and Conference, *"College Writing": From the 1966 Dartmouth Seminar to Tomorrow*. Through a focus on methodology, the presenters, working paper authors, plenary speakers, and participants of this institute and conference addressed, from a variety of perspectives, a concern of central importance at this point in the continued growth of Writing Studies: What is the state of the art of higher education writing research today, and where must it go next?

In his working paper talk at the Dartmouth Institute, and his closing plenary address at the conference, Charles Bazerman suggested that Writing Studies might benefit from turning its attention toward the lifespan—exploring writing, in other words, with an eye toward the ways in which writers go about writing from cradle to grave. He argued in his working paper talk that "Writing takes a lifetime to learn" and that it "is a part of life, and accordingly intertwined with [a] way of life at different points in life, including reading and literacy engagement." He elaborated on this further at his closing address, pointing out that, as we can see through research on writers at various points in their lives, "Things really do change across the lifespan," and that these changes are worthy of further examination by Writing Studies scholars.

Bazerman's working paper and closing plenary brought to light a small but growing trend in Writing Studies research. Lauren Marshall Bowen's work, for instance, acknowledges that "the perspective of a lifespan can reveal otherwise hidden complexities of literacy" (Bowen, 2011, p. 586). Likewise, Paul Prior (2018) and Kevin Roozen (Roozen & Erickson, 2017) have embarked on long-term studies of their own that explore, in Lemke's (2000) words, how "moments add up into lives" (p. 273). Bazerman himself has headed up a Lifespan Writing Development Group (Bazerman et al., 2017, 2018), an interdisciplinary, international collection of scholars, to begin stitching together knowledge of writers and writing at different points in the lifespan and identify new directions for furthering this knowledge.

This growing emphasis on writing across the lifespan comes at an opportune time: as Brandt (2015) has noted, "For the first time in history, masses of humans have keyboards under their hands that connect them to people at a distance and screens that shine back at them the public look of their own written words"

(p. 159). The rise of what Brandt refers to as *mass writing literacy* on the back of proliferating technology and shifting economic development has transformed the way that people across all ages now engage with the written word. Our students' literate development is not our parents' or grandparents' literate development, nor is it ours, and we need a way of understanding that development on its own terms. Now more than ever before—as writing continues to be reshaped by breakthroughs in technology and economic transformations—the field of Writing Studies needs to understand not only how individuals are writing, but how they shape their writing (and how their writing shapes them) across the course of their lives and amidst the continually-developing swath of human history that they are caught up within.

Brandt, like Bazerman, has participated in the Lifespan Writing Development Group (LWDG). Arguing that writing, like "all complex arts," will necessarily "take a long time to learn" (Bazerman et al., 2017, p. 352), the LWDG suggest that this complexity and the lifetime it takes to work through such complexity need to be respected. In order to begin seeing writing through the lens of the lifespan (in research, pedagogy, and policy), the LWDG proposes eight principles to begin framing "a multidimensional picture of development that respects the complexity and individuality of writing" (Bazerman et al., 2017, p. 353):

1. Writing can develop across the lifespan as part of changing contexts;
2. Writing development is complex because writing is complex;
3. Writing development is variable; there is no single path and no single endpoint;
4. Writers develop in relation to the changing social needs, opportunities, resources, and technologies of their time and place;
5. The development of writing depends on the development, redirection, and specialized reconfiguring of general functions, processes, and tools;
6. Writing and other forms of development have a reciprocal relation and mutual supporting relationships;
7. To understand how writing develops across the lifespan, educators need to recognize the different ways language resources can be used to present meaning in written text; and
8. Curriculum plays a significant formative role in writing development (pp. 354-357).

These principles have been put into action by the *Writing through the Lifespan Collaboration*, a group of international scholars with a shared interest in responding to Bazerman's challenge to think longitudinally about writing across sites and over time. The *Collaboration* defines lifespan writing research as the examination of "acts of inscribed meaning-making, the products of it, and the multiple dimensions of human activity that relate to it in order to build accounts of whether and how writers and writing may change throughout the duration and breadth of the lifespan" (Dippre & Phillips, in press).

The *Collaboration*, in their shared work, has demonstrated that these principles can be useful heuristics for thinking about teaching, researching, and performing writing amidst their work to "build accounts" of changes in writers and writing throughout the lifespan. But while the principles are necessary components for usefully envisioning writing across a broad span of time, they are, on their own, insufficient for directing a research agenda. These principles represent useful configurations of multidisciplinary knowledge, but in order to be useful in the performance of research, they must be *operationalized*; that is, they must be put to work in the construction of new knowledge that can extend, complicate, and refine them.

In this text, I draw from ongoing discussions of sociological method—as well as their enactments in Writing Studies—in order to conduct research that operates with these guiding principles in mind, that mobilizes them toward accounts of lifespan writing development. I identify strategic and perspicuous research sites, materials, and methods that enable me to

1. Construct a logic-in-use for studying literate action development through the lifespan;
2. Study literate action development throughout the lifespan via that logic-in-use; and
3. Extend and complicate contemporary approaches to writing development and transfer research with findings from such a study.

The studies at the heart of this text take a lifespan perspective on the writing development of eleven writers from ages 12 to 80. Through observations, interviews, and document collection, I trace the literate action that these writers performed for various purposes in order to determine how their participation with and through literate action transformed over time. By articulating a portable logic-in-use that I refer to as the *totality of the literate experience* (Chapter 5), I develop a lifespan perspective on the work that these writers were doing, and connect my findings from them to ongoing discussions in Writing Studies about writing through the lifespan, writing development, and transfer.

The *totality of the literate experience*, which I work out in Part I and articulate fully in Chapter 5, is aimed at creating a *lived reality* perspective on literate action development. The lived reality can generally be thought of as the entirety—conscious and unconscious, typified and untypified—of literate action as it is happening *in the experience of the person performing that literate action*. In other words, the lived reality directs attention to the understandings that writers bring to literate action in order to "keep writing or reading going" (Brandt, 1990, p. 8). It is this reality that the *totality of the literate experience* is used to uncover.

The lived reality of development is a different focal point than much other work on the subject. Research on writing development is often place- or community-bound, showing people developing as writers for particular kinds of writing in particular social organizations, such as postsecondary settings (e.g., Beaufort,

2007; McCarthy, 1987; Nowacek, 2011; Thaiss & Zawacki, 2006). In these kinds of studies, we see individuals writing themselves into organizations, transferring some writing knowledge and not others, and developing new understandings of writing based on their stances (e.g., Reiff & Bawarshi, 2011; Sommers & Saltz, 2004). Other studies have also shown the development of genres in those places, as social organizations have evolved to meet the needs of its members. These changes happen across widely varied periods of time—some over a period of centuries (e.g., Bazerman, 1988), and some over shorter periods involving the introduction of new technology (e.g., Spinuzzi, 2003).

In all of these studies, we see individuals being introduced to social structures and, to an extent, structurating (Giddens, 1984) a social organization further. But as Prior (1998), Roozen (2008, 2009a, 2009b, 2010), Woodard (2015) and others have noted, literate action does not observe the social boundaries we put around it—our literate actions regularly operate across various lifeworlds, with our understanding of ourselves, our artifacts, and our practices serving to co-construct social situations across what Prior refers to as *functional systems*, or "a process that links things happening within and between artifacts, people, and the world" (1998, p. 29). We are constantly drawing on knowledge, both explicitly and implicitly, across social boundaries, repurposing (Roozen, 2010) our literate practices to meet the demands of new situations in new times and places, which in turn shapes the interiority of our consciousness. Paying attention to the enculturation of actors in and across specific social organizations has highlighted the complex ways in which contexts shape and are shaped by the persons constructing and perpetuating those contexts, as well as the impact that this interaction between individual and context has on the performance of literate action.

However, if we are to understand the development of individuals' literate actions and practices across a lifespan, then tracing the contours of literate activity through functional systems is problematic as a central object for analysis. The lives that we live are constructed by (and, in turn, construct) laminated, co-present, and heterogeneously developed functional systems of activity, and to understand a *lifespan* of development through the lens of functional systems would require the tracing out the complexity of both the assemblages that constitute these systems and the transformations of consciousness that emerge from such social engagement. The complexity of such tracing—and the enormity of the records that would emerge from such tracing—may lead us to lose sight of the individuated development underway. Prior's recent project of studying literate activity through the lens of *flat CHAT* (Prior, 2008, 2015, 2018; Prior & Olinger, 2018; Smith & Prior, 2019) has begun taking on this challenge with new ways of exploring the "laminated assemblage" (Prior, 2008, p. 13) of literate activity. For Prior (2008), flat CHAT "means not taking for granted some form of the social, not discourse communities, not communities of practice, not bounded activity systems, not accepting the official maps of the social world that our everyday language offers us as complete" (p. 13). Prior's tracing of the *sociology of associations*

in particular moments of multimotivational literate activity suggest some potential paths forward for usefully reducing data and tracing the moment-to-moment work of literate activity, but such laminated assemblages, in the tradition of Actor-Network Theory, run the risk of overloading moments of literate activity with the agency of actants, which may negatively impact data reduction. This may be a particular problem when trying to examine literate action through the entirety of the lifespan.

This is what the perspective of lived reality offers this text: a way to focus attention on the individuated actor engaged in a literate act that acknowledges the laminated assemblage that composes the act while, at the same time, accounting for the ways in which the individuated actor will use that act for a different purpose in another context (i.e., a different assemblage that also pulls together multiple sets of functional systems). In short, the lived reality serves as a lens that can examine individuated development as it is caught within the situated, social character of literate action. This can allow the field to understand how literate action develops for writers across times and places and, by extension, how the complex work of organizations and cultures shapes and drives (and is, in turn, shaped and driven by) the lifelong development of literate action.

Attending to the lived reality, as I show in Chapter 1, requires attending to the daily, ongoing, moment-to-moment actions of literate actors under study—because it is the momentary decisions, the short-term tactical work, from which writing development emerges. To do this, I need to explore not the lived reality of writing development but the lived reality of *literate action* development. Rather than paying attention only to the words that appear on the page and how those words change over time, I attend to the ways in which writers organize their material actions around and for writing, and how that—in tandem with the final written product—changes over time.

As part of attending to these material actions, I leave behind internal, psychological explanations of social action for much of this text. This can best be thought of as a data reduction, or methodological move: it is a way to highlight the ongoing work that people to do keep literate action going, and the developmental moments that occur amid that work. I am not suggesting that psychological explanations of social action are not useful, or that they are not important to understanding the complexity of literate action. In fact, the reader will note several opportunities to connect the materially-oriented work I am doing in this text to concepts in the Vygotskian tradition of psychology, such as the zone of proximal development. Rather, I intend to create a materially-oriented approach to lifespan literate action development from which lifespan-oriented psychological insight can later emerge. Once such an orientation is firmly established, we can—as I suggest in Chapter 9—shift our attention to the internal plane. In other words, I aim to construct, through a close look at the lived reality of literate action development, a materially-oriented framework for studying lifespan literate action development from which accounts of interiority can later be built.

The logic-in-use that emerged from this close look at the lived reality of literate action development is the *totality of the literate experience*. The totality is way of thinking through the mass of actions, movements, tools, and people that construct each moment of an individual's engagement with literate action. Through the lens of the totality, it is possible to see that each moment of literate action is bursting at the seams with potential—potential that is taken up by a literate actor through the experience of their lived reality one moment at a time.

Using the totality of the literate experience can focus attention on the moment-to-moment work, the lived reality of individuals as they take up talk, tools, and texts to engage in literate action development. This focus can serve as the framework for, the foundational infrastructure of, seeing writing and how it operates across the lifespan. This infrastructure serves as a starting point for linking the interactional work of the moment to what Prior (2018) refers to as *trajectories of becoming*, and what I refer to in Chapter 9 as *renovations of worlds*.

The idea of renovating our worlds can be considered as a way of understanding how people come to construct and, in turn, be constructed by social situations. The language of renovating our worlds is an attempt to pull away from an understanding of development as on any sort of trajectory. The word renovation suggests a re-working of the materials that we encounter as our understandings of literate action (both tacit and explicit) develop. Any encounter with language or activity always carries with it an element of newness, even if we have done the thing thousands of times before. It is this element of newness that the phrase "renovating our worlds" attempts to capture. As we go about operating in our various social worlds, we are always operating in them, in Garfinkel's (1967) words, "for another first time" (p. 9), transforming both our worlds and ourselves in the ongoing reproduction of both. Considering development as part of the ongoing renovation of worlds also highlights the history of our experiences as well as our flexibility in using them for another first time—it suggests not a trajectory, but a range of options that our continued action takes up to carry ourselves and our worlds forever into the future.

Attending to the ways in which writers renovate their worlds via literate action poses interesting extensions and complications of recent literature on development and transfer. Research on development treats development as being oriented toward a particular end state. Haswell is particularly clear about this in *Gaining Ground in College Writing*. He separates *growth*—a change in the way one goes about writing—from *maturation*, which is growth "toward a fixed standard" (1991, p. 117). *Development*, for Haswell, denotes maturation in terms of a broader culture. To develop for Haswell, then, is to change one's writing in relation to fixed standards that are attendant to the ongoing development of culture. Such a perspective on development suggests concrete future situations—that is, particularities of unfolding culture—that developing writers will engage in.

Likewise, work on the transfer of writing suggests that there will be future situations—in the case of much college-based transfer research, these situations

are other classes—in which certain kinds of learning about literate action can be triggered and mobilized in order to successfully accomplish tasks. Hayes, Ferris, and Whithaus (2016), for example, take up the concept of prior knowledge and the new resources that students encounter equally as constants, rather than two mutually transformed aspects of the lives of those engaged in transfer. The students know what they know, and new situation is what it is, and the act of transfer involves the movement of one into the other.

Both of these approaches are assuming a social world that developing writers enter into and write into in some future time and place. Through the lived reality, however—and through the totality of the literate experience, which allows for the disciplined exploration of that lived reality—we can see that the social world that writers enter into is, at least in part, of their own making. Writers, as they go about writing and developing as writers, are also developing the world around them, responding to and making responsive their contexts as those contexts unfold with them from one moment to the next. In other words, the perspective of the lived reality removes the assumption of future situations that development and transfer take up, putting in its place an emphasis on the uncertainty, in the lived reality of the developing writer, of the unfolding moment—what I will come to refer to as *What-Comes-Next*.

As I explain in Chapters Six, Seven, and Eight, research on writing development and transfer does not necessarily stand against this uncertainty. Instead, this uncertainty is framed within the structures that shape the world now and will, because of their durability, shape the world for the foreseeable future. For example, while transfer researchers may agree that there is an element of uncertainty to the way in which a future class will unfold on an interactional level, there are certain material forces at work—the curriculum required by a department, the demands of accrediting agencies, the options afforded by the very shape and structure of the buildings, the financial commitments for yet another semester of courses by students, faculty, private organizations, and government—that provide us with some degree of certainty as to what will happen next. The uncertainty that is left, in other words, is of little consequence—researchers can get far more from taking up the certainty that they do have about what comes next than they can from embracing the uncertainty of *What-Comes-Next*.

In this text, I argue from the opposite position: that the uncertainty of *What-Comes-Next* needs to be at the foreground of understanding of how writers develop their literate action, because it is that uncertainty that is central to them, that directs their attentions and actions. Literate action is an attempt by actors working together to harness the uncertain, to put down as *decided* that which is, in the moment of literate action, *undecided*. To leave out this kind of complex social work is to ignore some of the most powerful ways in which writers develop not only as literate actors but as social beings in their cultures.

Talk, Tools, and Texts offers insight into the power and possibilities of a lifespan perspective on literate action development. Even in short bursts of time, in

seemingly one-dimensional sites of study, a lifespan perspective on the ways in which writers are going about writing and how researchers might be able to study those methods has a great deal to offer Writing Studies. It extends and complicates commonplace understandings of writing, development, and transfer while, at the same time, underscoring the importance of some of Writing Studies' most closely held beliefs about all three.

The Nonlinear Challenge: Constructing and Reporting a Research Methodology

The lived reality of literate action development—treating the unfolding experience of the developing writer (and the uncertainty that is central to that experience) as the focus of a research investigation—brings with it some interesting methodological challenges. My answers to these challenges have been recursive and iterative in nature. The nature of a manuscript encourages a linear progression of a research story: identifying an emerging problem in the field, proposing a research plan, selecting a site, carrying out the research, and producing results. However, the work that I performed for this project is decidedly nonlinear. This project has emerged gradually, as I came to understand my research sites more and more deeply. This work went on as new conversations in writing across the lifespan, writing development, and writing transfer were unfolding in Writing Studies, and as my own interests, concerns, and questions drove me more deeply into the ethnomethodological, phenomenological, and sociohistoric grounds for these unfolding conversations.

In order to account for this recursive and iterative work in ways that are both honest and communicable to a wider research community, I have intertwined my methodological choices within my search for data throughout the chapters, which I foreground in the section below. In what follows, I provide an overview of my site selection as a way of helping the reader make sense of why my sites—particularly when situated in relation to one another—are particularly effective at considering writing development with a lifespan in mind. It will also aid the reader in drawing connections from the logic-in-use uncovered in Chapter 5 to the empirical work demonstrated in Chapters Two, Three, Four, Six, Seven, and Eight. In those chapters, I elaborate on some of the methodological difficulties presented by my sites and my emerging logic-in-use.

Constructing a Research Project: Pursuing Strategic and Perspicuous Research Sites

This text looks across research subjects at various ages and in various social circumstances. The first four chapters of empirical work consider the moment-to-moment literate action of students in two seventh-grade, language arts classes across

an entire academic year. Chapter 6 considers the changing literate action of two undergraduate students in their first two years of college. Chapter 7 considers the past and present literate action of two creative writers completing an MA program in creative writing. Finally, Chapter 8 considers the literacy history and chronotopic construction of literate action by two older writers in their 60s and 80s.

The contexts of these studies—which I detail in the following chapters—serve as strategic research sites (Bazerman, 2008; Merton, 1987) that enable a foundational infrastructure of lifespan writing development to be established not because any one site covers the entire lifespan but because those sites offer revealing moments that serve as a "microscope of Nature" (Merton, 1987, p. 11) for seeing literate action *in action*. These research sites offer a place where the complex social realities of learning to write and participate in literate action are not only present but central features of discussion and collaborative work, an object to work with and toward. In other words, studying these writers in action gave this study a seat closer to the action of the lived reality of these writers.

But these research sites are not strategic merely because I placed a camera in the classroom, or turned on a recorder for a conversation. The writers I present in this text are encountering a shift in the way in which they engaged in literate action. The seventh graders, for instance, have just moved from elementary school to middle school. They had more than one teacher, more homework, different kinds of writing, etc. This is enough of a shift in the life of these students and their understanding of the grammar of schooling (Tyack & Cuban, 1995) that, particularly early in the year, a good deal of their literate actions were questioned by the students themselves and, by extension, those literate actions came to the level of discursive awareness for further discussion and examination. The other research subjects in this text were in similar positions, and found themselves encountering writing in ways that brought the particularities of their literate practices to the surface more often than in other times and places, offering a variety of moments that served as a "microscope of Nature" to work with.

A second criterion I attended to in my selection of sites was that they were *perspicuous* settings of the ongoing production of social order in some way. Garfinkel (2002) claims that a perspicuous setting "makes available, in that it consists of, material disclosures of practices of local production and natural accountability in technical details *with which to find, examine, elucidate, learn of, show, and teach the organization object as an* in vivo *work site*" (p. 181, emphasis in original). This relates to Brandt's (1990) attempt to study the acts of readers and writers—perspicuous settings make visible *how writers make sense of their actions* amidst the production of writing. A *strategic* research site reveals literate action in action, but a *perspicuous* site renders the sense-making activity of the actors in that setting visible for study.

Strategic research sites and perspicuous settings work together in this text to identify particular sites that will help me build an understanding of literate action development through the lifespan from the perspective of the lived real-

ity. These two components act as axes in a decision-making continuum (Figure 1). Research sites must be *strategically* selected so that they appropriately answer research questions, and *perspicuous* enough that the detailed picture of the lived reality can be kept at the center of attention while answering those questions. The process of answering those questions must balance the demand of capturing a phenomenon of interest longitudinally—that is, across significant swaths of time in the life of the developing writer—with the demand of production of social order that literate action is caught up within at any given moment in time.

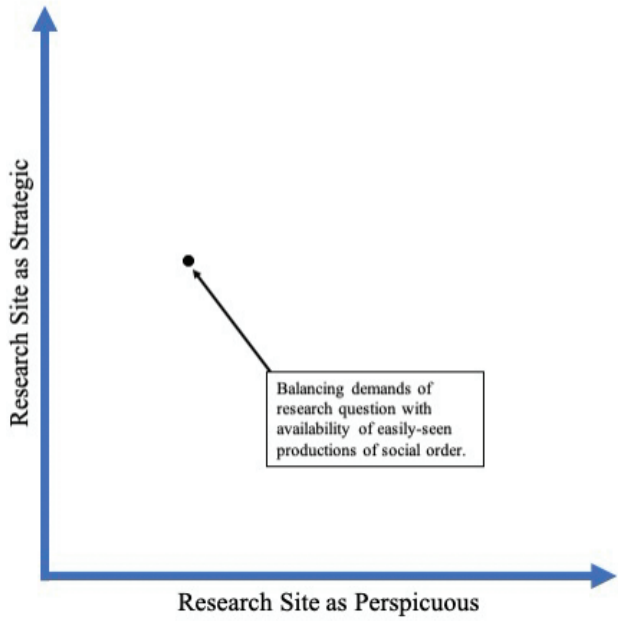

Figure 1. Research site decision-making: A continuum.

Throughout Part I, these two criteria overlap significantly. The middle school classroom that I select for study has a wide variety of writing (strategic) that can be easily viewed as it happens through participant observations (perspicuity) in order for me to pursue my phenomenon of interest: that is, locate and characterize literate action development through the lived reality. In Part II, however, as I study literate action development among different populations, I have to make decisions about where and when to sacrifice the perspicuity of the production of social order to take advantage of otherwise strategic research sites.

Outline of Talk, Tools, and Text

This text is organized into two parts. In "Part I: Transformations amid Recurrence," (Chapters One through Five) I turn the reader's attention to the untypified aspects of recurrent social situations and, in doing so, respecify literate action

development through the lens of *ethnomethodology*, or the study of how people work together to create social order through interaction. In "Part II: Tracing Development through the Totality," (Chapters Six through Eight) I draw on the logic-in-use of the totality that emerges from Part I to examine literate action development at various stages in the lifespan. In my conclusion, I further develop my logic-in-use, and outline the consequences of treating that logic as an infrastructure for studying literate action development through the lifespan.

In Chapter 1, I build on the argument for attending to literate action that I begin in this introduction more specifically, arguing that literate action as a coherent theory (Bazerman, 2013) must be oriented toward development and, in that act of orientation, its center of gravity shifts from typification and genre to the social construction of meaning, practices, and action. Since contemporary notions of "development" are insufficient for studying transformations of literate action through the entirety of the lifespan, I respecify development through the sociological tradition of ethnomethodology, aligning it tightly within a development-as-participation-in-social-action perspective (Applebee, 2000). Drawing on the example of candidate developmental moments of one seventh-grade student in a language arts classroom, Alice (pseudonym), I identify several concepts for thinking through literate action development as a phenomenon arising from interactions with talk, tools, and texts, and begin a search for a well-articulated framework that can attend to Alice's development.

In order to begin tracing literate action development, I produce a description of the practices that constitute a seventh-grade, language arts classroom throughout an academic year in Chapter 2. Because of Emily's focus on writing in her lesson planning and the degree to which writing is involved in daily classroom life, Emily's classroom serves as *strategic research site*. Since so much of Emily's students' writing happened in the class—where it could easily be observed—Emily's class also serves as a *perspicuous setting* for revealing literate action development as a part of the ongoing production of social order. I identify the locally-available organizing features of the practices in Emily's class throughout the year in order to develop an actor-oriented perspective on social order in Emily's classroom. Then, turning to ethnomethodological (Garfinkel, 1967, 2002, 2006, 2007, 2008) research, I develop two concepts—*What-Comes-Next* and information—that will support the conceptualization of an individuated perspective on literate action development.

In Chapters Three and Four, I use examples of particular literate action by four students: Marianne, Nick, Holly, and Don. Through the work that these students accomplish, I show the ways in which individuated literate action constructs opportunities for development, as well as what that interactional work of development looks like. In Chapter 3, I use the literate action of Marianne to trace the ways in which the intersubjectively accomplished classroom outlined in Chapter 2 can create the conditions for individuated understandings of a given social action. Nick's group work activity, which I trace through intertextual ties

to an eventual blog entry, allows me to elaborate those claims. Holly's "Do Now" activity, and Don's writing in Chapter 4 carries this issue of individuated intersubjectivity further forward, showing the ways in which it can accrue into a rambling path of development across a wider swath of time and activities.

The findings of Chapters Two, Three, and Four lead me to develop a logic-in-use in Chapter 5, what I refer to as *the totality of the literate experience*. The totality is a way of making sense of the intense, laminated assemblage that constitutes each moment of literate action from the perspective of the individuated actor engaged in literate action development. In other words, in each moment of an unfolding experience, a literate actor has a range of past understandings and actions to draw upon which are made materially available in the unfolding moment, and the ways in which that range is drawn upon provides another step in the rambling pathways of literate action development. Considering each moment of literate action like this is a way of re-framing the writing that we observe in our classrooms, our research sites, and our literate lives, and sets the stage for further clarification with cases in Part II.

In Chapter 6, I investigate the literate action of two college-aged writers, May and Lilly, through the totality to explore the possibilities that this logic-in-use has to offer the study of literate action development through the lifespan. By exploring how May and Lilly co-construct social order with and through literate action for school, work, sport, and personal communication, I demonstrate the usefulness of the totality and reveal a concept for thinking through future lifespan writing research: agency. Drawing on this concept as it is revealed throughout May and Lilly's work, I extend and complicate current work on writing transfer.

Chapter 7 draws on two more cases—those of two creative writers with histories in industry and academia, John and Tom—to further extend the reach of the totality and develop another concept: identity. The cases of John and Tom highlight the ways in which subtle transformations of literate action in a given moment can be sustained over long stretches of time, to undergird new patterns of literate action that transform the lifeworlds we participate in throughout our literate lives.

In Chapter 8, I draw on the final two cases in this text—two writers in their 60s and 80s, Michelle and James—to productively complicate agency and identity through the totality. The cases of Michelle and James, who have significantly more control over their time, money, and resources than the previous cases, underscore the analytic power of the totality while also productively complicating the concepts that emerged in the previous two chapters. By attending to the writing that these writers do, and the histories of literate action that brought them to it, the totality of the literate experience as a logic-in-use is further refined, and the case for using such a logic as a starting point for a foundational infrastructure of lifespan writing research is made.

Drawing on the findings presented in Chapters Six, Seven, and Eight, I articulate a summary of the lived reality of literate action development and its atten-

dant concepts. With this understanding of the totality and its connections to the concepts of Part II in place, I then outline the next steps in treating the totality as an infrastructure from which an interdisciplinary understanding of literate action development can build. I suggest potential sites of future interdisciplinary work that attend to interiority, broader systems of activity, and intergenerational cohorts.