Journal of Basic Writing

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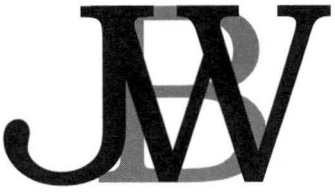

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CALL FOR ARTICLES

We welcome manuscripts of 15-25 pages, double spaced, on topics related to basic and ESL writing, broadly interpreted. Submissions should follow current MLA guidelines. Manuscripts are refereed anonymously. To assure impartial review, include name(s), affiliation(s), mailing and e-mail addresses, and a short biographical note for publication on the cover page *only*. The second page should include the title but no author identification, an abstract of about 150 words, and a list of 4-5 key words. Endnotes should be kept to a minimum. It is the author's responsibility to obtain written permission for including excerpts from student writing.

We prefer that contributions be submitted as Word document attachments via e-mail to: hopekcc@aol.com and Cheryl.Smith@baruch.cuny.edu. If electronic submission is not possible, mail five copies of the manuscript and abstract to:

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You will receive a confirmation of receipt; a report on the status of your submission will follow in about sixteen weeks.

All manuscripts must focus clearly on basic writing and must add substantively to the existing literature. We seek manuscripts that are original, stimulating, well-grounded in theory, and clearly related to practice. Work that reiterates what is known or work previously published will not be considered.

We invite authors to write about such matters as classroom practices in relation to basic-writing or second-language theory; cognitive and rhetorical theories and their relation to basic writing; social, psychological, and cultural implications of literacy; discourse theory; grammar, spelling, and error analysis; linguistics; computers and new technologies in basic writing; assessment and evaluation; writing center practices; teaching logs and the development of new methodologies; and cross-disciplinary studies combining basic writing with psychology, anthropology, journalism, and art. We publish observational studies as well as theoretical discussions on relationships between basic writing and reading, or the study of literature, or speech, or listening. The term "basic writer" is used with wide diversity today, sometimes referring to a student from a highly oral tradition with little experience in writing academic discourse, and sometimes referring to a student whose academic writing is fluent but otherwise deficient. To help readers, therefore, authors should describe clearly the student population which they are discussing.

We particularly encourage a *variety* of manuscripts: speculative discussions which venture fresh interpretations; essays which draw heavily on student writing as supportive evidence for new observations; research reports, written in non-technical language, which offer observations previously unknown or unsubstantiated; and collaborative writings which provocatively debate more than one side of a central controversy.

EDITORS' COLUMN

We are well aware that the field of basic writing is a self-conscious one. It seems we are wholly and constantly engaged in efforts to recognize our students rightly and take account of their needs. Given these times of budget cuts and standards-bearing, we also know how frequently these goals will elude us. Still we persist, always intent to find new lenses through which to view our students and the many influences on our work with them. Along these lines, the Council on Basic Writing (CBW) recently urged greater visibility for basic writing with its "sense of the house" motion at the 2011 Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) in Atlanta. See our News and Announcements for the good news!

Searching the psychological, Don J. Kraemer reminds us in "On Whether to Convert from a Rhetorical to a Psychoanalytic Pedagogy" that the politics of identity and conflict span a range wider than we may have imagined in ways that can reshape our teaching. Kraemer draws on Mark Bracher's *The Writing Cure: Psychoanalysis, Composition, and the Aims of Education* to acknowledge psychology's commitment to the "non-violent and just resolution to conflict" as a site where "psychoanalysis and rhetoric meet." He supports Bracher in recognizing the psychically-conflicted writing subject, yet shows that reconciling psychoanalysis to rhetoric—two compelling but distinct pedagogies of "problematic uncertainty"—is not easy. Kraemer's point is to set psychoanalysis and rhetoric in dialogue so as to perhaps re-examine the implications of teaching overly toward audience and rhetorical effect. As a result, instructors may come to understand pedagogies of ownership differently while questioning whether a "conversion" to psychoanalytical pedagogy is desirable or possible. Our lead article is thereby a force for considering the conflicts and tensions that accompany writing and their creative value.

The value of creative conflict likewise informs our second article, "Beyond Charity: Partial Narratives as a Metaphor for Basic Writing," by Nelson Flores. Here we re-engage two sources of conflict quite familiar to our field: basic writers' "conflict and struggle" as Min-Zhan Lu theorized these forces from the 1990s to the present, and the conflict brought forth in a *College English* symposium defending (as some compositionists saw need) the intentions and pedagogy of Mina Shaughnessy, with whom Lu was in dialogue. To acknowledge students' conflict in relation to their institutional location hardly seems contentious today. In fact, this is Flores' point—the potential and dangerous burying of this tension as Lu has defined it. Flores

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focuses on a recent re-visioning of the controversy by Brian Ray[1] which, he says, important as it is, overlooks the core of misunderstanding among the symposium's participants in regard to Lu—a misunderstanding conflating Lu's concern with discursive systems defining basic writers' experience and Shaughnessy's individual, well-intentioned politics. To reframe the sides of the debate, Flores rejects the metaphor that Ray proposes, "linguistic charity," and offers his own, "partial narratives." In so doing, he recasts the symposium as well as Ray's article in terms of basic writing advocates speaking to different concerns, under different assumptions. More, he offers "partial narratives" as a metaphor that can renew classrooms as places where diversity is creatively shared.

Just as the first two articles concern seeing students rightly, the next three articles discuss students' *institutional* recognition—i.e., seeing students' value as manifested by credit, programs, and material support. "Working Together: Student-Faculty Interaction and the Boise State Stretch Program" by Thomas Peele sparks the question, to what extent can we say (and mean) that we value students' basic writing coursework? Peele shares a growing record of success for Boise State's Stretch Program to argue the sense of granting its students academic credit for basic writing. The program succeeds in part because students recognize the benefit of continuing with the same teacher over the course of a year; Stretch at Boise State is largely by way of choice since these sections are not officially publicized as such. The efficacy of this approach for students shows in higher retention rates and overall quality of writing, comparable to non-Stretch/ non-basic writing students. But Peele sees, in effect, a lack of validation in the continuing unwillingness of university administrators to allow students credit for these courses—yet another *misrecognition* of basic writing students.

The fourth article in this issue discusses the challenges of supporting a program that, like Boise State's Stretch Program, implicitly values basic writing students as real contributors to academic life. In "Beyond the Budget: Sustainability and Writing Studios," Chris Warnick, Emily Cooney, and Samuel Lackey describe the College of Charleston's Writer's Group as a space for broadening students' experience of writing to include genuine inquiry, creative insight, and comparative, metarhetorical interest. In pursuit of these goals, Writer's Group adhered to Grego and Thompson's vision of Writing Studios as "third space." But the article details mainly how and why Writer's Group could not meet its potential. Under-utilized, under-staffed,

[1] Brian Ray, "A New World: Redefining the Legacy of Min-Zhan Lu," *Journal of Basic Writing* 27.2 (Fall 2008): 106-27.

and under-funded, the writing studio could not acquire the prominence it sought and eventually was cancelled amid programmatic changes made to the college's English requirement. Insofar as first-year students must still meet with their English teachers during an additional outside-of-class hour, the authors hope to revive something of Writer's Group's potential. The article shows the tremendous range of institutional issues that impact this possibility.

Finally, Sara Webb-Sunderhaus' article, "When Access Is Not Enough: Retaining Basic Writers at an Open-Admission University," addresses the full measure of support needed to ensure basic writers' success. Webb-Sunderhaus argues that the lack of support for basic writers comes down to equity, beyond access. It is not enough to provide access if resources for ensuring success are insufficient or unavailable. Webb-Sunderhaus extends recent discussions linking basic writing to social justice. She draws on Susan Naomi Bernstein's "Social Justice Initiative for Basic Writers" as well as myriad poverty and income-related statistics that prove the dire circumstances of many of our students. As a result, we discover yet another lens through which to view our students: often they are the excluded of society who nonetheless "currently [flood] into many of our basic writing classrooms in an attempt to escape the ravages of this economy." What a full and awe-inspiring picture this *JBW* issue provides of the students in our classes: internally desiring; creatively conflicted; hardworking and deserving credit; capable of seeing *more* in their writing (if allowed "third space"); greatly struggling and seeking. The search to see our students rightly may well be limitless, but every step in our progress renders insight.

Note from Rebecca Mlynarczyk: Since I retired from the City University of New York in January 2011, this issue will be the last in which I serve as *JBW*'s Co-Editor. Editing this journal, a position I assumed in 2003, has been one of the most rewarding experiences of a long and rewarding career. I began working with basic writers in 1974, when I was hired as a writing and reading tutor for some of the underprepared students who were flooding into CUNY during Open Admissions. Little did I know at the time that these students, and others like them, would become the center of my teaching and scholarship for the next 35 years. Serving as editor of *JBW*, founded in 1975 by Mina Shaughnessy and devoted to the challenges and rewards of working with this same population, has been a pleasure and a privilege. I leave it with regret but with great confidence in our new editorial team, Hope Parisi, who has served as Co-Editor since 2008, and Cheryl C. Smith of CUNY's Baruch College, who is moving up from her previous post as

Associate Editor. For making my work on the journal so rewarding, I would like to thank the authors I have worked with over these years; the inspiring doctoral students who have served as our editorial assistants—Johannah Rodgers, Karen Weingarten, Angela Francis, and Corey Frost; and the other editors from whom I have learned so much—George Otte, Bonne August, and Hope Parisi. Although I am now officially retired from the university, I will continue to work part-time for the Pipeline Program, which provides mentoring for academically strong CUNY undergraduates from groups that are underrepresented in academia. The goal is to help these students gain admission to doctoral programs and eventually pursue careers in college teaching and research. The ultimate goal is to achieve a more diverse professoriate, which better reflects the increasingly diverse student population of colleges and universities across the country. As I work with these outstanding CUNY undergraduates, I am aware that the expansion of educational opportunity that occurred in the late 1960s and 1970s is still paying dividends today. It is even possible that some of them are the children of those early open admissions students. Unfortunately, at this time, I see a curtailing of opportunity in general and of educational opportunities for basic writers in particular. Despite the modest gains of that earlier era, our nation's college and university faculties still do not reflect the diverse demographics of the students we serve. Hence, educational honors programs such as Pipeline are just as necessary today as when the program was started in 1991.

—Hope Parisi and Rebecca Mlynarczyk

On Whether to Convert from a Rhetorical to a Psychoanalytic Pedagogy

Don J. Kraemer

ABSTRACT: Like psychoanalysis, psychoanalytic pedagogy is a particular way of paying attention, a way of paying attention that deflects attention away from other pedagogies' means and goals. Looking for what psychoanalysis deems the "root cause" of writing problems—intrapsychic conflict—foregrounds that kind of conflict, relegating to the background other kinds of conflict, such as the rhetorical. Even more than relegating, looking psychoanalytically can transform rhetorical conflict from that which initiates and helps develop discourse into that which impairs it. The case this article will make is not that it is impossible to reconcile rhetoric and psychoanalysis, only that because they can (as forms of writing instruction) contradict each other, such reconciliation is not easy.

KEYWORDS: psychoanalysis; rhetoric; synthesis; basic writing; audience

WHAT IS AT STAKE?

The question is not whether rhetorical pedagogy and psychoanalytic pedagogy can or should be in dialogue with each other. They should be and have been.[1] As a teacher of writing, I routinely wonder how well I heard what a student was really saying, what undercurrents of feeling I missed in our class-wide discussion of a draft, why in the margins of drafts and in class exchanges I made one move rather than another. Why I do what I do (to them) can also cause students to question my motives, such as why so much of the writing I have them read is not just wordy but sneaky—or why I cannot, in plain English, just say what I mean.

If only to work ground my students and I have in common, then, I am receptive to Mark Bracher's recommendation, in *The Writing Cure: Psychoanalysis, Composition, and the Aims of Education*, that we "articulate more clearly the possible points of convergence between psychoanalysis and the teaching of writing" (11). The stakes are high, for unless the "fundamental aim of psychoanalysis as articulated by Lacan" is achieved—i.e., "to help the subject discover, acknowledge, and finally assume—that is, embrace and take

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responsibility for—his or her own unconscious desire" (5)—then a student's writing will be less effective because some of "the student's unconscious desires and gratifications" will "conflict with and oppose" his or her stated intentions (5): "Writing that is ineffective in any way is such because contrary impulses have interfered with the ego's conscious intention in some way" (61). Greater articulation between stated intentions and unconscious desire is significant because the deeply rooted fears and prejudices of unconscious desire can undermine a writer's overt aims, whether sizing up an audience or tightening the logic of an argument or crafting an appealing style (see Bracher 61). Attuned to the needs of writing students, then, Bracher's version of psychoanalytic pedagogy warrants special rhetorical consideration.[2]

Such consideration is further warranted because Bracher attends to the kind of civic discourse typically associated with rhetoric. Teachers of writing for the public will be interested in the psychoanalytic claim that when it comes to reducing social injustice and increasing social tolerance, psychoanalytic pedagogy is, in fact, "ultimately a more effective as well as more ethical intervention in social problems than either the more partisan and polemical pedagogies or the more 'objective' rhetorical hermeneutic approach" (Bracher 192). The former are pedagogies that explicitly teach just solutions to problems of social injustice—the latter, pedagogies that study how social conflicts get constructed and engaged (such as in my assignment 2, below). The aims of each, however, are in Bracher's view more effectively and ethically advanced by the psychoanalytic approach.

To change any writing teacher's mind about what is effective and ethical instruction will probably take some doing. Where effectiveness is concerned, I am thinking about the psychoanalytic claim that the "most successful pedagogy will be one that addresses the *root causes* of writing problems, and this means taking account of all the psychological factors involved" (Bracher 10, emphasis added). As we shall see, this reference to "the root causes of writing problems" emphasizes how prior experiences and meanings affect writing rather than how writing affects prior experiences and meanings (see Lu 32, 51). If what matters most exists prior to the act of writing, I will teach in a way quite different than if what most matters depends on acts of writing. What is effective for one may be ineffective, even wrong, for the other.

And here I am thinking of ethics, for wrong cannot be separated from effective, at least in a discipline that is about changing others' minds. A "truly psychoanalytic practice," Bracher says, "embodies the least coercive position possible for a practice that aims to change another person in important

ways" (7). Yet the rhetorical pedagogy I practice is full of the "incentives and demands" meant to help basic writers develop "their thinking through revision" (Coles 196). Such coercion no doubt creates difficulties, "a process of conflict and struggle" that Min-Zhan Lu has argued "is a source of pain but constructive as well" (Lu 31). Whether an assignment's constructive effects justify the pain of coercion is, like the question of effectiveness, another question on which rhetorical and psychoanalytic pedagogies are in conflict.

This conflict may indicate that the real pedagogical question between rhetoric and psychoanalysis is not whether to be in dialogue but whether to convert. Whether to convert to psychoanalytic pedagogy is also, for present purposes, the better question because the intensity of conversion imposes clarity, hauling to the surface our deepest preoccupations. Imagine making radical changes in one's teaching, even to a single assignment. An assignment I believe in, whose ends are honorable and whose benefits for students I have seen with my own eyes and whose design I have arrived at after much trial and error, after consultation with the student writers it affects—replacing this assignment with another, let alone the pedagogy it embodies with another, would not be simple.[3] If I am reluctant to change, if I seem entrenched, if I dig in my heels, it is because digging into the implications of a particular pedagogy has taken time, has been perhaps a labor of love, and is, therefore, invested with desire. If the question is conversion, the high-intensity conflict is not whether there are points of convergence and divergence between psychoanalytic pedagogy and the teaching of writing; the conflict is whether psychoanalytic pedagogy should uproot another pedagogical desire.

RHETORICAL PEDAGOGY

Conscious that it is contesting a monopoly held by teaching approaches more or less informed by rhetoric, psychoanalytic pedagogy claims the basic-writing classroom as its ideal forum:

> In fact, everyday prose—particularly that produced by writers who, like basic writing students, write more or less unselfconsciously, without the massive ego control and superego censorship present in more highly trained writers—offers what is perhaps the best forum available outside a clinical setting for a psychoanalytically informed teacher to observe intrapsychic conflict and respond to it in an effective and ethical manner. (Bracher 69)

We need not concede the claim that basic writers "write more or less unselfconsciously"—a claim that defies experience and experimental studies (Shaughnessy, Perl)—to acknowledge that rhetorical pedagogy has not had much to say about "intrapsychic conflict," a kind of conflict which "[r]hetorical scholars, *especially*, oversimplify" (Alcorn 23, emphasis added). Such conflict is, furthermore, probably burdened rather than helped by labels such as "basic writers," a remedial designation that conflicts with a self-image grounded in the competence that got them into college—the conflict within the self who received high grades in high school language-arts classes but a poor score on a college placement exam, for example, as well as the more internalized conflict (common enough at the polytechnic institution where I work) within the advanced gamer with serious market-ready skills placed into a developmental class designed to teach basic pre-baccalaureate writing skills.

Add to this conflict the demands of what it takes, as Marilyn Sternglass puts it in her longitudinal study of college-level writing and learning,

> to get students started in understanding what the goals of writing should be: the ability to develop a purpose for writing, the ability to formulate ideas clearly and succinctly, the ability to develop and defend the most crucial points in the argument, the ability to analyze evidence, the ability to synthesize ideas, the ability to influence an audience, and the ability to express their points clearly. (*Time to Know Them* 141)

Getting students started down even such a basic rhetorical path involves demands that can exacerbate the conflict between individual and institution. More conflict comes with the kind of writing prompt typical of rhetorical pedagogy—usually on a public topic that divides opinion and unsettles the social order. Consider part of my instructions to basic writing students for paper 2, a rhetorical analysis of *Lake of Fire*, a documentary about abortion in the United States (the "They Say" and "I Say" below refer to Graff and Birkenstein's *They Say/I Say: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing*—a textbook that helps student writers "organize their thoughts" by providing them with templates that focus "attention not just on what is being said, but on the forms that structure what is being said" [xiii]):

- Use what "They Say" about abortion to set up what "You Say"; the "they" must include at least two distinct "They's" from *Lake of Fire*.

You may also, if it suits your purposes, grab a "They" from [Edward] Schiappa's "Analyzing Argumentative Discourse from a Rhetorical Perspective: Defining 'Person' and 'Human Life' in Constitutional Disputes over Abortion," as well as from other sources (including but not limited to family and friends). In this part of the essay, it would make sense to use lots of "quotation sandwiches" (see *They Say/I Say* 42-43).

- Analyze what is at stake for these various "They's," using questions such as "What are Their purposes in defining 'X' "? and "What interests and values are advanced by these competing definitions?" In this part of the essay, you will need to demonstrate the connections between their words and the claims you are making about their words.

- In light of these differences, clarify what is at stake for you (this is your "I Say"). You might make what is at stake clearer by reflecting further on what it might mean to your life if you were to identify with one set of interests vs. the others. Or you might explain why you would draw the lines around the issue differently than have the sets of interest you've articulated.

To be fair, this assignment can cause students some discomfort—not only because of its content but also because of the kind of analysis it calls for. And this discomfort will be defended against one way or another. Some defensiveness is evident in this excerpt from a response to the above instructions (a second-draft response, having already gone through a workshop), an excerpt that follows several paragraphs elucidating "each side's" positions:

> Now there are definitely some radical pro life people who it seems will stop at nothing to get their point across. Many have taken matters into their own hands by murdering abortion doctors and even bombing their buildings where they perform the procedures. One man shot an abortion doctor in the back when the doctor was on his way into his building. Even though the man pulled the trigger, the blame is being pushed on the man's pastor who was supposedly influencing him and pumping him up to do it. The pastor said that he did no such thing, the choice was that of the man's and he will have to face the consequences now, but he did what he thought was the right thing to do. Another doctor was reportedly shot outside his

> home with his family nearby. The people committing these crimes feel like apparently killing one doctor will save hundreds of babies' lives, and so they have no problem doing it because they think it is the right thing to do. . . .
>
> Another thing about that that seems odd to me is that the anti abortionists are willing to become murderers themselves. They are so against the idea of taking a human's life, yet they seem to have no problem with it if they think they are doing good. Unfortunately, when you kill someone for what you believe is a just cause, it can lead others who follow in the same path. The murderers are viewed as a sort of martyr because they know they are going to be punished but they feel it is ok because they are standing up for what they believe. The interesting thing is, is that extremists were for a while making a huge impact because many abortion doctors and workers were dropping out because they feared for their lives. . . .

What do we, as teachers, attend to in this writing, which defends against the pain of analyzing the perspective behind violent acts? How do we respond to this student, who instead of exploring the ethical complexity of "standing up for what they believe" skips ahead to its "interesting" efficacy? What more, if anything, do we ask her to do, and why?

I will return to these questions, as well as the student's next revision, after working through some of the pedagogical conflicts between psychoanalysis and rhetoric, but it will be instructive to bear in mind a basic antithesis: psychoanalysis will direct the writer *inward* toward a pre-existing conflict revealed by her writing; rhetoric will direct the writer *outward* toward a conflict with others that her writing defines and transforms. Writing about the problems in a student paper—problems "at all levels, from diction to syntax to organization"—Bracher concludes, "Insofar as the root cause of these many writing problems is intrapsychic conflict, the best way to help [the student] eliminate such problems and improve her writing would be to help her work through these intrapsychic conflicts" (123). This specific diagnosis, intrapsychic conflict as the root cause of writing problems, turns out to be general and predictable: an individual's unconscious conflicts produce writing problems. Where to go from here—inward or outward—is the conflict to which I now turn.

PSYCHOANALYSIS AND RHETORIC IN CONFLICT

What psychoanalysis has to say about intrapsychic conflict speaks to many of our everyday concerns as writing teachers. Consider the following:

> Unless students have recognized and assumed their own desire, this desire will be likely to operate unconsciously in their relations with external Others, distorting their perception of the Other and interfering with their transactions with the Other. To the extent that students recognize and assume their own previously unconscious desire, they reduce such distortion and interference. (Bracher 186)

Anything that would help reduce the defensive interference that distorts, if not demonizes, the Other; anything that would enrich the quality of the transaction between audience and writer—anything along these lines improves the quality of "transactions with the Other" (i.e., rhetorical exchange). Such awareness, furthermore, is highly ethical—not just serviceable in the short run but desirable in the long run. When psychoanalysis advocates "bringing the subject to recognize that his own desire is at least partially responsible for problems that he had previously attributed to forces that he was opposed to or that were beyond his control" (173), it is advocating the qualities of good faith, rational agency, and maturely intersubjective relations that characterize an ideal rhetorical situation. Nowhere does rhetorical pedagogy overlap more ideally with psychoanalysis than in its belief in irony's ameliorative magic, in particular the magic of lessening violence where there is conflict: "Recognizing that one's own desire plays a fundamental and self-contradictory role in writing can be an important step toward identifying that desire, working through it, and reducing its destructive effects" (Bracher 173; see also 128). In this fundamental commitment to non-violent and just resolution of conflict, psychoanalysis and rhetoric meet. The significance of this commitment means, among other things, that more convergence between rhetoric and psychoanalysis can be sought in earnest.

And yet, having begun this search, I find some not insignificant divergence. One fundamental point of divergence—a point from which others emerge—is the relations among language and identity. In psychoanalysis, for example, certain styles are interpreted as "corresponding to specific personality types" (Bracher 91). Formed by processes that precede the rhetorical

occasion, personality types such as "the hysterical, the obsessional, and the perverse" (91) bring about the styles to which they correspond.

To say "bring about" is stronger than "correspond"; the stronger version is necessary to keep more legible this significant divergence between psychoanalysis and rhetoric. The divergence is barely legible in passages like the following, in which Bracher's discussion acknowledges that a student may write

> in a way that is deemed by the Symbolic Other to embody a certain valued quality. If a piece of writing is perceived as elegant, the writer, too, partakes of that quality. The same is true of an austere style, a formal style, a professional style, and so on: each creates a particular type of persona for the writer, allowing her to be perceived as a particular sort of person and thus according her a particular identity. (90)

In this account, style/persona can be read as "ethos"—a kind of ethical appeal adapted to a particular audience. Wishing to be perceived in a certain way by a certain audience, the writer forms her character—her image, her voice—accordingly.

The key difference in this passage between the conventionally rhetorical reading I have made (in which ethos is a means to an end) and the passage's recalcitrant commitment to psychoanalytic interests is its emphasis on the writer's ego (in which the desire to be perceived a certain way is an end in itself). To see why this difference matters, let us return to part of the quotation above: "If a piece of writing is perceived as elegant, the writer, too, partakes of that quality." Psychoanalysis has its eyes on the writer as *person*—the writer of the text as a person who will become its beneficiary, as the historical being who exists after its writing and who was the historical being who wrote in ways that can be explained psychoanalytically. To be interested in the individual's history *in a certain way* is why psychoanalysis exists, and that interest can override the rhetorical situation: i.e.,

> whereas the hysteric's typical response to the conflict between her own desire and the Symbolic Other's desire is to repress the Other and enact her own desire in an effusion of feelings in language, the obsessional's typical strategy is to appear to capitulate to the Other by making her discourse conform with great precision to the rules of language and decorum and to the realities she is describing, rather than allowing it to enact or express her own feelings. (92)

Some writers can be reduced to a personality type, in other words. This personality type will predictably follow a given strategy, effusing or perhaps capitulating but not expressing. Nor is expression necessarily rhetorical, according to the logic of the passage above, for whether the writer's discourse is used to "conform . . . to the rules of language and decorum and to the realities she is describing" or is used to "enact or express her own feelings," the rules, the realities, the feelings *precede* the writing, exist without the writing, and in theory could continue unchanged through the writing, if what writing does is describe or enact their prior existence. From the psychoanalytic perspective, it is not simply the case, then, that realities can be described; realities can be described in a way that *conforms* to them, that represents and reflects them.

This psychoanalytic logic of temperamental priority does not obtain *only* in the case of ineffective writing by maladjusted types. The same logic is applied to effective writing by normally adjusted writer-types. If neither a hysteric nor an obsessional, a writer can allow language to "enact or express" feelings that are her own—to conform to those feelings. In this psychoanalytic paradigm, language is a code, a vehicle, an instrument, a means of communicating a pre-existing content from elsewhere or "an utterance that expresses the subject's own thoughts and (Real-register) feelings, as opposed to 'empty speech,' which is just mindless chatter, the conventional, clichéd, and alienated expression of the Symbolic Other's desire" (Bracher 126; see also 25-48).[4] In either effective or ineffective writing, then, thoughts and feelings precede discourse. Effective writing is distinguished from ineffective writing by ownership: ownership of what already exists, which a writer owns up to or assumes responsibility for.

Ethically conscientious such ownership may be; rhetorical it is not. This a-rhetorical positivism posits a stable, core identity that is gotten at through language—not performed in, complicated by, and reinvented through language:

> The key truth that Lacan maintains must be confronted before all others is the truth of one's own repressed desires. The more one's internal truth remains repressed rather than assumed, the more the truth of the external, "objective" world will be a subjective illusion, the product of projections and defenses resulting from the repressed subjective truth. (Bracher 212, note 4)

A person's internal truth is not just prior to the world it projects in ways more or less faithful to "the truth of the external, 'objective' world"; it has priority. A person's internal truth has priority, that is, over the exigencies of the rhetorical situation. Rhetorically, we co-create not with a real audience but with an audience whom—no matter how close and immediate, investigated and familiar—we've approximated, constructed, fictionalized (see Ong). The reality of the reader and any other realities to which this essay, for example, refers and responds are discursive realities, such as how I interpret what others have said and what I imagine might be said in response to what I say. But from the psychoanalytic perspective, it matters less how a writer frames the rhetorical situation than how a person's internal truth skews reality, perhaps causing the person to address others who are not, so to speak, there.

CONFLICT OVER "IDENTIFICATION" WITH AN "AUDIENCE"

To begin with a little more about psychoanalysis's candidate for "the real cause of incoherence—intrapsychic conflict" (Bracher 170), the "root cause of the writing problem" (173): psychoanalysis could be right. Intrapsychic conflict might indeed block rhetorical efficacy, just as dysfunctional classroom dynamics can block free discussion of interesting lines of inquiry. If so, and when that is the case, then psychoanalysis is a resource it would be irresponsible to resist (just as it could be irresponsible not to help a particular student with parts of speech, even if teaching parts of speech is not generally featured in our pedagogy).

But taking such a leap, however necessary, might well be a leap *away* from the rhetorical, a possibility I'd like to continue exploring. If underlying conflicts in the writer are named as the cause of writing problems, audience has also been named—named in a way that is strongly non-rhetorical. In psychoanalysis, audience is something to impress or contain: i.e., "the Other's desire," which often leads to "a defense motivated by the ego's attempt to defend its identity against its desire for recognition and validation from the Other" (Bracher 108). The term "defense" is a logically consistent ramification of audience as "the threatening element," "a disrupting fact or force that might derail the ego as it consolidates its identity by pursuing a particular desire or occupying a certain position through a discourse" (110-11). If "audience" is not so much the people one wishes to engage—to invite into participating in, and completing, the logic and plot and rhythms and roles of one's prose—as it is the Symbolic Other who threatens the fulfillment

of this wish, then one will relate to that understanding of audience not only in ways that pragmatically follow it but also in ways that terminologically develop it. Somewhat psychoanalytically put, the terms we select express our desires, including the desire to fulfill those terms—to achieve "consummation" (see Burke, *Language as Symbolic Action* 78, 305).

The creative work it takes to consummate our terms can feel all-consuming, a feeling every teacher I know knows. Not just to know thoroughly but to know thoroughly one's way of knowing is integrity; integrity means commitment to the implications of one's premises. Psychoanalysis has premised much on the ego—e.g., "No matter what the situation is, the ego is continuously operating to maintain its sense of identity, either by defending against the incursion of otherness (internal and external) or by assimilating or accommodating the otherness" (Bracher 24). The ego's reliable operations give it a telling constancy—telling for composition, that is—for these operations precede situational, disciplinary, and generic variables. As Bracher explains, spelling out the clarifying attractions of psychoanalytic integrity,

> This psychoanalytic model allows us to see all writing (and all learning as well) as the product of two basic, conflicting types of intentions, no matter how great the number of specific intentions may be: first, the intention to reinforce and enhance the ego (our dominant sense of self, or identity), and second, the intention to express and hence to actualize other often unconscious *identifications*, desires, and enjoyments that contradict and thus threaten to destroy the ego's sense of unity and identity. (24-25, emphasis added)

Psychoanalytic integrity brings forth whatever threatens the ego. Contradictions are seen as threats, not as inventional opportunities. Audiences are not dialectical interlocutors but Others who may dominate, overwhelm, and end the writer's existence. Identifying with the audience can be dangerous.

The concept of "identification," common to both rhetoric and psychoanalysis, is an especially consequential way by which to consider how the integrity with which psychoanalysis explores the ego distances itself from rhetoric, whose integrity in exploring audience in turn distances itself from psychoanalysis. In the mid-twentieth century, rhetoric (most famously in the figure of Kenneth Burke) appropriated identification from Freud because rhetoric needed something to supplement persuasion, the discourse on which did not yet address that "intermediate area of expression that is not wholly deliberate, yet not wholly unconscious [, but which] lies midway

between aimless utterance and speech directly purposive" (Burke, *A Rhetoric of Motives* xiii). What is not "wholly deliberate" are "the ways in which the members of a group promote social cohesion by acting rhetorically upon themselves and one another" (xiv); the ways are rhetorical, however, as Burke emphasizes in the following passage:

> [A] speaker persuades an audience by the use of stylistic identifications; his act of persuasion may be for the purpose of causing the audience to identify itself with the speaker's interests; and the speaker draws on identification of interests to establish rapport between himself and his audience. (46)

Granting that identification is not wholly conscious, Burke claims it is not wholly unconscious, either; it is not wholly unconscious because it is a necessary part of deliberate persuasion, as one of Burke's examples makes clear:

> [M]any purely formal patterns can readily awaken an attitude of collaborative expectancy in us. For instance, imagine a passage built about a sense of oppositions ("*we* do *this*, but *they* on the other hand do *that*; *we* stay *here*, but *they* go *there*; *we* look *up*, but *they* look *down*," etc.). Once you grasp the trend of the form, it invites participation regardless of the subject matter. Formally, you will find yourself swinging along with the succession of antitheses, even though you may not agree with the proposition that is being presented in this form. . . . [I]n cases where a decision is still to be reached, a yielding to the form prepares for assent to the matter identified with it. (*A Rhetoric of Motives* 58)

On the one hand, then: That identification can be an affective proof, the audience helping to complete the form, or how such co-creation prepares for assent is something rhetoric studies. On the other, how such affective identifications can be psychically harmful or why a given individual resorts to polarizing projections of the world is something psychoanalysis studies. As psychoanalysis and rhetoric develop the implications of identification, in theory and on the ground, each enacts its own integrity—an integrity that illuminates their conflict, an integrity that brings on the conflict, a structural integrity without which their generative identities wouldn't be.

A last look at identification will help illustrate the enabling stubbornness of this integrity. If the ego needs to conform to the Symbolic order for

"recognition and validation," then it needs as well to "acknowledge, express, and enact values (as well as desires and enjoyments) that a particular Symbolic Other, internalized or externalized, rejects" (Bracher 65). Despite its desire to conform, the ego reaches a point of conflict with its Other. This conflict, which rhetoric would call "stasis"—that point at which agreements between others and ourselves come to a standstill, that point at which we agree to disagree for the sake of more purposeful, dialectical inquiry—psychoanalysis calls a "crisis situation": "The act of writing places the subject directly in this crisis situation. Sometimes the ego identifies with the Symbolic Other against the subject's own identity, and other times the ego identifies with the subject's ideals or desire. In both instances, the Symbolic Other constitutes a threat to the subject's identity" (65). In this construction of crisis—a construction as real as any other, to be sure—something more psychoanalytic than rhetorical defines identification:

> Identification is the internalizing of another's ideas, feelings, or behavior as a way of addressing a perceived deficiency in oneself (such as conflict with the ideals of the Symbolic order), or avoiding conflict with another person or loss of this other. The most common defensive form of identification is identification with the aggressor—the "if you can't beat them, join them" defense. An instance of this defense found quite frequently in writing is self-criticism, which allows a writer to occupy a superior position in relation to his or her own discourse and to co-opt others from taking that position. (Bracher 77)

From a rhetorical perspective, one may identify with the other not to address a "deficiency in oneself" but to realize a potentiality in oneself, to enact a social instinct, to establish or reinforce common ground, to prepare the way for situational, behavioral, attitudinal adjustments. Similarly, acts of "self-criticism" are not so much about "avoiding conflict" as engaging it. Whereas in psychoanalysis "self criticism" is an instance of the "most common defensive form of identification," in which the writer "co-opt[s] others from taking that position," in rhetoric, self-criticism, even if it were intended to co-opt others, would be co-optation with a difference. The difference—and it is a big difference—is that self-criticism serves the stasis, which has brought self and audience together in a way that calls forth some qualities of our complex identities while displacing others. Responsiveness to the stasis means that self-criticism might well be a question of the writer's

guilt or innocence. Or it might be a question of concession, or a question of critical reflection, or a question of redirection. What it might be will depend—not so much on the self's unconscious desire as on the stasis the self is in with others.

EFFECTIVE AND ETHICAL CONFLICT—IN PRINCIPLE

The Teacher

The Other whose position the student writer's self-criticism is said to co-opt is often the teacher, who in the psychoanalytic model must adhere to a particular protocol. If a therapist decides what is best for her patients, the "result will be that analysis will degenerate into a more or less thinly disguised process of developing the analysand's identifications with the analyst" (Bracher 210, note 1). Teachers who tell students what to do run the same risk. Teachers who would prevent the degeneration that identification with a teacher causes must do what psychotherapists do: "focus on the patient's language and respond to that rather than simply responding to their image of the patient and according to their own feelings" (181). If the student writer is to assume his own desire—to confront and take responsibility for it—the teacher must refuse, or redirect, identification:

> The teacher's desire in her responses, that is, will be for the students to explore their own unconscious desires further, so that insofar as a student identifies with the teacher as a subject supposed to know, the identification is with the teacher's desire for the student to recognize and assume responsibility for the student's own unconscious desire. (167)

Even as it makes sense to redirect a student's identification away from the teacher as the subject supposed to know, it is hard to imagine that a teacher should not be, or does not have to be, persuaded to take the student's writing seriously. It is hard to imagine that such persuasion would not be among a student writer's motives, harder still to imagine that a teacher might refuse to play the role of someone whose conviction is at stake, might fail both to ask questions about (not determine) a writer's claims (and all that supports them: experiences, hopes, passions, reasons, values) and to ask questions about how the writer thinks others will respond, if not assent, to these.

Psychoanalysis approaches this important dynamic—this dynamic between student writer and writing teacher—from another angle, "the desire for recognition,"

> the desire to be perceived in a positive light by the Symbolic Other, that ultimate authority (parents, peers, superiors, Society) from whom we seek the sense that we are somebody, that we matter, that we are okay, or simply that we are somehow taken into account—a message that is so vital that without it we cannot bear to exist, literally. (Bracher 175)

I can only agree—with these words as with those in the subsequent elaboration that "we—teachers as well as students—are often disappointed or angry when our writing fails to impress a particular Symbolic Other" (175). Something fundamentally rhetorical must be stressed, however: these authorities are often the very people who have to be impressed, and the reason they have to be impressed is not only that writers seek their recognition; writers also seek their assent.[5]

I am not saying that rhetoric complies and psychoanalysis resists, nor that a writing teacher who wishes to improve her student's writing cannot refuse the identifications a draft offers, nor that a teacher cannot question whether to participate in the completion of its form, nor that a teacher cannot be a good audience if she says no or interrupts the inevitable. But I am saying that to become an analyst—a person who by definition and discipline not only refuses to be convinced but also refuses to play the role of someone who must be convinced—a teacher would have to resist rhetorical exchange, a resistance that would risk silencing the rhetorical.

The Enthymeme

What is meant by "silencing the rhetorical" should become even more clear in the following presentation of the ego, in which the psychoanalytic version of the enthymeme renders it incompatible with its usual rhetorical function:

> Nonetheless, the ego's fundamental motive is always the consolidation of its own identity under a secure shelter of master signifiers and their accompanying knowledge/belief systems. This process is evident not only in the prominence and frequency with which

> certain signifiers are employed, but also in more indirect ways, such as in the use of enthymemes, where certain signifiers—ideals, values—govern thought without ever being uttered. (47)

The image of a "secure shelter" connotes protection rather than engagement: the writer's master signifiers are hidden from attack. The theme of protection is articulated with the subsequent claim that enthymemes "govern thought without ever being uttered," as if enthymemes did not depend on audience recognition of, as well as audience co-creation of, the implied ideals and values.

Yet this latter possibility is how rhetoric presents the enthymeme: "Although variously used in history, *enthymeme* generally refers to claims in arguments that are supported by probable premises assumed to be shared by the audience" (Gage 223). The signifiers emerge not just from the ego but from the ego and its audience, and while it could reasonably be said that the ego's signifiers represent the ego's projected sense of audience, psychoanalysis emphasizes the ego's unconscious workings that threaten to misconstrue the audience's objective reality. Not only does rhetoric emphasize something quite different (the ego's strategic collaborations with an audience whose reality must be made); the signifiers themselves are "probable premises," neither scientific truth nor widely accepted facts; this status means one's signifiers *have* to be established.

One effective way of establishing these premises is not stating them. In enthymematic reasoning, "most of the argument remains implicit. Such a proof can only work if the audience will provide the missing elements, and thereby both follow the reasoning and find it persuasive" (Johnstone 249). If it is the audience, not the author, who provides the premise that is only probable, that premise becomes more probable. For example, in an argument claiming that someone will make a good department chair because she is honest and compassionate, what go unstated are the propositions linking these attributes to the claim; the propositions linking honesty and compassion with chairing well "are precisely what the audience, out of its own beliefs, convictions, and opinions, must provide in order to complete the implicit chain of reasoning" (Johnstone 249), and insofar as the audience can readily do so, the claim is all the more reasonable.

It is important to restate that what psychoanalytic pedagogy sees as an omission or occlusion that blocks dialogue with an audience, rhetoric takes as a dialogic move: the audience is invited to complete the reasoning with its own contributions. Such completion makes comprehension and

persuasion more likely. The enthymeme engages the writer's audience in co-creation; its omissions are invitations, not necessarily deceptions. Deliberate deception is of course possible, but deliberate deception is not part of rhetorical pedagogy, which tries to help student writers make the best of uncertainty, a domain in which incompleteness and partiality and imperfection are inexact givens.

Policy Arguments

Uncertain situations (what to do), uncertain strategies (how to work with "strangers"), uncertain outcomes (what could happen, what else could happen, and what could happen as a result of these)—the stances psychoanalysis and rhetoric take toward such uncertainties divide them in a way it would be reckless to ignore. Consider the psychoanalytic critique of policy arguments—a major genre in any level of writing class. In policy arguments, the characteristic use of intransitive instead of transitive verbs and the "failure to identify the object (i.e., recipient or victim) or consequences of an action" exist "because either their uncertainty or their dire nature threatens the ego's sense of mastery and control" (Bracher 84). Having to act in the face of problematic uncertainty may indeed threaten "the ego's sense of mastery and control"; at the same time, having to so act may also help certain ego ideals rise to the occasion. No matter which way ego ideals are affected or mobilized, however, it would not make rhetorical sense to attribute the use of intransitive verbs and the omission of certain parties to problematic uncertainty. There would be no point in doing so because problematic uncertainty calls for some kind of timely, situational, artful response. Verbs are appropriate or inappropriate, omissions unnoticed or a deal-breaker, depending on audience and context.

In response to all the above, from page one on, a general qualification could be made: it is when rhetorical effectiveness is deficient that one looks for psychological causes to account for, and help rectify, that deficiency. This qualification makes perfect sense, yet it is complicated by psychoanalytic integrity—e.g., psychoanalysis's commitment to the claim that all language use defends the ego, an argument that goes something like this: defense mechanisms involve "transformations" of what is threatening into something less threatening (Bracher 76); in discourse, these transformations are tropes and figures (201, note 8); tropes and figures are language in use; therefore, language is defensive. This logic—which far from objectionable I find intriguingly suggestive—is evident in passages like the following:

> *Transformation of the object from one other to another other* is a common form of displacement. In writing, this may involve focusing on certain consequences of an action or event as a way of avoiding others. In disputes over land use, for example, developers tend to focus on positive economic consequences and repress negative environmental consequences, while environmentalists do the opposite. (Bracher 83)

If we allow that comprehensive focus is not humanly possible and that selective, emphatic focus may legitimately follow from a principled assessment of what is, on balance, preferable, then such displacement is at least as productive as defensive. To focus on the defensive, in fact, or to dismiss its inventional properties, can be counterproductive if such focus equates the advocacy that is typical of policy arguments with damning dissimulation, an unfortunate equation I see in the following:

> Transformation from individual to collective can serve to *disguise* the *true consequences* of one's actions, as when politicians *avoid* the Real and Imaginary dimensions of the human suffering that results from their policies and refer *instead* solely to the Symbolic dimension (e.g., statistics, such as the number of people deprived of food stamps through welfare reform). The inverse transformation of the object, from collective to individual, is also a way to *defend* against the Real dimensions of the consequences of one's positions or actions, such as when politicians *focus* on the individual "welfare queen" to justify a change in policy that results in depriving thousands of children of food. The transformations from concrete to abstract and abstract to concrete *can serve* the *defenses* of intellectualization and affectualization, respectively. Examples of the former include much medical, legal, and other technical discourse, while examples of the latter include various instances of *sensationalism* which *focus* on the Real and Imaginary elements in order to *avoid* issues of responsibility and action. (Bracher 84, emphasis added)

Although the auxiliary verb "can" suggests that the focus is on the potential for deception, other assertions are less qualified (e.g., "is also a way," as distinct from "can also be a way"). The two uses of "can" each precede "serve"; insofar as any utterance can serve, or be identified with, a wide

range of purposes, some of which can be antithetical with certain others, this qualification in the abstract has little utility. The qualification is beside the point, however, for the entire passage assumes a transparent, knowable, predictable reality; certain results—"true consequences"—are a given. Other words—"avoid" (twice), "defend," "defenses," "sensationalism"—call attention to the positivism of this variety of psychoanalysis, which imagines a clean cut between the real and the phony, the sincere and the fake, the explicit and the implicit, what something does and what something can do. Is it rhetorically reasonable to imagine an assertion of the real that some audience (possibly even one's intended audience) might not regard as ideal or deceptive, a declaration of the truth that cannot be construed as a self-serving fiction, an exposed and vulnerable expression of feeling that is not at the same time perceived as exquisitely defensive, a focus on one thing that does not blur something else—or, for all of these, the reverse: the phony as a "disguise" for the real, a fictive claim that won't be taken as autobiographical, a defensive gesture that strikes a blow, a blur of X that crystallizes Y? And so on.

A reasonable middle way between such absolute standards of the real and the phony, a way that takes seriously different standards of truth and fiction, in other words a way that takes "audience" seriously—and nonviolent persuasion seriously: psychoanalysis may call this a way of avoiding "issues of responsibility and action" (Bracher 84). But it is how rhetoric engages them.

Presence

The difference between psychoanalytic pedagogy and rhetorical pedagogy can now be put into plainer, stronger terms. The passage above frames "focus" so that all kinds of focus "avoid issues of responsibility and action." For rhetoric, however, "issues of responsibility and action" matter so much that focus is required; focus is in fact so synonymous with rhetoric that rhetoric has been defined as "an art of *emphasis* embodying an order of *desire*" (Weaver 1355, emphasis added). The aims of a policy argument may benefit from "presence" (Perelman 35-36)—the single focus on a specific case that brings faraway abstraction up close: "the individual 'welfare queen'" alluded to above, or a documentary on a child with a cleft palate (*Smile Pinki*), or an anecdote about a single child whose knee injury in Scotland led to universal health care in Canada (Reid 125-26). For rhetoric, "the art of emphasis embodying an order of desire" and "presence" are necessary

virtues that focus the attention on what matters—on the premises that matter most, the premises that must, that is, be made present in the audience's hearts and minds (Perelman 138).[6]

For psychoanalysis, rhetorical presence is not a legitimately motivated, reality-elaborating emphasis but a self-serving, reality-diminishing deflection. It is not just the case, moreover, that psychoanalysis knows "presence" as the insecure reduction of the Other; it is more tellingly the case that, in working out the implications of its premises, psychoanalysis performs this knowledge, moving away from rhetorical presence as an emphatic focus on what matters (which in turn, as knowledge that performs presence not as insecure reduction but as warrantable development, moves away from the psychoanalytical). If the basic psychoanalytic move is to construe effective language use as defensive—as a falsifying gesture that denies "true consequences"—then how compatible are psychoanalysis and rhetoric? They are, I think it now clear, not easily made compatible.

If it is fairly assumable that the vast majority of us struggle with intrapsychic conflict, that the vast majority of us have writing problems—have problematic relations to writing, all the more so the more we care about writing—and yet also fairly assumable that non-psychoanalytic pedagogies, such as the rhetorical, have helped writers become more effective and ethical, then there is no good reason to convert to the psychoanalytical, unless with respect to effectiveness and ethics in specific cases it is the better helpmate.

That there can be very good reason, however, to keep the dialogue going between rhetoric and psychoanalysis is suggested by my student's rhetorically guided revisions.

EFFECTIVE AND ETHICAL CONFLICTS—IN PARTICULAR

In my response to the section of the student paper quoted above, in the rhetorical spirit of *They Say/I Say*, I suggested that in her revision the writer give more expression to what "they say"—not merely to what she imagined they might say but to what she had good reason to believe others had said and would say, based on her interpretation of the voices in the documentary, in the assigned readings, in class discussions, and elsewhere in her experience. In the excerpt that follows, what she deleted from her previous draft is crossed through; what she added is in boldface:

Now there are definitely some radical pro life ~~people~~ **advocates** who it seems will stop at nothing to get their point across. Many have taken matters into their own hands by murdering abortion doctors and even bombing their buildings where they perform the procedures. One man shot an abortion doctor in the back when the doctor was on his way into his building. Even though the man pulled the trigger, the blame is being pushed on the man's pastor who was supposedly influencing him and pumping him up to do it. The pastor said that he did no such thing, the choice was that of the man's and he will have to face the consequences now, but he did what he thought was the right thing to do. **Some may ask if the person encouraging this behavior is just as guilty as the person carrying out the crime? My answer to that question would be yes. Even though they are not physically killing that doctor, they are still encouraging it. It is like they want the abortion doctor dead but because they do not want to face the consequences themselves; they just influence someone else to carry out the deed.** Another *incident was when* a doctor was reportedly shot outside his home with his family nearby. The people committing these crimes feel like apparently killing one doctor will save hundreds of babies' lives, and so they have no problem doing it because they think it is the right thing to do. . . .

~~Another thing about that that seems odd to me is that the~~ **Something that I can not seem to wrap my head around, is the fact that** anti abortionists are willing to become murderers themselves. They are so against the idea of taking a human's life, yet they seem to have no problem with it if they think they are doing good. Unfortunately, when you kill someone for what you believe is a just cause, it can lead others who follow in the same path. The murderers are viewed as a sort of martyr because they know they are going to be punished but they feel it is ~~ok~~ **okay** because they are standing up for what they believe. **Now I am not saying that standing up for what you believe and extreme behavior in all cases is bad. I am aware that people like Martin Luther King Jr. and others took extreme steps for a good cause. But to my knowledge none of those involved murdering opponents who supported or carried out what the other side stood for. I can understand that sometimes you are**

> **going to have to go against the law to get your voice heard but it is up to you how far you are willing to take it. In regards to abortion, the pro life people have the right to want justice but let the law handle the kind of justice that has to do with taking another persons life.** The interesting thing is, is that extremists were for a while making a huge impact because many abortion doctors and workers were dropping out because they feared for their lives. . . .

Is her enthymeme about guilt a denial of her own or an appeal to her audience? Is it unconscious conflict or a step toward greater sophistication that we see in "have to go against the law to get your voice heard" followed by "but let the law handle the kind of justice that has to do with taking another persons life"? Is the division of "justice" implicit in "the kind of justice" fragmentation or elaboration, evidence of a defensive equivocation or evidence of an improved (if awkward) "analytic stance" (Sternglass 296)? Is the insufficiently analytic stance toward the law's authority the result of the student's identification with the Symbolic Other to address a deficiency in herself or the result of an inexperienced identification with an academic audience?

These either-or questions may seem to embody false dilemmas, but if the case I have been making is at all persuasive, these questions will embody a meaningful choice full of consequence for teachers of writing—and the possibility of a synthesis that will not be simple. Yet if an easy synthesis of the two pedagogical approaches is not forthcoming, there is good reason for the dialogue between psychoanalysis and rhetoric to continue. The need for this continuing dialogue is illustrated by the example of a common agreement error that occurs in the student's revision:

> Some may ask if *the person* encouraging this behavior is just as guilty as the person carrying out the crime? My answer to that question would be yes. Even though *they* are not physically killing that doctor, *they* are still encouraging it. It is like *they* want the abortion doctor dead but because *they* do not want to face the consequences *themselves*; *they* just influence someone else to carry out the deed. (emphasis added)

The student uses plural pronouns ("they," "themselves") to refer to the singular antecedent, "the person." Because such faulty agreement is neither uncommon, especially in speech, nor usually harmful to meaning, my

assumption is that the student is writing what sounds right to her. But what if there is more to this slip, which symbolically moves the onus from a person to be held accountable—someone whose testimony could be consulted, whose life could be examined, whose individual words could join the dialogue—to a sloppily collectivized and distanced "they"? What if this everyday error on the student's part is a fairly significant defense, one that conveniently helps shut down inquiry? There are many such errors in student writing, and there may be much more to them, which would help explain why some errors resist instruction in conventions of usage and persist despite improvement elsewhere in audience awareness.

Simply being mindful of the relevance of psychoanalysis to writing instruction is enough to compel revision of the previous sentence: it is particular students who resist instruction with respect to certain error patterns; it is particular students who rhetorically improve in some ways but not others. While it may be too much, then, to ask rhetoric to convert to psychoanalysis, it is not too much to expect them to stay in touch, as they have, on a cautious but productive as-needed basis.

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Notes

1. Although this essay will not cover the topic of writer's block, this topic continues to warrant psychoanalytic attention. Just as sometimes writers of all kinds are made "basic" by fear of the Symbolic Other, sometimes student writers are blocked by this fear of the Symbolic Other, whom the teacher may well unwittingly represent, if not wittingly reinforce. Meaningful engagements with an audience, and meaningful arguments, may never get made, if disabling fears, inhibitions, and constructions of writing are not worked through.
2. For the purposes of this inquiry, Bracher's book—a careful, sustained, aggressive pitch for psychoanalysis as a highly desirable composition pedagogy, a major contribution that synthesizes contemporary psychoanalysis and the dominant composition pedagogies—will be taken as

representative of psychoanalytic pedagogy. Bracher identifies with Lacanian psychoanalysis, a form of psychoanalysis that should allay writing teachers' fears: "The fundamental aim of analysis as articulated by Lacan is to help the subject discover, acknowledge, and finally assume—that is, embrace and take responsibility for—his or her own unconscious desire" (5). Psychoanalysis as composition studies mainly knows it, however (through its representation in special issues dedicated to it, such as College English 49.7 [November 1987]), is "unethical and ineffective—unethical because it ultimately involves getting the analysand to identify with the analyst's perspectives, ideals, or notion of reality, and ineffective because it leaves the analysand's own deepest unconscious desires and gratifications untouched" (5). If this distinction does not make writing teachers more receptive to the promise of Lacanian psychoanalysis, Bracher has a response: writing teachers "are confronted with powerful forces that are best dealt with by someone having psychoanalytic training. Eschewing psychoanalytic pedagogy does not allow us to escape these forces; it only deprives us of the best means we have of understanding them and operating more ethically and effectively with them" (8). Whether to dive into such training is the big question this essay tries to face.

3. Here, of course, is another compelling reason to be in dialogue with psychoanalytic pedagogy: its commitment to the relations between meaningful change and individuals' emotional investments.
4. Bracher refers to the three registers from Lacanian psychoanalysis: "Stated very succinctly, the Real is the realm of affects and visceral experience," the "Imaginary register manifests itself in images and in our visual/spatial orientation and our sense of bodily coherence and integrity," and the "Symbolic order is a function of verbal memory and its codes" (25).
5. To be recognized in a certain way has long been related to persuasive ends and was for Aristotle the most important of the appeals (On Rhetoric I.2 1356a, 4).
6. To get its audience to grasp and care about the daily abuses suffered by women worldwide, a recent book offers "moving individual narratives: forced prostitution, honor killing and maternal mortality" (Nussbaum C5).

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Beyond Charity: Partial Narratives as a Metaphor for Basic Writing

Nelson Flores

ABSTRACT: In "A New World: Redefining the Legacy of Min-Zhan Lu" (JBW 27.2, Fall 2008), Brian Ray revisits the controversy that emerged in the early 1990s in response to critiques of the iconic Mina Shaughnessy made by Min-Zhan Lu. He offers a reading of the debate that focuses on common ground between the two sides through a metaphor of linguistic charity based on the work of Donald Davidson. While common ground can no doubt be found between these two opposing sides, by focusing exclusively on the similarities between Lu and her critics, Ray runs the risk of diluting Lu's argument and inadvertently reproducing the relations of power that Lu's project is attempting to undermine. This article, therefore, offers a different route to reading the debate between Lu and her critics—a reading that focuses on the real and irreconcilable differences between the two sides. Building on the work of Elizabeth Ellsworth, this article offers a metaphor of partial narratives, in an attempt to expose the power relations embedded in all knowledge production. This metaphor of partial narratives provides not only a way of understanding the substantive difference between Lu and her critics but also raises questions that can help inform an approach to negotiating the different discourses present in composition classrooms, especially those focused on students positioned as basic writers.

KEYWORDS: Min-Zhan Lu; Mina Shaughnessy; partial narratives; linguistic charity; conflict and struggle

In "A New World: Redefining the Legacy of Min-Zhan Lu," Brian Ray revisits the controversy that emerged in the early 1990s in response to critiques of the iconic Mina Shaughnessy made by Min-Zhan Lu. Lu's critique would eventually lead to a debate in the pages of *College English*, where defenders of Mina Shaughnessy would take Lu to task for what they believed was both a misreading of Shaughnessy and the promotion of a dangerous and potentially explosive pedagogy. Ray should be commended for bringing attention back to this debate, which ended in a stalemate with neither side conceding to points made by the other side. He should also be commended for trying to find common ground between the two sides. This is especially important in academia, where too often false dichotomies

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are created that limit the potential of different theories to be in productive dialogue with one another. While I applaud this attempt to find common ground between Shaughnessy and Lu, my concern is that Ray's desire to find commonality glosses over important and real differences between the two sides of this debate.

In this article, I revisit the debate with an eye to differences between the two sides. My hope is to offer what Elizabeth Ellsworth in *Teaching Positions* calls a different "route to reading" the texts of Lu and her critics—a route that makes different assumptions and asks different questions than the ones made by Ray in his article. The route to reading that I will take focuses on differences between Lu and her critics, providing a vital supplement to Ray's focus on finding common ground. It will demonstrate that while Ray is correct in alluding to some similarities between Lu and Shaughnessy and her supporters, in the end Lu is offering a vision of the composition classroom that is a radical departure from that of Mina Shaughnessy and her followers, as well as a radical departure from the practices found in most composition classrooms today. Therefore, this different route to reading Lu's legacy is meant to be much more than a critique of Ray's position. Instead, I propose to use a critique of Ray's position as a way of asking bigger questions about the state of composition studies and the place of basic writing within the field today. In short, I see this critique of Ray as part of a larger project of pushing the field of composition studies in general, and basic writing specifically, to take stock of its past in order to meet the challenges of the future.

In the first part of this article I will offer my reading of Lu's theoretical framework through a chronological look at some of her major articles written around the time of the debate. I will then examine the debate that emerged in response to her theoretical framework, demonstrating the ways that the positions of Lu and her critics are in many ways fundamentally incompatible with each other. I will then explore Ray's attempt to bring the two sides together through the concept of "a pedagogy of charity" and will argue that although Ray does demonstrate some common ground between the two sides, a pedagogy of charity glosses over real differences between them. This glossing over of differences serves to silence the critique Lu was attempting to make of the field of composition in general and her critique of basic writing programs specifically. Based on this critique, I will attempt to theorize an approach to teaching that illuminates the differences between Lu and her critics through a pedagogy of partial narratives as opposed to a pedagogy of charity. I end with some ideas on how this might inform current pedagogical approaches in the field of composition.

Revisiting the Legacy of Min-Zhan Lu

Lu began to develop her theoretical framework through autobiographic work. In "From Silence to Words," she describes her experiences as a Chinese student in Maoist China coming from a household that attempted to instill in her a Western humanistic tradition through the teaching of European culture and the English language. She documents the conflict and struggle she experienced as she navigated these contradictory discourses arguing that "despite my parents' and teachers' attempts to keep home and school discrete, the internal conflict between the two discourses continued whenever I read or wrote" (445). While the struggle she experienced in having to navigate the two fundamentally contradictory discourses caused her a great deal of pain, she argues that "constantly having to switch back and forth between the discourse of home and that of school made me sensitive and self-conscious about the struggle I experienced every time I tried to read, write, or think in either discourse" (438). She concludes from her experiences that struggle, rather than something that is inherently limiting to students, can be embraced and used constructively by all students experiencing contradictions between home and school discourses.

There is a clear connection between this autobiographical piece and the subsequent theoretical framework Lu would articulate. In "Redefining the Legacy of Mina Shaughnessy," Lu argues that "language is best understood not as a neutral vehicle of communication but a site of struggle among competing discourses" (27). Using this as her premise, she argues that Mina Shaughnessy was guilty of relying on an "essentialist" view of language that assumes that "linguistic codes can be taught in isolation from the production of meaning and from the dynamic power struggle within and among diverse discourses" (28). In short, in Lu's view, Shaughnessy fails to examine the political nature of language and discourse; in particular, she charges Shaughnessy with what she terms a politics of linguistic innocence that fails to explore the ways that academic discourse may constrain what students are able to say and the knowledge that they are able to produce.

This argument was built upon in "Conflict and Struggle"—the article that would lead to the huge debate in *College English* mentioned above. Elaborating on her critique of Mina Shaughnessy, Lu demonstrates how academic discourse is embedded in relations of power and argues that learning this discourse is not inherently empowering to basic writers; on the contrary, Lu points to how exposure to academic discourse may actually silence basic writers. The only way Lu sees around this bind is to "find

ways of foregrounding conflict and struggle not only in the generation of meaning or authority, but also in the teaching of 'correctness' in syntax, spelling, and punctuation, traditionally considered the primary focus of Basic Writing instruction" (910). In other words, basic writing teachers need to place conflict and struggle at the center of any pedagogy as part of a process of developing in students a "mestiza consciousness" (888) that allows them to blend different discourses in their writing and reposition themselves in relation to both their home discourses and academic discourse. This stance articulated by Lu received passionate critique by those who saw themselves as continuing in the tradition of Mina Shaughnessy. It is to the debate that emerged around this article that we now turn.

The Debate

The debate between Lu and the defenders of Shaughnessy came to a head in a symposium on basic writing that appeared in *College English* three years after Lu's "Conflict and Struggle" article appeared in that same journal. In total, six people participated in the symposium, with four of the respondents (Patricia Laurence, Peter Rondinone, Barbara Gleason, and Thomas Farrell) openly critical of Lu, one respondent (Paul Hunter) responding to Farrell and not to Lu directly, and Lu defending her position as a conclusion to the symposium. Rather than go through each of the respondents' arguments, which are succinctly summarized in Ray's article (111-14), I will focus on Lu's response to her critics and describe the critic's position only when demonstrating substantive differences between their positions and those of Lu. In contrast to Ray, who faults Lu for missing "an opportunity to identify common ground between herself and her peers" (113), I will argue that Lu's response shows fundamental differences between Lu and her critics that may not be reconcilable. In particular, I will focus on Lu's elaboration of the Foucauldian principles on which her analysis is based as well as her defense against her critics' accusation of either/or thinking.

Lu begins her response by clarifying the type of history she was attempting to do in "Conflict and Struggle." In response to her critics, who saw her argument as an attack on Shaughnessy's intentions, personality, or career achievements, Lu stresses that she was doing a Foucauldian analysis of the discourses surrounding the emergence of the basic writer. A Foucauldian analysis does not seek to find a chronology for a particular historical issue but rather tries to excavate the discursive regimes that make a certain system of knowledge possible as well as to identify the knowledges that have

been subjugated by this system (Foucault 85). Lu, therefore, was not trying to critique Mina Shaughnessy as an individual, but rather trying to critically examine the discourse of basic writing.

This Foucauldian analysis was seen by some of Lu's critics as an attack on Shaughnessy as an individual rather than a critical examination of the discursive regime of basic writing. For example, Barbara Gleason in her critique of Lu argues that "to say that Shaughnessy's pedagogy and research were based on the premise that form is separate from meaning is to say that Shaughnessy was influenced by some of the most commonly accepted premises and theories of her time" (887). What she fails to recognize is that this is, in fact, what Lu is saying. This is because they have fundamentally different ways of understanding power and agency. For Gleason, power and agency reside in the individual while for Lu power and agency are shaped and re-shaped by the discursive regimes prominent in any particular socio-historical context. For Lu, Shaughnessy was not an autonomous individual but a subject shaped by and working within discursive regimes embedded in relations of power. Therefore, what appears to be an attack on an individual in Gleason's view is in Lu's view a critical examination of a particular socio-historical context that made the emergence of the basic writer possible.

Lu expands on this Foucauldian analysis in her critique of Gleason's conception of student need. Gleason argues that rather than embracing conflict and struggle, the role of the basic writing teacher should be to care for their students and work to meet their needs. Lu problematizes this view, arguing that Gleason "implies that whatever 'needs' she has in mind are self-evident 'facts' or 'truths' inherent in students rather than a discursive and political construct shaped by a particular form of discourse: knowledge arrived at by taking a particular theoretical perspective towards a particular 'object' of study" (899). In contrast to this approach, which Lu believes reproduces the students as spectators, Lu advocates explicitly opening up classroom dialogue to analyzing the discursive constructs motivating classroom interaction. In other words, rather than treating discourse in general, and academic discourse in particular, as removed from the ideological processes that make their production possible, Lu is advocating a denaturalization process that attempts to make the ideological underpinnings of academic discourse an explicit part of instruction. The purpose of this denaturalization process is to give students the tools to reposition themselves in relation to academic discourse rather than be passive vessels absorbing academic discourse without question and accepting the teacher's conception of their needs uncritically.

In Lu's response, in addition to elaborating on her Foucauldian analysis, she defends herself against the accusation of perpetuating either/or thinking. She argues that it is her critics who are partaking in this kind of thinking. In particular, she takes issue with Patricia Laurence's contention that a metaphor of understanding, caring, exchange, and reciprocity is preferable to the metaphor of conflict and struggle that Lu proposes. Lu critiques this either/or thinking, arguing that "part of the reason I promote the image of the new mestiza and the notion of education as a process of repositioning is precisely because these concepts offer a way of thinking beyond the trap of polarization which seems to have dominated much of the earlier debate over 'the students' right to their own language' and current debates over so-called Political Correctness" (895). She goes on to examine some "borderland" writing demonstrating that the conjunctions and adverbs most frequently used by these writers are "both," "simultaneously," "not only . . . but also," and "as well as" (896). In short, borderland writing offers another discursive voice that can be in productive conflict and struggle with the either/or thinking that permeates much of academia including, in Lu's view, the work of Laurence.

Lu argues that this type of either/or thinking is also perpetuated by her other critics in the symposium. For example, she finds this type of thinking reproduced in the "polarized pro/con format" advocated by Thomas Farrell in his response, where he advises basic writing teachers "to have the students read articles arguing for and against some proposed course of action; and have them summarize arguments both for and against; and then have them write a position paper that includes a refutation of the adversarial position" (891). Lu also finds this either/or thinking in the commentary of Peter Rondinone. She challenges the dichotomy he creates between the world of academia and the world of the home. In contrast to Rondinone, who characterizes the world of the home as consisting of "idiots" with "values not worth clinging to" (897) and the world of academia as "conferences, journals, and programs to help people like himself," Lu argues that both worlds have positive and negative aspects. For Lu, the either/or thinking of both Farrell's pro-con format and Rondinone's academic versus home discourses serves to marginalize those students in the borderland who cannot or will not conform to these dichotomies.

In summary, there are great differences between Lu and her critics. The differences boil down to different ways of understanding the world and the nature of academic discourse. For Lu's critics, academic discourse is a neutral vehicle of communication that students need to know either in replacement

of or in addition to their home discourses. For Lu, coming from a Foucauldian perspective, power is embedded in particular socio-historical discursive regimes that make possible certain ways of understanding the world while subjugating others. Academic discourse is not immune from these relations of power. The only way that Lu sees to resist the power relations embedded in academic discourse is to embrace conflict and struggle in the composition classroom. This embrace of conflict and struggle will give students the tools to reposition themselves in relation to academic discourse and other discourses in their lives. How Lu envisions this happening in the classroom will be explored in greater detail below after an exploration of the limitations of the pedagogy of charity metaphor proposed by Ray as uniting Lu and her critics.

The Limitations to a Pedagogy of Charity as Metaphor

The concept of a pedagogy of charity comes from the work of philosopher Donald Davidson and has been adopted by some scholars in composition studies. The idea behind charity is that "under charity, interpreters assume that what their interlocutive partners say that doesn't make sense is nevertheless true—not error, ignorance, or deception—and so they are motivated to enter a dialogic process of interpretive vision and revision in search of the causes of the other's way of using words, a search that can end in the interlocutor's reconception of the way things are in a particular situation" (Yarbrough xii). In short, rather than assuming we know what others are trying to say, charity requires an approach where others are seen as rational beings and errors and misconceptions are not presumed.

In "A Pedagogy of Charity," Kevin Porter elaborates on what this might look like through a differentiation between a pedagogy of severity and a pedagogy of charity. In his view, a pedagogy of severity is characterized by "the shutting down of dialogic possibilities, assigning labels and making corrections instead of asking questions and searching for new answers" (576). This is contrasted with a pedagogy of charity, where students are presumed to be authors in control of the text, having chosen certain strategies for certain effects. Ray argues that this pedagogy of charity is the missing link that can connect Lu and her critics. In Ray's reading of the debate, the parallels between Lu and her critics "become clearer when viewed through the common denominator of linguistic charity" (119). In his view, both Lu and her critics favor negotiation with students on issues of language and grammar. He concludes from this that Lu's pedagogy does not pose a threat to the role

of academic discourse in writing classrooms and argues that it is important to ensure that basic writing teachers be instilled with greater linguistic sensitivity "not through calls for revolution, but through acts of charity" (p. 125).

I am very much in agreement with Ray in his call for more linguistic sensitivity among basic writing teachers. I also agree with him that there are indeed connections to be made between Lu and her critics as well as between Lu and a pedagogy of charity. Examining the application of a pedagogy of charity described by Porter in his analysis of the peer feedback one student (Joan) gave to a peer can provide an example of common ground:

> There is an eerie mix of voices and audiences in this passage. The "readerly" voice of the first three sentences surely shifts to a "teacherly," evaluative tone in the final sentence. . . . Behind these two voices I hear a third, that of the "student," addressed to me—not to the supposed "author" of the text—in an attempt to explain/justify her grade. . . . And perhaps thinking that she may have overlooked several grievous errors—the kind only English teachers ever seem to find—Joan felt she had to mention that she really did try to find problems with the essay but couldn't. (583)

One can see here a little bit of the experience that Lu so eloquently described in "From Silence to Words." Joan, like Lu, is blending a number of different discourses into one written assignment. Porter, in his charitable reading of it, should be applauded for seeing this blend rather than pathologizing it. Certainly he and Lu would agree here. Yet this recognition of blending seems to be where the similarities between Lu and Porter end. For Porter, this blending is "eerie" while for Lu it is the norm. Depicting this blending as eerie stills holds the deficiency to be in the student as opposed to a problem with the homogenization expected in academic writing and avoids the conflict and struggle that is the centerpiece of Lu's pedagogy. I would argue that this has to do with different conceptualizations of power used by Lu and advocates for "charitable" approaches such as Porter and Ray.

These different conceptualizations of power can be seen even in the use of the word "charity." Lu, in her critique of the politics of linguistic innocence, would challenge us not to see the concept "charity" as a term with a universal meaning understood by all people in all contexts. Instead, Lu's approach might encourage us to critically examine the different connotations charity could have. From the perspective of the person giving the charity (in this case the basic writing teacher), the primary meaning of the

term may be associated with positive values of altruism and good will. Yet, for somebody coming from a marginalized population who is oftentimes positioned as the receiver of charity (in this, case the basic writing student), charity may be more associated with condescension.

One image that comes to my mind is a scene from the movie *Roots* where the Black dean of a college is forced to sing for a group of White liberals who are charitably donating money to his school. The White audience applauds his effort with one of the women noting how interesting it is that "all of them" can sing. The White charity givers feel good about their charitable work; yet after they leave the dean and his colleague acknowledge how humiliating the receiving of charity is for them. In short, the concept of charity has many different connotations, and while the benevolently innocent one advocated by Porter is one way of understanding the concept, it is certainly not the only way of understanding it. The fact of the matter is that both the giving and receiving of charity have historically been and continue to be embedded in relations of power. It is these relations of power that Lu is trying to make the center of her pedagogy, and it is these relations of power that seem to be missing from the conception of charity advocated by Porter and taken up by Ray. Reading Lu through this charitable framework serves the function of diluting and glossing over these power relations.

Ray's applying of this charitable approach is indicative of this glossing over of power relations. Using the lens of a pedagogy of charity, Ray concludes his reading of two articles where Lu lays out in more detail her pedagogical approach with the statement that "Lu merely says that . . . we cannot assume the way we . . . might 'fix' certain problems equals the way the students would solve them" (p. 123). Yet, as noted above, Lu is saying much more than this. In the two articles that Ray cites, Lu is trying to describe a pedagogy that not only problematizes the idea that teachers know how to fix students' problems but also calls into question the neutrality of academic discourse and unmasks the power relations embedded in its ways of describing and analyzing the world.

With this said, I will now offer a re-reading of the two articles Ray analyzed with an attempt at identifying how Lu's approach, while having parallels with a charitable approach, also has fundamental differences. In "Professing Multiculturalism," Lu elaborates on how her theoretical framework might look in the classroom. In this article, Lu makes the case for a multicultural approach to style asking "why is it that in spite of our developing ability to acknowledge the political need and right of 'real' writers to experiment with 'style,' we continue to cling to the belief that such a need

and right does not belong to 'student writers?'" (446). Lu argues for a reconceptualization of the composition classroom to one that treats students as "real" writers with the authority to experiment with style. While there are certain similarities between treating students as "real" writers and the goals of a pedagogy of charity, the differences are profound in that Lu is interested in making conflict and struggle with and against academic discourse the center of thinking about "error" correction.

In this article, Lu provides an example of how this looks in her classroom. She describes a Chinese-speaking student who used the phrase "can able to" several times in something she wrote for class. Rather than treating this as an error, Lu and her class (including the student who wrote the phrase) critically examine the use of the phrase. They begin to note a possible cultural way of understanding the world where things are being done to people as opposed to people having ultimate control over their own destinies; this orientation is reflected not just in how the student used "can" but also through widespread use of the passive voice. Therefore, to simply assume that this "error" needs to be corrected to read "be able to" may be producing a particular discursive understanding of the world that may or may not be the discursive understanding that the writer wishes to convey. In short, this type of close reading gives students the opportunity to begin to see the interrelatedness of form and meaning. Once students are made more conscious of this interrelatedness, they can make conscious decisions regarding style rather than blindly accept the "correct" way of saying things—a "correct" way that is connected with a certain worldview that may not be the worldview the student wishes to articulate.

In "An Essay on the Work of Composition," Lu elaborates on this method in even greater detail, connecting her approach with an attempt at resistance to the fast capitalism that has been a product of globalization. While Ray is correct in saying that here Lu spends several pages considering various reasons why a public sign she encountered on a visit to China says "collecting money toilet" rather than "public toilet," his conclusion that teachers should not assume they know how to correct student writing leaves out the larger social, political, and economic aspects of Lu's argument. He fails to acknowledge Lu's wish to theorize ways of reimagining language that resist the cultural imperialism of the English-speaking world and allow for non-Euro-American interactions with English to exist on the same level as Euro-American interactions with English. It is within this social, political, and economic context that Lu analyzes the emergence of Chinglish in China and the campaign against it by the Chinese government, a context that is

lost in Ray's reading of her work. It is also within this context that we must understand her analysis of the use of "collecting money toilet."

Based on these assumptions and the social, political, and economic context of the emergence of the phrase "collecting money toilet," Lu speculates on a possible explanation for the use of this phrase as opposed to the more traditional "public toilet." She argues that it might represent a reappropriation of English that reflects a particular worldview where the public-private distinction may make little sense and the collecting money aspect of the toilet may be more important to the person who wrote the sign. Ray is correct to point out that part of Lu's argument is that we cannot assume we know how to correct the phrase; however, what Ray leaves out of his analysis is the way that Lu embeds her analysis within relations of power as well as her centering of dissonance in the process. As in her earlier work, Lu not only makes the case for treating students as "real" users of English but also makes the case that the dissonance students experience between and across standardized and peripheralized languages should be part of the composition curriculum. In Lu's view, this type of dissonance could be used to create alliances between composition studies and resistant users of English, in an attempt to redesign U.S. English against the grain of fast capitalism.

As can be seen, while Lu's work does have some things in common with a pedagogy of charity and with the views of some of her critics, there are also fundamental differences that should not be glossed over. By glossing over these differences, we may unintentionally gloss over the conflict and struggle that are integral to Lu's approach to composition studies. What results is a diluted version of what Lu is attempting to do in her work. I, therefore, offer a different metaphor—the metaphor of partial narratives—that I believe may more accurately reflect the conflict and struggle and analysis of power relations that are central to Lu's work. While this metaphor is a direct response to the metaphor of charity, I hope to use this new metaphor to raise questions for the entire field of composition studies and the state of basic writing within it. In other words, the new metaphor I propose is not so much a response to an academic disagreement with Ray but rather a call to reflect on where we currently are in terms of these questions that were raised over fifteen years ago and remain unresolved today.

Toward a Metaphor of Partial Narratives

The metaphor of partial narratives comes from the work of Elizabeth Ellsworth. In her seminal article "Why Doesn't This Feel Empowering?"

Ellsworth critiques the rationalist assumptions underpinning critical pedagogy that continue to oppress as opposed to empower the marginalized students it claims to advocate for. While her focus is critical pedagogy and not a pedagogy of charity, I believe that her insights are useful at getting to the limitations of both, especially since a pedagogy of charity is so keen on treating everybody as a rational being.

According to Ellsworth, pedagogies with a Western conception of rationalism as their foundation are not neutral but instead embedded in relations of power that not only privilege the teacher as bearer of ultimate knowledge but also privilege certain ways of being and certain ways of expressing an opinion. As she describes it, "these rationalist assumptions have led to the following goals: the teaching of analytic and critical skills for judging the truth and merit of propositions, and the interrogation and selective appropriation of potentially transformative moments in the dominant culture" (303-304). Here Ellsworth is making a similar argument to Lu in her unmasking of the power relations embedded in academic discourse that in her view are based on Western conceptions of rationalism. As she notes, "literary criticism, cultural studies, post-structuralism, feminist studies, comparative studies, and media studies have by now amassed overwhelming evidence of the extent to which the myths of the ideal rational person and the 'universality' of propositions have been oppressive to those who are not European, White, male, Christian, able-bodied, thin, and heterosexual" (304). In other words, academic discourse is not neutral but is instead embedded in relations of power that can perpetuate marginalization and oppression when treated as universal and objective.

In order to unpack this argument a bit it might be useful to lay out a working definition of the type of academic discourse embedded in Western rationalism that Ellsworth is critiquing. In "Inventing the University," David Bartholomae provides a succinct and clear definition of the basic characteristics of this academic discourse based in Western rationalism. In his view, a student is successful in entering academic discourse when he or she "can define a position of privilege, a position that sets him against a 'common' discourse, and when he or she can work self-consciously, critically against not only the 'common' code but his or her own" (644). What he does not interrogate in this article is who wins and who loses through the taking up of "privileged" positions in opposition to the Other.

For example, Patricia Clough in *End(s) of Ethnography* sees this taking up of a "privileged" position in opposition to the Other as embedded in an oedipal logic of narrativity, which she associates with a masculine subject

who "has appropriated power by dissociating himself from the spectacularized others of vision and not by simply denying their presence or their visions but by making their points of view public only through and as his vision" (40). Clough connects this taking of authorial position in relation to the Other not only with patriarchal relations of power but also with colonization and racism. Gloria Anzaldúa in *Borderlands/La Frontera* goes even further, arguing that "in trying to become objective, Western culture made 'objects' of things and people when it distanced itself from them, thereby losing 'touch' with them. This dichotomy is the root of all violence" (37). For Anzaldúa, the foundations of Western thought not only marginalize borderland populations but also serve to justify the violence oftentimes perpetuated against these populations. Academic discourse, as a product of Western thought, is implicated in this process.

As we can see, academic discourse based on Western rationalism is embedded in relations of power designed to benefit the few at the expense of the marginalization and oppression of the many. Charity cannot do justice to addressing these power relations that are at the center of Lu's theoretical framework. This is where a metaphor of partial narratives based on the work of Elizabeth Ellsworth may be helpful as a different route to reading the debate between Lu and her critics. Ellsworth, recognizing the power relations inherent in academic discourse as well as the power relations in any discourse, argues not for more rationalism or charity but, instead, a pedagogy of partial narratives. As Ellsworth describes it, "because . . . voices are partial and partisan, they must be made problematic, but not because they have broken the rules of thought of the ideal rational person by grounding their knowledge in immediate emotional, social, and psychic experiences of oppression, or are somehow lacking or too narrowly circumscribed" (305). In her view, rather than trying to create a unified voice, it is instead more productive to interrogate the partialness of all discourses (both academic and non-academic) and struggle through and with difference as opposed to trying to homogenize it.

It is this type of partial narrative that I believe productively makes clear the differences between the theoretical frameworks of Lu and her critics in the same way that a metaphor of charity can be used in an attempt to get to the commonalities between the two approaches. In "Professing Multiculturalism" and "An Essay on the Work of Composition," Lu is not simply saying that composition teachers need to be careful when dealing with student error. Instead, Lu is interested in making the composition classroom a space where partial narratives interact in a contact zone where conflict and struggle (both

internal and in interaction with others) are explored and reflected on. While Lu focuses on issues of "error" in her writing on the topic, her theoretical framework goes much further than that; in fact, even when focusing on "error," she is constantly connecting her work to larger discursive practices and the larger social, political, and economic contexts.

It is also with partial narratives that Lu's conception of agency and resistance can be understood. For Lu, one can never escape the discursive regimes that have created academic discourse or the power relations they are complicit in reproducing. However, by reflecting on one's partial narrative of the world and how this partial narrative both resonates with and conflicts with academic discourse, students can reposition themselves in relation to academic discourse and (re)appropriate it for their purposes. In many ways, Lu's thinking here is aligned with the thinking of A. Suresh Canagarajah, who argues for a pedagogy of appropriation that he believes allows marginalized students to "become insiders and use the language in their own terms according to their own aspirations, needs, and values" (176). In his view, this pedagogy of appropriation would help students "develop a critical detachment from the conventions, develop a reflexive awareness of the discourses we think by, and reformulate the rules of these discourses to conduct relatively independent thought" (185). Like Canagarajah, Lu is interested in embracing and facilitating students' experience of conflict and struggle with conventions of academic English so that they can appropriate it for their own needs and create a mestiza consciousness. For both of them, this is not an act of charity but of resistance and a fundamental challenge to the colonizing tendencies of Western academic discourse.

The point Lu is trying to make is the need to truly explore and embrace difference and the conflict and struggle that come with difference in the classroom as a way to resist the colonizing tendencies of academic discourse, especially for basic writers. In the end, this profound implication of composition teachers in relations of colonization may be the root cause of the backlash against Lu. For example, Laurence in her reply to Lu's defense of her position, critiques the use of the term mestizo, asking, "why should I, a teacher of English, be complicit in perpetuating a colonial metaphor in America, which implicates me, perhaps, as one of the 'peninsulares'?" (105). While Lu never uses the term "peninsular," perhaps she would agree that it is necessary to accept the fact that all academics, including basic writing teachers, are on some level peninsulares. Embracing this premise will allow basic writing teachers to reflect on the paradoxical nature of wanting to empower students that they are at the same time marginalizing.

In "The Tidy House," David Bartholomae, in a striking departure from the views he expressed years earlier in "Inventing the University," shows what the consequences are for basic writing students when composition teachers fail to acknowledge the colonizing tendencies in academic discourse along with the construction of basic writers. As he argues, "basic writers are produced by our desires to be liberals—to enforce a commonness among our students by making the differences superficial, surface-level, and by designing a curriculum to both insure them and erase them in 14 weeks" (12). It is, therefore, not enough for teachers of composition to work at understanding our students in the ways a charitable approach advocates because the reality is that our own partial narratives may not make this possible; in fact, an attempt at understanding our students may serve the function of homogenizing difference as we inevitably will see the Other from our own partial narrative of the world. It is this irreconcilable difference and the paradox that it creates that Lu is arguing should be the center of pedagogy in the composition classroom, and it is the embracing of partial narratives as a pedagogical tool that would make this possible.

Of course, the challenge becomes how composition teachers can facilitate a class of partial narratives where complete understanding of not just "errors" but discourse in general is impossible. This will inevitably always be an action-in-progress. As Ellsworth notes, "whatever form it takes in the various, changing, locally specific instances of classroom practice, I understand a classroom of practice of the unknowable right now to be one that would support students/professor in [a] never-ending moving about" (321). This constant moving about and the conflict and struggle that are associated with it offer us new ways of conceptualizing dialogue. Ellsworth describes this communication across difference as best represented by the statement "if you can talk to me in ways that show you understand that your knowledge of me, the world, and 'the Right thing to do' will always be partial, interested, and potentially oppressive to others, and if I can do the same, then we can work together on shaping and reshaping alliances for constructing circumstances in which students of difference can thrive" (324).

A type of dialogue that holds promise as the foundation of a pedagogy of partial narratives can be found in the work of John Trimbur. In "Consensus and Difference in Collaborative Learning," Trimbur argues that one way to avoid the homogenizing effects of presumed mutual understanding and agreement is to treat consensus as "based not so much on collective agreement as on collective explanations of how people differ, where these differences come from, and whether they can live and work together with

these differences" (470). In his view, this focus on difference "offers students a powerful critical instrument to interrogate the conversation—to interrupt it in order to investigate the forces which determine who may speak and what may be said, what inhibits communication and what makes it possible" (473). In short, very much in line with Lu, Trimbur envisions a classroom where teachers and students grapple with difference and the power relations that have produced those differences at all levels from the smallest "error" to the largest conversations.

In summary, a pedagogy of partial narratives, in contrast to a pedagogy of charity, challenges composition teachers to accept the inherently political nature of language and discourse and to make it part of their pedagogical relationship with students. A pedagogy of charity assumes that a composition teacher can understand his or her students and decide what their needs are in the process of moving them from the "eerie" mix of discourses (Porter 583) to a purely academic one. In contrast, a pedagogy of partial narratives makes the unknowability of the Other the center of a pedagogy that seeks to constantly interrogate the power relations embedded in all discourses and in all genres. It moves us beyond the politics of linguistic innocence through an acceptance that all knowledge is embedded in relations of power. While neither composition teachers nor their students can escape these relations of power, composition classrooms can become spaces where students are given the opportunity to (re)appropriate these power relations in the act of becoming resistant users of English through a continuous conflict and struggle for self (re)determination as opposed to becoming recipients of our charity.

The Paradox of the Teaching of Composition

Brian Ray should be commended for his efforts at revisiting an important debate in the teaching of composition in an effort to find common ground between two sides that were not successful at communicating productively in the 1990s because of a combination of personal and philosophical differences. Yet, in an attempt to find common ground, it is equally important not to gloss over real differences. While it is true that both Lu and her critics may share some commonalities as described through a pedagogy of charity, it is equally important to remember that different conceptions of power and the nature of academic discourse truly divide these groups. To gloss over these differences dilutes the meaning of the mestiza consciousness that Lu is hoping to instill in her students. For Lu, mestiza consciousness is inherently a process of conflict and struggle with both academic and non-

academic discourses. To deny this, or to ignore it in favor of finding common ground between Lu and her critics opens up the possibility of returning to the politics of linguistic innocence that Lu is arguing against. On the other hand, to embrace conflict and struggle opens up the path of engaging with difference in all of its complexity and irreconcilability.

While adding more complexity to the already complex task of teaching basic writing may make the work we do seem overwhelming, basic writing teachers who embrace the metaphor of partial narratives can work with their students to critically examine the ideological underpinnings of academic discourse while they struggle to master it. Basing instruction on the metaphor of partial narratives offers the possibility of the creation of classroom spaces for students to emerge as resistant users of academic discourse as opposed to uncritical assimilators of the language and ideological underpinnings of the academy. This, in turn, can provide both teachers and students with the tools to make academic discourse more inclusive of different ways of expressing knowledge.

It is undoubtedly disturbing to embrace a position that implicates oneself or those one admires in a system of colonization and domination. This is especially true for composition teachers, in particular basic writing teachers, who have been on the front lines advocating for the full inclusion of their students in mainstream academia since the Open Admissions struggles of the 1960s and 1970s. These are teachers who justifiably see themselves as advocates for their students. The impulse might be to avoid facing the disturbing possibility of one's own complicity in colonizing relations of power and to continue to treat good intentions as sufficient in empowering basic writing students. Yet Lu challenges us to embrace the paradox of being complicit in oppression through the creation of spaces in our classrooms where we grapple with power relations and the colonizing tendencies in academic discourse. A charitable approach is not sufficient in exploring these relations of power. This grappling can only come through conflict and struggle.

Yet we should also recognize that basic writing teachers have always been at the forefront of critiquing the status quo. During the Open Admissions struggles, basic writing teachers, led by Mina Shaughnessy, were ardent proponents of the inclusion of students who had previously been excluded from academic discourse and from U.S. colleges and universities. Lu continued in this tradition by critiquing the politics of linguistic innocence embedded within the discursive regime that produced the field of basic writing and advocating instead a pedagogy of conflict and struggle. Both of these different eras were challenging the status quo of their time and pushing

against the boundaries of the academic tradition as it stood. I would like to call on today's basic writing teachers to reflect on the radical tradition that has produced the field of basic writing and to critically examine where the field currently stands. An exploration of where the field has come from can provide us insight into what a radical approach to composition studies and the teaching of basic writing might be in today's socio-historical context. The challenge for the field is to continue to remain forward-thinking and to push at the frontiers of academic discourse. Brian Ray would urge the field to move toward a pedagogy of charity. However, a pedagogy of charity does not go far enough in pushing the academic tradition to become more inclusive. In contrast, a pedagogy of partial narratives—an approach that embraces conflict and struggle and the paradox of teaching—has the potential to provide insights into more effective strategies and to sustain and develop the radical tradition out of which basic writing was born.

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Working Together: Student-Faculty Interaction and the Boise State Stretch Program

Thomas Peele

ABSTRACT: In this article, I describe how policy changes instituted by our State Board of Education prompted the composition faculty at Boise State University to develop a Stretch program. Our goal was to support basic writing students by linking two writing courses (one of which is non-credit-bearing) , thus allowing students to remain with the same classmates and professor for a full year instead of just one semester. I discuss the history and challenges of our Stretch program and detail our assessment of it, which reveals a positive impact on student retention, G.P.A, and writing ability. While there are too many variables to claim that the Stretch program alone is responsible for the positive outcomes, research shows that increased student-faculty interaction, a significant feature of the Stretch program, does reinforce student learning. We are using evidence of this research and our assessment to develop the program and advance the argument that students should receive full credit for both semesters of the Stretch sequence.

KEYWORDS: Stretch programs; basic writing; first-year composition; collaboration; program assessment; student-faculty interaction; college credit

THE STRETCH PROGRAM AT BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY

Origins

In 2002, the State Board of Education (SBOE) changed its placement policy for enrollment in composition classes ("Admissions") at Boise State University. The change increased from about 350 to about 500 the number of students required to take basic writing (English 90), a non-credit-bearing course, and it began to charge them an additional fee of $30. We believed students were being penalized by the additional fee. We also wanted to develop effective ways to support our basic writers, so we decided, in effect, to give the fee back to students and use it to enhance their experience. At the same time, we wanted to document their achievements in order to argue that English 90 should be for credit. Our hope was that by demonstrating students' academic achievement, the department, college, and the SBOE

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would share our view that these students—many of whom (40%) *choose* to enroll in a non-credit-bearing course in order to better prepare themselves for their college course work—should be rewarded, not penalized, for their efforts.

In this article, I describe the Stretch program that we created to provide additional support to English 90 students. I also describe the assessment methods we used—analysis of student success in terms of course completion and student retention rates, evaluation of student portfolios, and interviews with faculty and students—to determine the impact of the program on student success. All of our assessments show that students who complete the Stretch program perform significantly better in all areas studied. The most successful aspect of our Stretch program, however, may be the simple fact that it allows students and faculty to spend more time together by pairing students with the same instructor for a full year. The added semester provides faculty with additional time to identify and address individual student needs and creates an environment in which students feel more confident as writers. As I describe below, research indicates that it may be this prolonged contact that not only does the work of increasing student confidence, but also helps students make gains in the other areas we assessed.

Unfortunately, our efforts to demonstrate that students deserve college writing credit for this course have been met with resistance from the department and the college for the common reasons. Basic writing students, some say, are working to achieve a level of writing proficiency that "good" students have already achieved. This commonplace is applied to *all* basic writing students—children of migrant farm workers, adult speakers of other languages, and recent graduates from our local high schools. Others note in the current language of economics that linking two courses together, as we have done in the Stretch program, *adds no value* to the sequence, and therefore there is no reason for offering credit for English 90 or for listing the course sequence in the catalog. At the root of these arguments lies the unstated claim that a clear and stable definition of college-level writing exists and that basic writing students produce essays that fall short of this level. By extension, then, writers who do not meet the standard do not deserve college credit for their work, while writers who meet or exceed it *do* deserve credit. This claim, though, is hard to defend. If such a standard really does exist, then why do students enrolled in our writing courses designed for ESL learners earn credit for their writing? We know that students in our ESL courses often write at a considerably lower level than our basic writing students. In fact, we encourage our ESL students to increase their proficiency

by completing the basic writing course before enrolling in the mainstream composition sequence. I am not arguing that there should be no standards for college-level writing, but rather that students come into our classes with a variety of strengths and weaknesses, and we assess their writing over time and often as a part of a portfolio of writing. Determining in advance that a group of students are not writing at the college level, before even reading any of their essays, suggests that the institution relies on an elusive concept of basic writing in order to maintain an equally elusive definition of "standard" college-level writing. As long as there are basic writers and basic writing, then those students who do not fall into this category must necessarily be the "real thing"; they are the exemplary students worthy of time, attention, and college credit. In developing Stretch at Boise, we have worked to document basic writers' efforts and accomplishments in order to show that they merit the same time, attention, and credit as any of the student writers we serve.

In her detailed history of basic writing at Boise State, Karen Uehling demonstrates that the concept of basic writing has functioned, at least in part, as a way for the University to improve its status. Uehling notes that "there has been a basic writing course at Boise State" since the 1930s when the school opened as a junior college (147). She notes that "students who did not place into regular freshman writing began, in 1933, to take a kind of modern five-hour 'stretch' course" (147). By 1952, the department "created its first clearly described basic writing course" for which, because it was seen as a high school review course, "no credit was offered" (147). Uehling further notes that "the 'quality' of students was not an issue in the early years" of Boise State, but "as the community college developed in the 1950s and especially in the 1960s when Boise State was nearing four-year status, student quality emerged as a concern. That is, the legacy of diversity of the community was weighed increasingly against a sense of excellence and perhaps elitism, notions that affected how basic writing students were perceived" (148). Boise State currently finds itself enmeshed in this same space of redefinition. Through the 2000s, the University has raised its admissions standards, which are now the highest in the State. During the same period, the administration has pushed the faculty to produce more research and reduced the teaching load to facilitate research productivity. The University has also heavily promoted its football program, which has attained national prominence. Finally, it has been instrumental in the creation of a local community college. In the 1950s, non-credit basic writing courses emerged as the junior college pushed to become a four-year state college. In the 2000s,

non-credit basic writing courses remain intractable as the University pushes to redefine itself as a research institution. It is as if basic writing and basic writers are a necessary part of our institution's image of itself. Without basic writers, how would we know what "standard" is?

THE STRETCH PROGRAM AT ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

The First-Year Writing Program at Boise State, under the leadership of Bruce Ballenger (Director) and Michelle Payne (Associate Director), used some of the student fees generated by the SBOE's new policy to provide additional training to basic writing faculty and also to invite Greg Glau to describe the Stretch program that he administered at Arizona State. Though the institutional contexts of Boise State and Arizona State differ significantly, the composition faculty decided to institute a pilot Stretch program of its own to see if Stretch would have a positive impact on student learning.

The Stretch Program that Glau and others developed at ASU is "a two-semester sequence that 'stretches' ENG101 over two semesters" ("The 'Stretch'" 79). Before the Stretch program, basic writing students at Arizona State began with the no-credit ENG071, a required, non-credit-bearing pre-requisite for English 101. The Stretch program did away with ENG071. Instead, basic writing students enrolled in a course that *stretched* the contents of ENG101 over two semesters. In other words, instead of a two-semester sequence (071 followed by 101), students enrolled in a two-semester version of 101. They worked with the same peer group and the same instructor for the entire year, and—significantly—they received credit for both classes (I discuss below some of the impact of non credit-bearing status of English 90 on our students). The shift from the original sequence to the Stretch Program sequence also shifted how basic writing students were conceptualized within the institution. As Glau puts it, the Stretch Program "*sees* . . . beginning writers as just as capable as their ENG101 counterparts; we just give them an extra semester to work on their writing" (80). Glau reports that more students pass the first semester course of the Stretch Program than they did ENGL071, and more students enroll in and complete the second semester of the two-semester sequence than they did under the previous system (84-85).

In Glau's follow-up study of the program ten years later, he reports reliably impressive outcomes ("*Stretch* at 10"). Glau notes that Stretch students "consistently pass ENG 101 at a higher rate than do their counterparts who take traditional ENG 101," and they "consistently pass ENG 102 at a higher

rate than do their traditional ENG 101 counterparts" (38). That students at ASU *consistently* achieved such positive results over the course of a decade provided momentum for the development of a Stretch program on our campus. Our faculty anticipated similar outcomes, but further speculated that the success of Arizona State's Stretch program rested, at least in part, on *how* students were conceptualized as just as capable as any college writer. From the beginning of ASU's program, basic writing students were invited to the main campus from the local community college, where they had been required to take the non-credit "ENG 071, a 'remedial' class" ("Stretch" 79). On the main campus of ASU, those same basic writers were not only given college credit for their work, but they were also provided with additional writing support. They were rewarded for and supported in their work. We hoped that if our students achieved higher rates of success, even without the advantage of course credit, then our argument for the creation of a credit-bearing course would be strengthened.

THE STRETCH PROGRAM AT BOISE STATE UNIVERSITY

Administrative and Curricular Design

The results of Stretch at Arizona State in terms of student success were so impressive that faculty at Boise State made plans to pilot a Stretch program of its own, to begin in the fall of 2005. In making this decision, faculty recognized that there were significant institutional differences that would impact our results. For example, at Arizona State, students were brought to the main campus from a local community college, whereas our students were already enrolled on our main campus. Arizona State's program "was designed to replace remedial word-and-phrase level instruction with the practice of multiple discourse strategies," but at Boise State students were already working in groups and conferencing with their professors before revising their essays (79). Another significant difference is that Arizona's "*Stretch* classes were initially capped at 22 students, as compared to 26 in traditional ENG 101 classrooms" ("*Stretch* at 10" 34). At Boise State in 2002, all composition courses were capped at 27; this number has since been reduced to 25. The number of students required to take this course at Boise State was also significantly smaller, less than half the number at Arizona State. The most important contrast, though, is that Boise State's basic writing course, English 90, is non-credit-bearing, and it appears as though it will remain so for the foreseeable future.

In spite of these differences, Boise State's faculty wanted to pilot Stretch as another way to support basic writing students. We knew that students who enrolled in English 90 (basic writing) performed better in English 101 (the first semester of the credit-bearing, two-semester composition sequence) than students who enrolled directly into English 101.[1] We also knew that students who completed English 90 before enrolling in English 101 were significantly more likely to be retained one year later (70%) than students who enrolled directly into English 101 (57%). We hoped that our Stretch program would have the same kind of positive impact on our already strong retention numbers. We further hoped that a comprehensive assessment of the success of English 90 students—increased retention, better performance in English 101, and writing portfolio assessments that demonstrated a high level of writing proficiency—would persuade our department, college, university, and the SBOE that English 90 students deserved college credit for their work. All of the data suggested that even without the Stretch program students were more likely to succeed than students who enrolled directly in English 101. It seemed reasonable, then, to *encourage* students to take this course since over the long term it enhanced their likelihood of success.

Confronting Issues of Continuity

We decided to develop a yearlong course in which we stretched the English 101 curriculum over two semesters. Administratively we still had (and continue to have) two separate courses (English 90 and English 101). In our Stretch program, students have to enroll in English 90 in the fall and English 101 in the spring. What we were able to do, though, was to limit the spring English 101 enrollments in Stretch designated classes to just those students who were enrolled in Stretch designated sections of fall semester English 90. If a student takes English 90 with me in the fall semester, for example, then she is guaranteed a spot in my section of English 101 in the spring semester. In this way, students who want to continue working with the same instructor and the same students for an entire year are able to do so.

When we began the program, we hoped that, as at Arizona State, most students would be able to complete the program. Glau reports being "concerned that many students would be unable for some reason (they got a job, perhaps) to take the 'linked' section of ENG101 and would have to be moved to another class. This concern turned out to be false, however, as so far less than one percent of our students have had scheduling difficulties from one semester to the next" ("The 'Stretch' " 82). We, however, have had

a relatively high rate of instability from one semester to the next. In academic years 05-06 and 06-07, for example, of the 243 students who entered Stretch sections of Eng 90, only 120, or 49%, completed Stretch English 101 with the same instructor. According to students, much of this instability has to do with factors outside the classroom, such as conflicts with work and family responsibilities. Still, the reality that not even a majority of students were able to complete the Stretch sequence with the same instructor called into question the very definition of a Stretch student. This definition would have an impact on our assessment. If a Stretch student is anyone who enters English 90 without regard to whether or not she continues with the same instructor into English 101, then the impact of the program is considerably less significant than it would be if we limited our study to students who actually went through both semesters of the Stretch sequence. While recognizing that we have no way of determining *why* some students remain in Stretch and others do not—are those who remain simply better students or students with more resources?—we decided to count as Stretch students only those who completed the Stretch sequence during the pilot phase (2005-2007) of the program. In order to maintain consistency, I analyzed the results of the 2008-2009 academic year using the same logic: I counted as Stretch only those students who completed both segments of the Stretch sequence with the same instructor. The analysis and my conclusions, then, are based on those students who completed the program. Armed with the results of the Stretch program on the students who could complete both semesters with the same instructor, we have gone into English 90 classes to promote the benefits of remaining with the same instructor, but our efforts have not had an impact on re-enrollment.

Designing a Shared Syllabus

For two years (2005-2007), we assigned the "Stretch" designation to five fall sections of English 90 and five spring sections of English 101. For a variety of administrative reasons, mainly having to do with the significantly higher number of English 90 courses offered in the fall and the complications of staffing part-time faculty, we were able to include some but not all spring and summer sections of English 90 in our program. The pilot sections of Stretch were taught by three faculty members: Laura, Jen, and Garawyn. Since the Stretch designation was made within the department, we didn't have to change the administrative structure for the Stretch sections. We focused, instead, on the curricular structure and developed a

yearlong syllabus, knowing that we would need to accommodate students who would not be able to complete the Stretch program. We had to both conceive of a yearlong sequence and make sure that students who were unable to complete the sequence would be prepared to either move into a section of Stretch English 101 with another instructor or move into a section of Mainstream English 101.[2]

To accommodate these conflicting needs, we designed a syllabus with two repeating elements: The first assignment of the first semester (a personal narrative) was revised and included as a part of one of the later assignments of the second semester, and the last assignment of the first semester (an opinion essay) was revised to become a part of the first assignment of the second semester (a persuasive essay; see Appendix A). In this way, the curriculum built a bridge between the two semesters, and it allowed students to work on the same piece of writing for an extended period of time. The syllabus also built in the opportunity for students to review and revise their earliest writing just as the year was coming to an end, an experience that proved very powerful to many students. This sequence of assignments in the Stretch sections of English 90—three or four longer pieces during the English 90 course—also mirrored the course structure of Mainstream English 90. We were assured, then, that Stretch students would receive the same preparation for English 101 as their Mainstream counterparts.

We kept to the principle of maximum flexibility within our standardized syllabus. That is, we wanted to develop a sequence of assignments that engaged students in the work of the yearlong course, but we didn't want the syllabus to be so standardized that individual instructors' creativity, initiative, and preferences were stifled or eliminated. Thus, though the assignments were the same in principle, the names faculty chose to call those assignments—for example, the "documented perspective essay" and the "research essay" to describe the same assignment—were left up to the individual. Instructors also chose the readings they wanted to use with each assignment, and they determined the sequence of readings and writings within each assignment as well as the amount of time devoted to each assignment.

The development of the shared syllabus proved both difficult and rewarding. All three faculty members resisted and resented having to give up, in some cases, a favorite assignment whose value others didn't see, and having to use another assignment that they had not previously tested and in which they may have had little faith. Ultimately, however, they agreed that the exercise of creating a shared syllabus, and a syllabus that spanned

both semesters, was productive and rewarding. They reported great satisfaction in having tried out a new assignment, which they may originally have resisted, because the new approaches provided fresh ideas about how to teach basic writing. Perhaps most importantly, though, they loved the fact that, since they were all doing more or less the same class work as their colleagues, they had common ground for discussion about the progress of their classes. The informal mailroom meetings took on a new significance as they realized that they had formed a faculty learning community. When we expanded the Stretch program to include all sections of English 90, we retained the collaboratively developed syllabus, with all teaching faculty contributing to its structure.

ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Statistical Measures: Completion Rates, GPAs, and Retention

In the assessment of student performance that follows, a Stretch student during the pilot phase is defined as a student who completed the Stretch designated sections of English 90 and English 101 (see Appendix B). For the sake of comparison, I also show overall (Mainstream and Stretch) English 90 performance during the pilot phase of our Stretch program. In the fall of 2008, all English 90 classes were designated Stretch. The second chart in Appendix B shows enrollments in the 2008-2009 academic year, the first year that every section of English 90 was designated Stretch."

The data for the years 2005 through 2007 show that Stretch students completed English 101 at the same rate as their Mainstream English 90 counterparts and more frequently than their Mainstream English 101 counterparts. In 2008, when all English 90 sections were designated Stretch, students were still more likely to complete English 101 than their Mainstream English 101 counterparts. During the pilot phase, Stretch English 90 students were more likely to enroll in English 102 than their Mainstream English 90 counterparts, but not nearly as likely to enroll as their Mainstream English 101 counterparts. During the 2008-2009 academic year, English 90 students were less likely to enroll in English 101 than in any of the previous years. This might be due, however, to the fact that students who began in 2005 and 2006 have had a longer period of time to complete this course than students who began in 2008. Stretch students from this period who do enroll in English 101, however, are more likely to complete the course than Stretch students

from 2005-2007 and students who enrolled directly into English 101 from 2005-2007. The Stretch students from fall 2008 are also more likely than any other student to enroll in English 102; completion rates are not yet available. Since the higher frequency of 2008 Stretch completion rates in both English 101 and enrollment rates in English 102 remains in place even if it is measured against the performance of *all* English 90 students from 2005-2007, both Stretch and Mainstream, the Stretch program appears to have a positive effect on student re-enrollments.

The GPA calculation for this study breaks students into three groups: those who completed Stretch with the same instructor, those who did not, and those who began their composition sequence in English 101. Within this particular configuration, Stretch students' GPA is very compelling. According to the analysis of the statistics for 2005-2007, performed by Marcia Belcheir at the Office of Institutional Assessment, for "cumulative GPA, students who enrolled in a [Mainstream] ENGL 90 course had GPAs that were *significantly lower* than any of the other groups. Students in the Stretch Program had cumulative GPAs that were *statistically indistinguishable* from students who began in ENGL 101" (emphasis added). Students enrolled in a Mainstream section of English 90 had over the course of two years a cumulative GPA of 2.06; students who completed the Stretch program had a cumulative GPA of 2.36, and students who began the composition sequence in English101 had a cumulative GPA of 2.48. Within the limits of this study, it's not possible to determine if the Stretch students' success is a *result* of Stretch or if it's the *result* of other factors. However, we have reason to believe that increased faculty-student contact is at least in part responsible for the higher rate of Stretch student achievement.

The retention data is also interesting. For the period from 2005 through 2007, 76% of students who completed the Stretch program were enrolled the next fall, an increase in the overall retention rate of 70% of English 90 students from the 2002-2004 period. However, only 62% of students who completed Mainstream English 90 were enrolled after one year, and only 62% of students who completed Mainstream English 101. Of the 2007-2008 group, 80% of Stretch students were enrolled the next fall, 59% of the Mainstream English 90 students were enrolled the next fall, and 55% of Mainstream English 101 students were enrolled the next fall.

The GPA and retention data sheds light on the Stretch program, but is inconclusive since it measures those students who, for unknown reasons, are *able* to complete the Stretch sequence with the same instructor against student who are *unable* to complete the sequence with the same instructor.

Although the 2008-2009 data indicate that the Stretch program has a significant positive impact on all students, it is not possible to determine why students from the pilot phase completed the Stretch sequence. In other words, are the positive results for the Stretch program simply a result of the fact that more determined students make it a priority to complete the program, or is there something intrinsic to the Stretch program itself that helps students achieve these impressive results? In addition, many other uncontrollable variables have affected English 90 enrollments during the course of this study. For example, the university has raised its overall admissions standards and has ceased to be an open admissions institution. At the same time, a new community college—the first in the metropolitan area—began operation in spring 2009, and the success of our athletic program has dramatically changed the profile of the university within the State.

It is impossible to say whether or not all of these changes have had an impact on how Stretch students perform or on the concept of basic writing itself. Enrollment in English 90 has remained more or less stable, and the administration has not indicated that it's time for these courses to go away altogether. It is perhaps because basic writing is already so firmly marginalized that it has not come under attack. It could also be, of course, that the administration and even the athletic department understand that this course, non-credit-bearing though it is, contributes to students' success. Members of the coaching staff, for example, routinely communicate with basic writing faculty to make sure that the student athletes are performing well. If faculty report problems, the coaching staff work harder to support the student in his efforts; faculty are never pressured to make exceptions for athletes. What does remain consistent, though, is that students who complete the Stretch Program with the same instructor perform significantly better on most statistical measures than those students who do not complete Stretch with the same instructor and those students who begin the composition sequence in English 101. These positive results are further supported by assessment of Stretch student portfolios.

Portfolio Assessment

Assessment of student portfolios, in place since 1998, is an integral part of the first-year writing program. We collect portfolios from about 10% of all composition students—over 700 portfolios—every year. Although assessment methods and course outcomes have changed over the last ten years, the process for assessing the portfolios has remained more or less the

same. Every spring, after the semester ends, between ten and twenty faculty members gather for a two-day portfolio reading session. We evaluate the portfolios based on the outcomes that faculty use to develop their syllabi (see Appendix C). Once we have the portfolios in hand, we discuss what constitutes evidence that students have achieved the outcomes.

English 90 students, both before the Stretch Program was begun and since it has been in place, are consistently assessed as either proficient or highly proficient. For example, in 2001, 2003, and 2006, all of the English 90 portfolios were assessed as either proficient or highly proficient. In 2002 and 2009, over 88% of the portfolios were assessed as either proficient or highly proficient. There is no English 101 portfolio assessment of students who completed English 90 *before* they enrolled in English 101, so it isn't possible to measure the proficiency levels for these students.

In the summer of 2009, a separate, independent study was conducted in which 9 portfolios from the spring 2006 Stretch sections of English 101 were mixed with 21 randomly chosen Mainstream English 101 portfolios from fall, 2005. Readers were not told the purpose of the assessment, but were asked to assess the portfolios following the same guidelines that they used when they assessed portfolios drawn from the whole program. The two assessors, Mark and Melissa, are part-time faculty at Boise State. Both had participated in the general assessment in the spring of 2009, and so had significant, recent experience applying the assessment criteria to portfolios. In addition, both had been trained to teach in the Stretch program, and had already taught all or part of a Stretch sequence. Mark scored 5 of the 21 Mainstream English 101 portfolios as not proficient (24%); Melissa scored 6 of the Mainstream English 101 portfolios as not proficient (29%), both of which are reasonably close to the overall assessment of English 101 portfolios. Mark and Melissa rated the same 5 Mainstream English 101 portfolios as not proficient; Melissa rated one additional portfolio not proficient.

The results of the Stretch English101 portfolio assessment are much worse—until we consider the reasons *why* so many of the portfolios were rated not proficient. Of the 9 Stretch English 101 portfolios, both Mark and Melissa rated the same 6 as not proficient (67%), but their reasons are revealing. In the "comments" section of the assessment write-up, for example, Mark wrote of one Stretch English 101 portfolio that it "contained strong pieces of writing, but there is no reflective essay and no evidence of process." Mark specifically notes on 3 of the 6 not proficient portfolios that, overall, the writing was strong, and had the writer included a reflective cover letter that he would likely have marked the portfolio proficient. He notes on the

fourth not-proficient essay that the student has written "a good research essay that integrates source material and personal experience," suggesting that the lack of a cover letter, and not the writing itself, compelled Mark to rate that portfolio as not proficient. Melissa rated the same 6 portfolios not proficient, and for the same reasons. In the notes section of each of her rating sheets, Melissa writes that the lack of a cover letter is a major weakness of the portfolio since without it she couldn't assess the student's sense of his or her own revision strategies or ability to articulate rhetorical choices. In only two cases did she note an additional problem that might by itself have earned the portfolio a ranking of not proficient.

Why did so many of the Stretch portfolios not contain the reflective essays that Mark and Melissa were looking for? Since 2005-2006, the requirements for portfolio contents have been revised to require cover letters, and those cover letters must address (among other things) students' views of their own rhetorical choices. Many of the portfolios that Mark and Melissa assessed did not contain cover letters simply because they weren't required when the portfolios were created. If we account for the lack of cover letters, then, we can conclude that the writing in this small sample of the Stretch English 101 portfolios is comparable to the Mainstream English 101 portfolios. Furthermore, Mark's and Melissa's ratings were very nearly identical, which suggests a high degree of reliability. In addition, when I interviewed Mark and Melissa after the assessment process, I was able to determine, before I revealed to them the purpose of the assessment, that neither one of them had guessed that nearly one-third of the portfolios they were reading were from sections of Stretch English 101. Students who completed the Stretch sequence, then, achieved portfolio assessment results largely indistinguishable from students who enrolled in Mainstream English 101. The faculty hoped that this result would help persuade the department that English 90 students were indeed performing at the college level.

As of this writing, we are in the process of proposing, for the third time, that English 90 courses be for credit, and we intend to use the evidence that I have gathered and reported in this article. I anticipate that faculty will argue that this portfolio assessment only demonstrates that English 90 is doing the work it was designed to do: prepare students to be successful in English 101. I aim to make the case that students should be *encouraged* to take courses that increase their proficiency, GPA, and retention rates. The fact that these students create portfolios that echo the findings of the statistical analysis should make this argument airtight.

Reports from Student and Faculty Interviews

The positive statistical and portfolio results for those who complete Stretch with the same instructor are echoed in student and faculty interviews, which provide a compelling argument for the continuation and expansion of the Stretch program. The interviews overwhelmingly support the notion that the increased contact between students and faculty is one of the most productive features of Stretch. A returning student, Dan, noted that the Stretch program "was great . . . I think [Stretch] makes it a lot smoother to go from a high school transition or into a college level, or, like I said, being out of school for many years. . . . The thing I like about going from English 90 to 101 is that it takes a lot of the intimidation out. You don't feel like you have to be a word wizard, like you have to be a genius. . . . It does make the transition a lot easier, you don't feel so, oh boy I'm bewildered and intimidated." Both students and faculty get to know each other better than they would be able to in a one-semester class, and both report greater comfort, better learning and teaching, and higher overall satisfaction. The increased level of predictability—that is, students' ability to predict how their professors will react from one semester to the next—and faculty knowledge of student performance are the two areas of the Stretch experience noted by both students and faculty that offer the strongest argument for implementing a Stretch program.

Scholarship on the subject of student-faculty involvement demonstrates a convincing correlation between the enhanced student-faculty contact afforded by the Stretch program, retention rates, and GPA. In their study of 766 freshmen at Syracuse University, Ernest Pascarella and Patrick Terenzini built upon their own previous work and the work of other scholars who have demonstrated that a high level of student-faculty interaction is associated with student retention (Pascarella and Terenzini "Informal"; Pascarella and Terenzini "Patterns"; Terenzini and Pascarella "Predicting"). Pascarella and Terenzini refine the previous studies by examining "how different educational outcomes were associated with different types of student-faculty interactions" and controlling for "the potentially confounding influence of the characteristics which students bring to college" ("Informal" 184). The results of the study are worth quoting at length. Pascarella and Terenzini investigated:

> the relationship between student-faculty informal relationships and three freshman year educational outcomes [cumulative freshman

> year grade point average, a measure of self-perceived intellectual development . . . and a measure of self-perceived personal development]. After controlling for the influence of 14 student pre-enrollment characteristics, such as high school academic performance, academic aptitude, personality needs, and expectations of certain aspects of college, eight measures of the frequency and strength of student-faculty informal relationships accounted for statistically significant increases in the variance in freshman year academic performance and self-perceived intellectual and personal development. (183)

In other words, high levels of student-faculty engagement improved cumulative freshman year GPA and students' perception of their intellectual and personal growth, and these levels were unaffected by various factors in the students' background. The students at Boise State who completed Stretch with the same instructor, although their pre-enrollment characteristics were not assessed, demonstrated the same positive impact in their cumulative freshman year GPA. And, as noted above, these students also returned to school at a significantly higher rate. Pascarella and Terenzini continue:

> [T]he associations [between student-faculty informal relationships and educational outcome measures] are not totally explainable by the fact that the students whose initial intellectual abilities and personal dispositions lead them to seek actively non-classroom interaction with faculty, also tend to achieve at the highest levels academically and to benefit the most from college intellectually and personally. *Rather, it would appear from the present findings that the frequency and strength of student-faculty informal relationships may make a significant contribution to variations in extrinsic and intrinsic freshman year educational outcomes, independent of the particular aptitudes, personality dispositions, and expectations which the student brings to college.* (188, emphasis added)

Pascarella and Terenzini's study argues that the informal interaction influences students' academic performance and achievement without regard to student proclivities. In other words, the high level of student-faculty interaction positively influences students both academically and in terms of student persistence (retention) even for students who, according to their academic histories, are unlikely to seek out that kind of interaction. The benefits of

student-faculty interaction are not based entirely on student proclivity; it is to some extent the interaction itself that produces the beneficial effects. The results reported by Pascarella and Terenzini indicate that the outcomes experienced by Boise State Stretch students are not due to their already-existing abilities as students, but rather, at least in part, to the increased faculty-student interaction offered by the Stretch program.

Other scholarship in this area argues that increased student-faculty interaction has further positive implications. As Jean Endo and Richard Harpel note, "Beyond the opportunity it provides for students to obtain academically related information, increased student-faculty interaction has been shown to have a broader impact on students' general ways of thinking, methods of problem solving, and interest in various life goals. Increasing interaction is also one way in which institutions, in an era of shrinking resources and declining student demand, might increase student satisfaction with specific programs. . ." (116). Our experience with the Stretch program suggests that with increased student-faculty contact, Stretch English 90 students in some areas—including average GPAs, retention rates, and overall satisfaction—out-perform students who begin their college careers in Mainstream English 90 and 101. These results encouraged faculty as we assessed how well we were using student fees, and as we looked to build our argument for creating a credit-bearing course for these students.

THE QUESTION OF CREDIT

Our experiences at Boise State demonstrate that the Stretch program, as Glau documented at Arizona State, is a powerful pedagogical tool. The faculty benefit from the second semester of work with the same students because they have more time to understand and respond to individual student needs. Students appear to benefit from the increased contact with the faculty both as writers and as students—the Stretch program significantly increases the likelihood that students will be registered at our institution the year following their completion of Stretch. The Stretch program also appears to have a positive impact on student GPA, and a blind portfolio assessment reveals that Stretch students are producing writing in the same range of proficiency as their mainstream counterparts. Both students and faculty report a very high level of satisfaction with the course, and the program itself is relatively simple to put in place through scheduling. However, in spite of these achievements, the department and college have consistently refused

to acknowledge that the Stretch program is worthy of recognition through catalog listing, which would help inform students and the public about our programs, or through granting English 90, in any form, credit-bearing status. Our arguments that these students are indeed working with language at levels that are significantly higher than students in other credit-bearing courses have thus far fallen on deaf ears.

The impact of the no-credit status is significant. As Judith Rodby points out, faced with a course's no-credit status, "student doubt persists—what's this for? If it were really worthwhile, it'd be worth something. So is it a trick?" (110). Closer to home, Katie White conducted a study of basic writers at Boise State that involved, in part, her participation as an intern in a Stretch section of English 90. As an intern, she attended every class and occasionally met with students outside class. She observed:

> Students' concern with the no-credit status of the class verbally manifested throughout the course. Grumbling amongst themselves, the students made snide comments referencing the class as a "waste of time" and told stories of how they had tried to enroll in E101 . . . and had been denied. As the semester wore on, I began to notice a surprising thread of discussion in which the students constantly questioned if what they were doing and learning was going to be required in E101. They completed their writing assignments, always looking toward the next semester—when their work would count. (3)

White also distributed a survey to 217 students in the fall semester of 2007 in order to measure, among other things, the impact of basic writing's no-credit status on their impression of the course. The majority of students surveyed (143, or 66%) were not negatively influenced by the no-credit status of the course, but a significant minority (63, or 29%) *did* have a negative view of the course because of its no-credit status. These students resented the amount of work in basic writing (an amount equivalent to the other courses in the composition sequence) because it bore no immediate rewards. On the surveys, students commented that they "should focus on [their] main classes because they count more." They also questioned, "Why should we do the same amount of work for no reward in the end?" Finally, they argued, "It doesn't make sense to do all this work for nothing!" (45). Even the fact that, as White discovered in her survey of basic writing students at Boise State, 43.78% of students *chose* to take basic writing in order to increase their confidence

before entering English 101 has had little impact on the perception of English 90 by faculty outside of Composition (95). As we continue to try to change the status of English 90 by gathering data on student achievement, perhaps the data that many students demonstrate significant initiative by enrolling in this course will resonate differently with faculty.

In describing revisions to a basic writing program at California State University, Chico, Rodby addresses the problem of how basic writing is conceived, noting that she and her team "mainstreamed [their] students, and while [they] were doing so [they] found that the term 'basic writing' (or developmental or remedial writing) blocked [their] ability to produce wide-ranging and long-term changes in the ways in which [they] were able to conceive and give credit for writing instruction" (107). Rodby mainstreamed basic writing students not because of a reduced commitment to them, but rather because she "began to see that [the terms basic writing and remediation] were primarily institutional 'slots,' interchangeable terms for what the institution saw as one monolithic problem, and as a monolith, the category would not budge" (108). Rodby writes, "it did not matter whether we thought of and called the program remedial or basic or developmental writing. It did not finally even matter how relevant, insightful, or provocative our curriculum was," and goes on to describe the puzzling, somewhat circular arguments she received from faculty and administration when she argued that these courses should be for credit (108).

Answering her own question of why "is/was there this insistence on no-credit writing courses," a question that the Composition faculty at Boise State has asked repeatedly, Rodby provides "nostalgia" as the answer, and defines nostalgia as "an array of effects that disguise the economic relations and institutional functions served by basic writing. In this atmosphere, the multifarious contexts of real basic writing programs are reduced to a unidimensional picture of student lack, a disturbingly sad portrait of students who didn't learn *something basic* that they should have before they came *here*" (108, 109).

Rodby's use of the term nostalgia and its conceptual application to basic writing programs is far more complex than what I present here, but this aspect of nostalgia—that faculty outside basic writing programs tend to see basic writers as a unified group of students who are all similar in that they represent lack, and in so doing allow for the rest of the students at the university to inhabit a space of wholeness—is expressed in the arguments that we at Boise State have received in our repeated attempts to gain credit-bearing status for this course. The Composition faculty is, of course, pleased with the

results of the Stretch program, and grateful to be able to manage it on this small scale. As I note above, we intend to continue to work toward creating a credit-bearing basic writing course that will be more firmly institutionalized than it is in its current form. Academic institutions, however, do not move quickly. Our attempts to change the status of English 90, and even the creation of the Stretch program, have taken place over years. Once we have persuaded the faculty to make these changes, we still face challenges at the College, University, and State levels. Much in our institutions still depends on a fantasy of lack and the institution's apparent reliance on this marked category of other in contrast to which it can define itself as complete. Eric Clarke, analyzing heteronormativity and citing Raymond Williams, calls this kind of system—characterized by a privileged, entitled insider paired with a disempowered outsider—a " 'structure of feeling,' one that aims to produce an entitled coherence" (6). It is this structure of feeling about entitled insiders and excluded outsiders that we confront when we discuss the needs of basic writers and basic writing programs. In significant ways, we may not be able to change this structure of feeling. Much of contemporary culture relies on this insider/outsider divide. Over time, however, we can create institutional structures such as credit-bearing courses that neutralize the outsider status of basic writers while we take care not to create new categories of the abject.

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Notes

1. Between 2002 and 2004, 85% of English 90 students earned a grade of C or better in English 101; 82% of students who enrolled directly in English 101 earned a grade of C or better.
2. Since the course numbers are (confusingly) the same for both Stretch and Mainstream English 90 and English 101, I refer in this article to Stretch English 90 and Stretch English 101 to indicate Stretch designated classes, and Mainstream English 90 and Mainstream English 101 to indicate classes that did not carry a Stretch designation.

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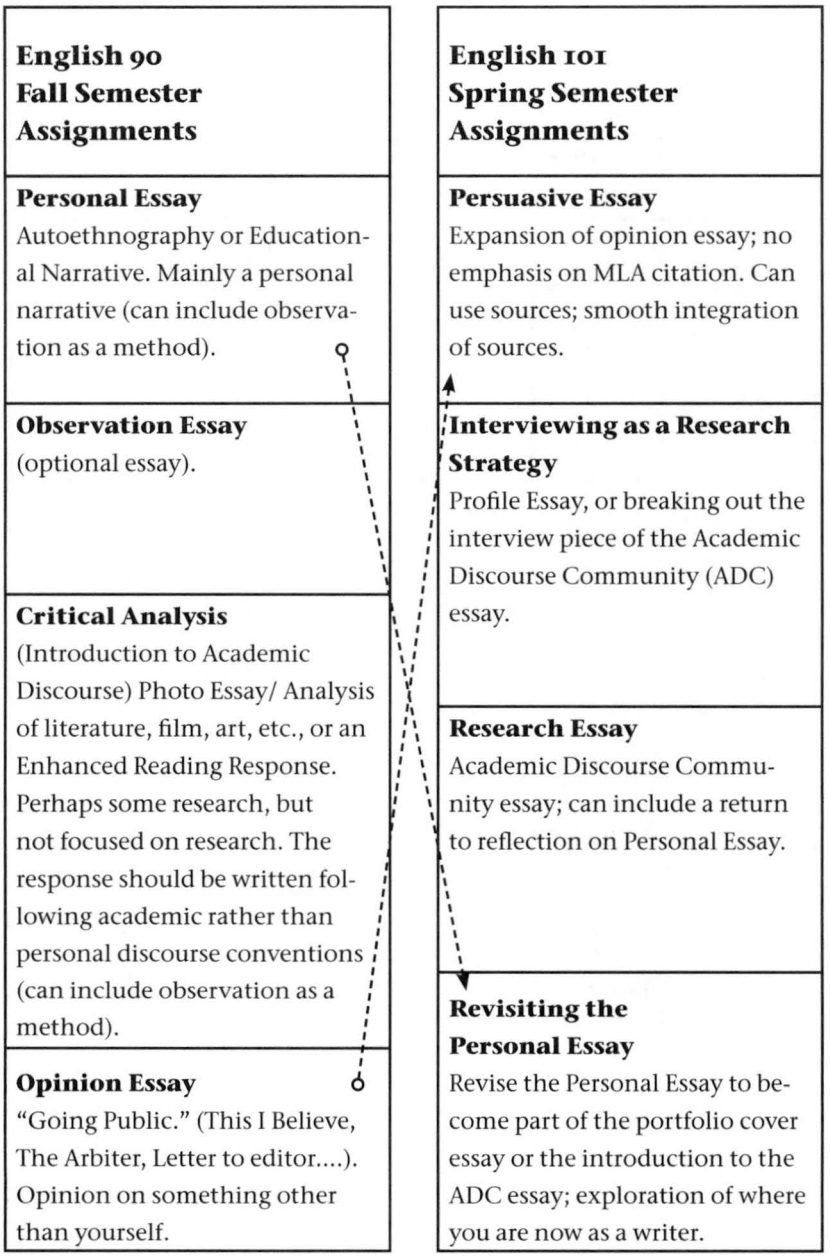
Appendix A


English 90
Fall Semester
Assignments
Personal Essay
Autoethnography or Educational Narrative. Mainly a personal narrative (can include observation as a method).
Observation Essay
(optional essay).
Critical Analysis
(Introduction to Academic Discourse) Photo Essay/ Analysis of literature, film, art, etc., or an Enhanced Reading Response. Perhaps some research, but not focused on research. The response should be written following academic rather than personal discourse conventions (can include observation as a method).
Opinion Essay
"Going Public." (This I Believe, The Arbiter, Letter to editor....). Opinion on something other than yourself.
English 101
Spring Semester
Assignments
Persuasive Essay
Expansion of opinion essay; no emphasis on MLA citation. Can use sources; smooth integration of sources.
Interviewing as a Research Strategy
Profile Essay, or breaking out the interview piece of the Academic Discourse Community (ADC) essay.
Research Essay
Academic Discourse Community essay; can include a return to reflection on Personal Essay.
Revisiting the Personal Essay
Revise the Personal Essay to become part of the portfolio cover essay or the introduction to the ADC essay; exploration of where you are now as a writer.

Appendix B

Stretch Program Pilot Phase, 2005-2007 (percentages based on English 101 enrollments)					
	Enrolled Fall 2005 and 2006	**English 101** Enrolled	Completed	**English 102** Enrolled	Completed
Stretch English 90	120	120 (100%)	103 (86%)	71 (59%)	59 (49%)
Mainstream English 90	328	228 (79%)	198 (87%)	117 (51%)	95 (42%)
Mainstream English 101		3127 (100%)	2591 (83%)	2219 (71%)	1856 (59%)
English 90, Stretch and Mainstream	448	348 (78%)	301 (86%)	118 (54%)	154 (44%)

Stretch Program for All English 90 Students, 2008-2009 (percentages based on English 101 enrollments)					
	Enrolled Fall 2008	**English 101** Enrolled	Completed	**English 102** Enrolled	Completed
Stretch English 90	262	152 (58%)	139 (89%)	117 (77%)	Not Available
Mainstream English 101		2025 (100%)	1729 (85%)	1313 (65%)	Not Available

Appendix C

Course Outcomes
By the end of English 90, students will be able to a) have confidence in themselves as writers and readers within a college environment; b) engage in a multi-faceted process of writing, that includes invention, development, organization, feedback, revision, and editing/proofreading; c) be willing to use multiple strategies to view, revise, and edit their evolving written texts over time, moving from writer- to reader-based prose; d) produce writing that has a beginning, middle, and end developed with relevant details and examples; e) produce writing in a format appropriate to its purpose; f) read actively and critically and engage in a dialogue with a text; g) edit their work for mechanical errors to the extent that, while perhaps not "perfect," surface features of the language do not interfere with communication.
By the end of English 101, students will be able to a) apply strategies for generating ideas for writing, for planning and organizing material, for identifying purpose and audience, and for revising intentionally b) produce writing in non-fiction, inquiry-based genres appropriate to the subject, context, purpose, and audience; c) integrate evidence gathered from experience, reading, observations, and/or other forms of research into their own writing in a way that begins to complicate their own understanding; d) use a variety of strategies for reading and engaging with a range of material; e) use an academic documentation style, even though they may not show mastery. f) revise to extend their thinking about a topic, not just to rearrange material or "fix" mechanical errors; g) articulate the rhetorical choices they have made, illustrating their awareness of a writer's relationship to the subject, context, purpose, and audience; h) provide appropriate, engaged feedback to peers throughout the writing process; i) produce prose without surface-level convention errors that distract readers from attending to the meaning and purpose of the writing. ("First-Year Writing Program").

Beyond the Budget: Sustainability and Writing Studios

Chris Warnick, Emily Cooney, and Samuel Lackey

ABSTRACT: This essay discusses our failed attempts at the College of Charleston to sustain a Writing Studio course. Specifically, we explain how the failure of our Studio course revealed underlying problems in the department concerning the formation of writing program policy, the role of adjunct faculty, the oversight of our first-year writing curriculum, and the program's coordination with other stakeholders on campus. We contend that our experience can inform programs elsewhere because it shows, on a larger level, how Studio courses reveal potentially damaging tensions within a department or program. We conclude the article by identifying areas of our broader writing program in need of repair and explaining our vision for a new and improved Studio program that incorporates elements of supplemental instruction.

KEYWORDS: basic writing; writing studio; sustainability; writing instruction; program description

Sustainability is an issue that is frequently mentioned in the scholarship on Writing Studios. Rhonda Grego and Nancy Thompson, whose work has laid the foundation for other Studio programs and courses across the country, write convincingly of the benefits Studio programs offer, but they simultaneously worry that "Studio may not be tolerated too long in any particular institutional space/place because it transgresses into those details... that do not make for neat assessments or happy-ending stories of student (or program or faculty) successes, that do not fit the expectations, tolerances, or timeframes that the academy or a particularly institutional site may have for either research or program administration" (*Teaching/Writing* 219; "Repositioning"; "Writing Studio"). John Paul Tassoni and Cynthia Lewiecki-Wilson, in discussing their efforts to implement a Studio program at Miami Middletown, argue that sustaining a program takes "flexibility, and improvisation, tolerance, and some complicity with 'norms' and values one may wish to contest" (88). While these comments about the precarious institutional

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status of Studio programs and the need to be adaptable are instructive when it comes to running (or even growing) a program, the existing scholarship on Studios hasn't yet thoroughly addressed the issue of sustainability.

Some would contend that Studio programs, unlike more formalized first-year writing programs, are best thought of as contingent, temporary, and readily adaptable, and therefore present a different set of concerns when it comes to addressing their sustainability or make the question of sustainability irrelevant. We agree that one of the advantages Studio programs offer is their mutability, and we likewise agree that Studio programs confront different challenges than those faced by more formalized writing programs, but we believe the issue of their sustainability is vital because the provisional nature of Studio programs makes them easy targets for budget cuts, especially in the current economic climate.

The following essay, therefore, attempts to fill this gap in the scholarship by discussing, from different perspectives, our failed attempts at the College of Charleston to sustain a Writing Studio program. (Chris, an Assistant Professor specializing in composition and rhetoric, administered the program; Emily and Samuel at the time were M.A. students whose training was primarily in literature.) We believe our story has important implications for our own institution and for Studio theory. On a local level, our Studio program revealed fault lines within the broader institutional culture that show us our department, despite significantly revising its first-year writing course, has not made as much progress as we thought it had toward building a coherent writing program. Specifically, the cancellation of the Studio program revealed a broken committee structure that diminishes the role composition experts have in the formation of department policy concerning writing; disenfranchised adjunct faculty who understandably do not see themselves as having a stake in the program; a nebulous writing "curriculum" that more closely resembles a collection of autonomous courses that in reality aren't required to address the larger goals of the program; and a first-year writing program that fails to coordinate with other stakeholders on campus. These tensions, which we imagine are all too familiar to compositionists in other departments and programs, were much more damaging to the long-term health of the program than the budget.

In terms of Studio theory, our experience confirms the idea that Studio programs are sites of institutional change because the dismantling of our Studio program has shown us which aspects of the broader writing program are in need of repair. However, our failure has prompted us to consider how the small workshop model of Studio that Grego and Thompson and Tassoni

and Lewiecki-Wilson describe might be adapted to also include supplemental instruction pedagogies. We conclude the essay by discussing our ideas for an improved Studio program that incorporates elements of supplemental instruction—including large-group workshops led by trained faculty, podcasts that present students' views on academic writing, and public lectures where faculty present their views on the writing process and invite students to reflect on their processes as writers.

The Studio Concept

Broadly defined, Writing Studios are spaces located outside the classroom, but within the larger institution, where students work with instructors to address both practical writing concerns and what Grego and Thompson call the "metarhetorical aspects of student writing" (*Teaching/Writing* 88). That is, one of the larger goals of Studio pedagogy is to create a "learning space rather than a teaching one" (Gresham and Yancey 15) where students and instructors together investigate the context within which students write and how that context both shapes and can be shaped by students' writing. Described in more practical terms, a typical Studio session involves a small group of students, with the assistance of a facilitator, sharing feedback on one another's writing and exchanging ideas on how to address the concerns they face as writers—whether it's tackling sentence-level errors or interpreting an instructor's comments. While students' writing is central to the conversation that happens in a Studio session, just as important are the materials and attitudes that inform students' writing; thus, students are asked to bring to their sessions not only copies of their rough drafts but also assignment sheets, rubrics, outlines, brainstorming notes, course readings, class handouts, and papers with teachers' comments. Facilitators prompt students to explain their understanding of these materials and to discuss any challenges they face interpreting them. For example, a student might use a particular week's Studio session to discuss the comments she received on a recent paper; the facilitator and other students might help this student process the instructor's feedback and offer suggestions for how the student might address any questions they have about the instructor's response.

The dialogue that occurs in Studio is designed to be mutually beneficial to students and instructors. From listening to students discuss the broader context of their writing, Studio faculty gain a richer understanding of the context they provide (and fail to provide) students in their own classrooms. Tassoni and Lewiecki-Wilson describe this process when mentioning how

they changed their own commenting practices after facilitating Studio sessions and learning the problems students faced interpreting teachers' written comments: "After one semester teaching Studio classes, Cindy...started using tape-recorded responses, changing a twenty-year practice of written commentary. And while John still writes comments on student papers, he now follows each marking session with a one-to-one conference to explain further and negotiate with students the significance of his comments in relation to each assignment" (90).

We were attracted to the Studio concept because of its investment in context, collaboration, and reflection, values we believed informed only a fraction of our first-year writing courses. However, we found that the small-group workshop model of Studio that Grego and Thompson and Tassoni and Lewiecki-Wilson describe was among the factors that limited our ability to reach both faculty and students. Designing the program around weekly small-group workshops prevented regular classroom faculty, who were already teaching three classes per semester, from participating in the program other than recommending students. Low enrollments in the program (we typically served around 2% of all first-year writing students) made it difficult for us to guarantee that all sections of the Studio course would have more than one student. Students expressed less interest in small-group workshops, with many commenting on end-of-the-semester surveys that they would have preferred individual assistance. Eventually, the workshop approach our Studio course was centered on became redundant once the department instituted a new four-hour first-year writing course, which led most writing faculty to use this extra instructional hour for small-group workshops of their own. We contend that any new Studio program at the College should be embedded in this writing course and, in addition to offering workshops, draw from supplemental instruction pedagogies.

The Beginning and End of Writer's Group

Part of what motivates Grego and Thompson's interest in Studio is making the knowledge of composition more institutionally visible. They recognize that undergraduate majors and doctoral programs in composition and rhetoric are means toward this end, but they're aware these choices aren't available to compositionists who work in smaller schools with few, if any, graduate students or faculty trained in composition. Studio programs, they suggest, can be one way to elevate the status of composition at such schools "Where there may not even be infrastructures for writing program

administration" (*Teaching/Writing* 65). This last phrase aptly describes our situation in the English department at the College of Charleston, a public M.A.-granting liberal arts college. Located in a historic downtown and made up in part of restored antebellum homes and buildings, from the outside the College appears to be a quaint southern liberal arts college. The school, however, enrolls roughly 10,000 undergraduates, and, with the growth of programs in Management and Entrepreneurship, Hospitality and Tourism Management, and Discovery Informatics, the liberal arts no longer play as central a role in the curriculum as they once did. Of the roughly 35 faculty who make up the English department, including non-tenure-stream faculty, only four professionally specialize in composition and rhetoric—and of these four only one has tenure. Other than a First-Year Writing Committee, which recommends (but does not enforce) policies related to first-year writing courses and designs voluntary faculty development meetings, the department has no formalized writing program and no writing program administrator. While the department has discussed the possibility of creating a writing program with an administrator who has authority, it is fair to say this goal is at least several years away.

After the state's Commission on Higher Education in 1990 decided that for-credit basic writing courses could only be offered in the state's technical colleges, the department created a Studio course called Writer's Group to mainstream students who previously might have been placed into basic writing. Departmental records for Writer's Group date back only to 2000, and one of the program's directors is no longer at the College, so a complete picture of the program's beginnings does not exist. According to department lore, however, Writer's Group was explicitly based on the Studio model developed by Grego and Thompson at the University of South Carolina, although it differed in significant ways. For instance, we have been told by faculty more familiar with the program's early history that there were no formal procedures for placing students in Writer's Group. Once the basic writing course was abolished, incoming students were no longer required to take a writing placement test. Instructors for English 101 and 102, the two courses that constituted the College's first-year writing requirement at the time, were told to recommend students to Writer's Group whose papers displayed significant errors in sentence construction and paragraphing, thus making the program a space for remediation.

By the time Chris was asked to direct the program in 2007, Writer's Group was no longer strictly thought of as a mainstreaming program, in part because the perception within the department was that the College,

which had raised admission standards, was now admitting better-prepared writers. Any student in 101 or 102 was eligible to take Writer's Group, which was offered each Fall semester. Most of the students we worked with signed up for the program because their 101 or 102 instructors identified significant problems with sentence construction, paragraphing, or organization in the students' initial class writings and recommended they take the course to address these issues. Each semester, though, we would also get a handful of students who signed up for the program on their own. More often than not, these students, based on our observations of their writing, seemed to have fewer problems acclimating to academic discourse. They signed up for Writer's Group, they told us, because they lacked confidence in their writing, were worried about making the transition to college, wanted to maintain a high grade, or simply wished to talk over their work with someone before handing it in. In the two years Chris directed Writer's Group, it averaged thirty students a semester, about 2% of all first-year writing students.

Keeping in mind the College's skepticism of basic writing and composition, and influenced by Studio theory, Chris approached Writer's Group as a place that "basic writers [and all beginning academic writers] can call their own in an environment that has often been traditionally dismissive of, and sometimes even hostile, to their presence" (Rigolino and Freel 60). Students would meet once a week in small groups, at times of their own choosing, to work on brainstorming, drafting, editing, and revising individual papers. But facilitators also prompted students to bring in and discuss assignments, course readings, teachers' comments, and other materials, teasing out the course's underlying assumptions about writing and examining where these assumptions came into conflict with their own attitudes and practices.

Chris also wanted Writer's Group to better serve the department's graduate students, who have limited teaching opportunities. Because of its mission as a student-centered liberal arts institution, the College does not allow master's candidates to teach undergraduate courses, although they can serve as interns who assist individual faculty. Graduate students do not typically work in the College's Writing Lab, which is staffed by undergraduate peer tutors. The Writing Lab director is a member of the graduate faculty in English and serves as an *ex-officio* member of the department's First-Year Writing Committee; beyond this, though, there is little formal coordination between the writing program and the Writing Lab, due in part to the Writing Lab being housed within the College's Center for Student Learning. So when Chris discussed his plans for Writer's Group with the previous chair and others in the department, he more than once got the

impression that one of the main reasons the program continued to exist was because, apart from teaching internships, it was the only mechanism the department had for providing graduate students with at least some pedagogical training. Nevertheless, Chris hoped that the metarhetorical learning that can potentially occur in Studio would be beneficial to the department's graduate students as well, many of whom go on to teach basic writing courses at the local technical college. A Studio program, as he imagined it, could offer graduate students the hands-on and theoretical experiences they could use to become thoughtful teachers who understand, and hold themselves responsible to, the larger curricular, institutional, and disciplinary environments within which they practice, avoiding what Graff has called "courseocentrism," the tendency among faculty to think only of their individual courses and not how these courses fit into the larger curriculum ("Why Assessment?" 157).

Writer's Group enjoyed some successes despite its context. Faculty who recommended students to Writer's Group reported being satisfied with the program. Students consistently gave positive feedback on the program in end-of-the-semester surveys, with most students reporting either "moderate" or "great" improvement in their writing as a result of attending Writer's Group. One comment students made repeatedly was that Writer's Group should be offered in the spring semester; some students recommended the program link up with other courses in the curriculum. The most thrilling feedback for us were those rare comments where students seemed to glimpse the program's larger goal of getting them to grow as writers aware of their purposes and contexts. For example, one student wrote, "In the writing lab, they just help for the spelling but in writer's group they actually try to help for understanding what we want to do, enlarge that to other classes." Although we questioned this student's characterization of their Writing Lab session, we were happy to see that the program encouraged her to examine her purposes in writing.

That being said, the program encountered a number a problems, enrollment and attendance being chief among them. Enrollment peaked in 2000, when 63 students signed up, but this number dropped precipitously, with only 14 students registering in 2006. Fewer faculty recommended the program, which can partially be explained by the perception within the department that incoming students were better prepared. Because students did not earn letter grades for the course, attendance was a constant issue. In their dialogue sheets, graduate assistants frequently voiced their frustrations with students who were late or who missed a scheduled session, and these

attendance problems suggested to us that students were not fully behind the small-group method on which the program was built. To address these problems, we opened up Writer's Group to all undergraduates taking 101 and 102, which we hoped would both raise enrollment while also creating an environment where writers with a wider range of experiences and abilities could learn from one another. Enrollment did rise slightly, but for reasons we will discuss later in the essay, the collaborative environment we sought to create didn't materialize. Along with changing the audience, we proposed that students be assigned letter grades for Writer's Group, but our department chair at the time denied this request. He contended that letter grades would make students think twice about signing up for the course, a concern we shared. We answered that letter grades would suggest to both students and faculty that Writer's Group was an integral part of our first-year writing curriculum, but he remained unconvinced, and we were unable to bring the proposal before the entire department.

With the budget crisis, pressure from the administration to cut the number of adjunct faculty, and a concern among some in the department that the existing curriculum focused more on literary appreciation than academic writing, the department's First-Year Writing Committee proposed and passed revisions to the College's writing requirement in 2009. Informed by research on transfer by Carroll, Fishman and Reiff, Wardle, and others, the Committee proposed replacing our two-semester, six-credit, literature-based requirement with one four-hour course, English 110: Introduction to Academic Writing. Department faculty felt that the addition of an extra instructional hour to the required course, which instructors could use to conference with small groups of students, would make Writer's Group a less attractive option for students. Therefore, the program was canceled and replaced with a different program, 110 Supplemental Instruction, which Chris directed, that offered monthly large-class writing workshops, designed and staffed by graduate students, open to all English 110 students. Students either attended these workshops to earn extra credit or to fulfill a course requirement.

The public workshops offered by Supplemental Instruction covered topics ranging from brainstorming to plagiarism to revision, and at times recreated the kind of "interactional inquiry" we sought to foster in Writer's Group. For example, during the opening of each workshop, facilitators encouraged students to talk about how the focus of that day's workshop, whether it was brainstorming or revision, had been treated in their individual classes. These activities prompted students to talk openly about the

differences they noticed between the writing course they were taking and others. In a workshop on integrating quotes, for instance, a group of students asked about how the workshop could help them write about photographs, which they were being asked to do in an upcoming paper. Several students joined the conversation by saying they wished their 110 courses dealt with visual texts instead of asking them to engage solely with academic essays, and they wondered aloud why each section of 110 had a different theme or approach. Facilitators asked students if they would find it helpful for 110 courses to have at least some shared readings or assignments. Several students expressed interest in this because, as they said, having more common texts or assignments would allow them to better discuss their writing with roommates or friends taking a different section of the course. Discussions such as this one led Chris to believe that many students, at least for those fifty minutes, gained a richer understanding of the metarhetorical situation they faced in their first-year writing courses.

However, these discussions were also bittersweet because they reminded Chris of how far the department had to go in terms of creating a coherent curriculum. Some of this incoherence could be attributed to the rapid changes we made to the first-year writing course, but just as significant was the attitude in the department that tenured and tenure-stream writing faculty can ignore the policy recommendations of the First-Year Writing Committee. Just two months before the Supplemental Instruction workshop on integrating quotes, the department voted down the committee's proposal to adopt a guide to English 110 that would allow for the kind of shared materials some students at the workshop said they wanted. Some faculty claimed the ten-dollar cost of the guide was an undue hardship on students while others said they simply would not adopt the text, even if it were required. The department's refusal to adopt a custom guide proved to be ironic as the Supplemental Instructional program, which could have received funding through the sale of a custom guide, was cancelled after only one year because the department chair could no longer secure reassignment time for Chris.

In the sections that follow, we examine more fully the three most important factors we believe compromised the sustainability of Writer's Group and, echoing Fulwiler and Young's work on WAC programs, are the "enemies" of sustainable Studio programs elsewhere: a lack of buy-in from undergraduates, a lack of support from faculty, and an inadequate administrative infrastructure.

Student Buy-In

While Writer's Group made facilitators aware of the institutional forces at play in their teaching, the program was largely unsuccessful in getting undergraduates to discuss their writing in a similar way. We were unable to articulate to students the program's larger goal of encouraging them to explore what Grego and Thompson call the "intersectional quality of student writing," the idea that student writing is part of a larger institutional dialogue in which everyone—students, faculty and administrators—have a stake ("Repositioning" 78). We were aware that students would initially approach Writer's Group like a writing lab where they could get individual advice on how to quickly fix surface-level issues in their papers. And to some extent, we mistakenly created this impression of the program in our emails to faculty asking them to recommend students based on their performance on a diagnostic assignment. However, we hoped that by collaboratively examining one another's drafts, along with assignment sheets and any other related materials, students would gradually become aware of and begin to question the institutional forces that shaped their writing. Grego and Thompson describe the collaborative atmosphere we sought to create this way:

> Initially we intended that each student would bring a rough draft of his or her current 101 assignment with photocopies for each group member; we have since realized that students benefit in other equally important ways from discussing the wider range of possible texts that they ended up actually bringing: initial freewriting and other invention activity notes, writing assignment sheets from their classes, drafts or papers with teacher and/or peer comments, graded papers, revisions, even research materials. ("Repositioning" 75)

Students brought with them to their sessions these and other types of materials. Despite the fact that facilitators prompted students to talk through these materials with one another, Writer's Group sections rarely achieved the round-table quality Grego and Thompson describe. We offered roughly twenty sections of Writer's Group each semester, which turned out to be an overestimate because some sessions had only one student. In those sessions where there were two or more students, it wasn't unusual for students to become less engaged when it came time to discuss another student's material.

Emily's biggest section contained three students who approached Writer's Group as their own personal, weekly writing lab. Each was there to garner help from a graduate student on their individual essays and none seemed interested in further exploring their styles or the writing process. Still fresh from the facilitator training, Emily pushed the students hard in the first couple of meetings to share their assignments with the group and any writing they had already done. The result was that the meetings were awkward and often silent as she tried to facilitate discussions and was met with requests to look at a teacher's comment. Addressing the comments instructors leave on student writing is, of course, useful. And Emily was more than willing to help students decipher and tackle any comments made. However, she found that when students came to the group meetings armed with notions of one-on-one tutoring and an essay complete with instructors' remarks, they were unwavering in their demand for that personal attention and did not see the benefits of sharing with the other students. As a result, Emily reorganized her own goals for the section and commenced going around the table and spending time with each student, individually, every week.

One student Emily worked with in this section, Leah, brought in technically sound essays that lacked a sense of her style as a writer. Leah was enrolled in a service-learning course and her writing assignments were based around the volunteer work she had chosen. Quite often Leah would bring her essays to her professor for comments before she came to her session with Emily, and therefore her requests were almost always limited to attending to the comments the professor had made. Again, heeding remarks made by the professor is certainly important, but it left no time for anything else. Emily noticed that Leah, whose essays were supposed to build from one to the next as she spent more time volunteering, had issues revising her later essays. Leah took entire paragraphs from earlier writing and copied them into later essays rather than rework them. Emily was never able to convince her that the goal of the course was for her writing to mature as her knowledge of working in a new environment increased and as she conducted more research in her field of interest.

There was very little technically wrong with Leah's essays, despite the fact that initially she was not earning the marks she wanted, which made it nearly impossible for Emily to convince her that she should reevaluate her pieces and think about style or voice. The instructor focused comments on Leah's issues with transition statements and her repetition of certain key words. Interestingly, there were also sometimes comments about the robotic nature of Leah's essays, but she always managed to brush those aside

and focus on the issues more easily fixed. She once told Emily that she had always been a good student in English classes, writing exactly as she wrote in the essays she brought to Writer's Group, so she did not understand why her grades were not the same. It is important to note that her grades were not bad, just less than she was used to receiving. It is also important to note that fixing the transition statements and using a thesaurus did improve her grades considerably, which was another reason Emily's suggestions for extra work on her writing were likely not taken. In the end, Emily helped Leah continue to make good grades by addressing teacher feedback and practicing transitions, but she felt she had failed to help Leah become a better writer.

Another student in this section, Amanda, would come in either when she had a final draft due or after she had received a grade on a final draft and wanted help with surface errors and organization. As opposed to Leah, who had always received good marks in English, Amanda admitted she had never been a "good" writer. Amanda's writing course was part of a learning community that tied together composition and psychology. She faced a completely different set of problems from Leah. Her essays for psychology were graded harshly for grammar mistakes and her essays for composition were graded harshly for her troubles analyzing an assigned reading and constructing a thesis with well-supported arguments. Together Emily and Amanda would explicate each essay Amanda brought with her and practice rewriting sentences that had been marked as grammatically incorrect. Emily also worked with Amanda on developing a thesis and soon discovered that although her essays lacked a central point, Amanda almost always had a clear idea of what she wanted to say. She also happened to be pretty good at transition statements and she certainly had no shortage of ideas she wanted to share in her essays.

Amanda and Leah's desire for writing lab-style assistance contrasts very distinctly with the third student in Emily's section, Mario, an ESL student who came to Writer's Group for intensive work on his English abilities in general and his writing specifically. Whereas the other students expressed confidence, at the very least, in their abilities with English as a language, Mario did not have that luxury. His grammar and structure inhibited a reader from being able to understand his essays enough to notice his skill with self-reflection and his connections with the assigned reading material. In his connections to the material, Mario had similar abilities to Amanda who also strongly expressed her opinions but had difficulty expressing them coherently in an essay form. Mario and Emily therefore had supremely difficult tasks each week. Luckily for them both, they received a good deal of feedback

from Mario's professor both in the form of essay comments and via email. Emily also had some experience teaching ESL students, something Mario's professor was missing, so she was able to garner meaning from sentences and paragraphs that seemed incomprehensible to his instructor. Together they practiced drafting and redrafting his work, focusing on prepositions and quote integration. Very often they ended up meeting after their sessions were complete to continue working on Mario's essays.

Emily's sessions with Leah, Amanda, and Mario were not all they could have been, though, because the group never became a truly functioning writing group. As Beverly Moss, Nels Highberg, and Melissa Nicolas explain in their edited collection on school-based and public writing groups: "Ideally, writing groups enable writers to make decisions about their personal texts with the supportive influence of readers/writers who are like-minded in their views of what it means to belong to and participate in a community of writers but who represent a diversity of perspectives, experiences, and opinions as readers and writers" (3). Emily believed that the students could have drawn on their different experiences and areas of expertise to learn from one another. For example, she believed Leah and Amanda could have benefited immensely from each other and from shared practice with Emily. Leah could have seen how Amanda developed fresh ways of looking at a subject and her techniques for transitioning between paragraphs. Amanda could have seen examples of clear thesis statements and well-structured essays. Mario could have benefited from Leah's skill with structure and thesis development while offering Leah and Amanda his interesting perspective on English texts. More than once Emily wanted the three students to comment on each other's drafts so that Leah, the technically strong student, could help the other two, and Mario, the student with the most developed sense of voice, could offer his opinions on the essays produced by the others. Alas, it seemed that there was never enough time.

During the course of their semester together, time became the go-to enemy of Emily and her three students. One survey response recommended, "I think it should be a little longer than 50 minutes. It's hard to get through a whole paper with 2 other people to focus on in only 50 minutes." Chris, Emily, and Samuel, along with other facilitators, discussed the possibility of increasing sessions to 75 minutes but ultimately decided against this, at least for the time being, because we felt time was not the real problem. Not being on the same page with students as to their goals in Writer's Group was what prohibited us from really getting somewhere in terms of improving student writing. Rather than adding time, the meetings with Amanda,

Leah, and Mario would have been vastly improved if they had approached Writer's Group in the same way Emily and the rest of the staff approached the program. The facilitators and the director wanted Writer's Group to more resemble Grego and Thompson's scenario of shared essays and group discussions. But as Emily's largest section demonstrates, the students who came to Writer's Group not only differed from the facilitators in their understanding of the purpose, they sometimes differed from each other.

Faculty Support

As mentioned earlier, there existed no formal mechanism for placing students in Writer's Group. Students either signed up on their own or were encouraged to by their classroom instructors. This lack of formal placement procedures, along with the fact that faculty relied on widely varying pedagogical approaches, some of which were antithetical to that of Writer's Group, made it difficult for the program to achieve support among department faculty.

We distributed promotional materials on Writer's Group to incoming students during orientation and asked advisers to recommend it to students, but each semester only one or two students signed up for the program before the semester began.[1] We therefore relied on individual faculty to promote the program, either by having facilitators visit their classes to discuss the program or recommending it to students who were struggling in the course. In an email sent to faculty before the start of each semester, we suggested they include a writing activity early in the semester that would allow them to identify candidates for Writer's Group, students who exhibited significant patterns of error in their writing or expressed attitudes toward writing (i.e., lack of confidence in their writing abilities, hostility toward academic writing, etc.) that could prevent them from being successful in the course. Although faculty in department meetings and in hallway conversations expressed interest in the program, only a handful took advantage of these opportunities. We consulted with the department's previous chair to see if faculty could require students to sign up for Writer's Group and tie it to the course grade, but he rejected this motion. For all intents and purposes, what we had was a program that hinged on student self-selection.

Having Writer's Group remain a voluntary program created overlap with other student support programs on campus, especially the Writing Lab, which, as we noted earlier, is staffed by undergraduate peer facilitators from across disciplines. Because the Writing Lab is also self-selective, working

with students on a walk-in basis, students (and some faculty) were unable to recognize what made Writer's Group different. We went to great lengths, in promotional materials and in our everyday conversations with faculty and students, to articulate the differences: students enrolled in Writer's Group would work with graduate student facilitators in English, instead of undergraduates; they would work collaboratively in small groups, instead of receiving individual help; and as part of this collaboration they would examine the metarhetorical aspects of their writing. We didn't see ourselves competing against the Writing Lab; we simply offered students a different kind of learning opportunity. Despite these efforts, our message never resonated with most faculty for a variety of reasons. Faculty workload was undoubtedly an issue, but some faculty were skeptical of or confused by our belief that students would benefit from a greater metarhetorical understanding of their writing, a concept we were aware instructors would find hard to understand. And while no one openly stated that Writer's Group interfered with the goals of their own course, there were instances where an individual faculty member's objectives conflicted with the program's goals.

This was especially true with those instructors whose pedagogy could be considered current-traditional. In some cases, the current-traditional orientation of particular classes prevented graduate assistants from getting students to examine metarhetorical aspects of their writing. An example of this occurred in one of Samuel's sessions with a student named Kim, whose writing exhibited very few problems and who seemed to understand well the class material. The only domain she seemed concerned about was grammar—and this concern was fueled by the poor grade she earned on a diagnostic test. Since she was worried about repeating the errors she made on the test in future assignments, Samuel attempted to get a copy of the test from the instructor, figure out where she went wrong, and review the concepts that gave her trouble. He requested Kim ask the instructor for the test; she returned the following week and said that he refused the request because he was reusing the tests for other classes. Samuel unsuccessfully tried to reach the instructor, who was an adjunct who spent little time on campus, during his office hours. In an e-mail containing the dialogue sheet regarding Kim's latest session, Samuel explained the situation and politely requested a copy of the test.

The instructor never responded. Samuel worked with Kim on comma splices, pronouns, and other grammatical concepts, but she always seemed vaguely worried that they were not covering the mysterious material that

had tripped her up on the test. From his interactions with Kim, Samuel got the impression the course emphasized grammar over process. Grammar tests and essays on historical events comprised most of the work, and the one returned essay Kim brought to a session had no traces of comments or feedback; ink was only spilled for grammatical errors. Samuel was keenly aware of his status as a novice facilitator and relative newcomer to composition pedagogy; consequently, he went out of his way not to criticize the instructor or sow any seeds of insurrection. Like writing centers, Studios "are triangulated into the relationship between students and teachers" (Grimm 527), which places the Studio facilitator, who has no institutional authority, in a complex position. While empowered to intervene in Kim's writing process by his status as a graduate assistant assigned to the program, Samuel nevertheless feared overstepping his bounds and overriding the authority of Kim's classroom instructor, who would ultimately determine Kim's grade. As a result, very little metarhetorical dialogue occurred in his sessions with Kim. Instead of engaging her in a discussion about the course's assignments, requirements, and assumptions about writing, Samuel mostly just scrambled to address her vague grammatical worries. Kim was never quite satisfied, and after a couple of weeks she stopped attending Writer's Group.

Tassoni and Lewiecki-Wilson suggest that moments like this highlight "the very real limits of curricular transformation that a Studio program faces, as well as the ways that Studio itself becomes complicit with values and approaches to writing external to it" (87). According to Tassoni and Lewiecki-Wilson, they also serve to remind us of the material conditions that inform writing pedagogy (88-89). Over the last few years, at least a third of our 101 and 102 courses were staffed by adjunct faculty, most of whom received little formal support from the department apart from limited office space, copier privileges, and a haphazard mentoring system that paired new adjuncts with experienced roster faculty. All first-year writing faculty are also invited to participate in regular pedagogy workshops, including one offered right before the fall semester, but given the fact that many of our part-time instructors also teach in local high schools and technical colleges it's understandable that most don't take advantage of these opportunities.

Just as Kim stopped attending Writer's Group for understandable reasons, many of our writing faculty, especially part-time instructors, ignored the program not simply because it may have been antithetical to their pedagogy but because they lacked the time and support necessary to integrate it into their courses.

Administrative Infrastructure

Throughout its history, Writer's Group was directed by unprotected faculty members. In a situation that is unfortunately all too common in the field, the second director of Writer's Group left the College after being denied tenure. The program was then directed for two years by a Senior Instructor, a non-tenured faculty member who taught a 3-4 course load in first-year composition. When Chris, an Assistant Professor, was asked to lead the program in 2007, he had only been at the College for one year. Being aware of the second director's fate and having little formal training in Studio pedagogy, Chris was hesitant to direct Writer's Group. At the same time, though, he felt Writer's Group provided an opportunity for him to continue teaching basic writing, something he didn't think he would have the opportunity to do at the College. In addition, he felt the program would allow him to work alongside graduate students in creating a graduate-level concentration in composition and rhetoric that would prepare them, in part, to teach basic writing. Chris recognized that approaching the Studio in this way created overlap and potential conflict with the graduate program, yet he also hoped that it would revive the discussion some in the department had started years ago about instituting a graduate concentration.

During staff meetings, graduate assistants frequently discussed their frustrations with the existing graduate program and talked with Chris about what they thought a composition and rhetoric concentration should look like. While these conversations were instructive for both Chris and the graduate facilitators, efforts to create substantive change through the program were compromised by working conditions. Although the department chair actively worked to secure release time for Chris when he directed the program, she wasn't always successful. In fact, he received release time for one course only once in the four semesters he directed the program, which meant he typically taught three writing courses, many of them new preps, each semester. Besides directing Writer's Group, Chris also chaired the department's First-Year Writing Committee, who during his tenure revised the first-year writing requirement and assessed the newly created English 110 course. These other demands gave him little time to do the work necessary for building a graduate concentration.

All too late, Chris learned that Writer's Group, and the graduate assistants in the program, would have been better served if, in terms of workload, its administration had been separated from the administration of other areas of first-year writing. The lack of adequate release time certainly contributed to

the program's unsustainability, but just as damaging was Chris's tendency to take on too much responsibility, especially given his status as a relatively new junior faculty member—a common story with non-tenured writing program administrators. The joint administration of first-year writing and Writer's Group, instead of building coherence, created further fragmentation.

Moving Forward

Chris plans to begin efforts to recreate a Studio program in the future, and we believe that the insight gained from the dismantling of Writer's Group and Supplemental Instruction will help him and others work together to create a more successful and sustainable program. The remainder of this section, then, identifies the areas of the broader program in need of repair and explains our current vision for a new and improved Studio program.

First and foremost, we learned that a formalized first-year writing program that both supports and coordinates with other areas of the writing curriculum must be established before a Studio program could be reinstituted. When Chris initially accepted the offer to direct Writer's Group, he naively thought that the Studio course could temporarily serve some of the functions of a more formalized writing program or at least lay the groundwork for one. In hindsight, though, we learned that this goal was misplaced given the provisional and critical nature of Studio work. With no first-year writing program or director and no real consistency in the first-year composition curriculum, each section of 101 and 102 was a self-contained island following the rules of isolated instructors who ostensibly answered to no one. Thus, when students examined the material conditions underlying their class writing they sometimes did so in narrow terms. In other words, their comments and questions suggested that they saw some of the writing demands they faced as quirks of an individual instructor, rather than a materially conditioned attitude they might encounter elsewhere in their coursework. To some extent they were right, and no future Studio course (and no formalized writing program) could alleviate this concern entirely. However, to go back to Emily's observation about students not sharing our goals for Writer's Group, a future Studio program might have more success in this regard if the curriculum and ideas about writing they were being asked to reflect on were made more visible, which is something a formalized writing program could help provide.

While any future Studio program would coordinate with the first-year writing program, we would recommend that both programs have different

directors. Our decision to allow the same person to direct Writer's Group and the department's First-Year Writing Committee created some coherence, but this was offset by the workload issues that came with these additional responsibilities. We recognize that creating and maintaining multiple administrative lines is more difficult at smaller institutions like ours, but we would also argue that this is one concrete way Studio programs can elevate the status of composition and rhetoric.

The second most significant change we would make would be to embed the Studio into our current required four-hour course, English 110. In this effort, we have been influenced by the work of Deanna Martin who first developed Supplemental Instruction at the University of Missouri-Kansas City over thirty years ago. As she and Maureen Hurley have written, Supplemental Instruction involves such core principles as helping first-year students "develop a culture of learning" and making students more critically aware of classroom materials like the syllabus and assignments (310-11). While the model of SI Martin and Hurley describe employs undergraduates as SI leaders who are embedded in a particular course and hold multiple breakout sessions each week, it shares the goals of Studio programs in that it, to use Martin and Hurley's words, "provide[s] the opportunity for open and free-flowing dialogue, spontaneous questions, lively discussions, trial-and-error experimentation, and, most important, the help and support of colleagues" (319). We need to survey more Supplemental Instruction programs and models, but our approach toward a new Studio program imagines it as a resource embedded into the 110 course that could serve students and faculty in a variety of ways.

Right now, many instructors, especially those new to teaching 110, remain uncertain about how to use the course's extra instructional hour each week, and this is a place where we believe a revived Studio program can step in. We would continue to offer small-group workshops led by trained Studio faculty, which students from various sections of 110 could sign up for as part of a weekly fourth hour, but we would also provide students and faculty with a range of other activities with similar metarhetorical goals. These would include regular large-group writing workshops led by Studio faculty, podcasts that present interviews with students and faculty from across campus about issues related to academic writing, and public lectures in which instructors from different disciplines present on their ongoing research and the research and writing process behind their work. Studio faculty would also be trained to deliver whole-class writing workshops developed in coordination with 110 instructors.[2]

Third, we would recommend that all 110 faculty be required to contribute to the Studio program as part of their regular teaching responsibilities, which would help us iron out some of the logistical problems that would inevitably arise with the type of Studio program described above. Samuel's difficulty coordinating with Kim's instructor illustrated to us that the department has done a poor job of getting writing faculty, adjuncts especially, invested in the program. Indeed, requiring 110 instructors to participate in the program, while compensating them for their labor, would help us go a long way toward solving this problem. We would recommend that a portion of the department's annual 110 orientation be set aside for training instructors in Studio pedagogy, and this introduction would be followed up with regular workshops where current Studio faculty and classroom instructors reflect on their teaching, discuss any problems they're facing, and share ideas on how specific Studio experiences might address these problems. These meetings would allow instructors who are less familiar with Studio pedagogy to build relationships with those with more expertise, and both groups could collectively think through ways in which the Studio could productively be embedded within the 110 course.

We imagine that many 110 instructors would object to this additional requirement for very sound reasons, the most obvious one being time. Non-tenure-stream faculty in renewable full-time positions typically teach three sections of 110 a semester, and adding an additional responsibility on top of this would understandably be seen as an undue hardship. Tenure-stream faculty have departmental and college service obligations that make this requirement hard to sell. However, we're not suggesting that all 110 instructors would have to run weekly workshops, although they could if they wish; instead, we would recommend that all 110 faculty make a handful of contributions to the program over the course of the academic year. They might lead a small-group workshop, deliver a public lecture, interview someone as part of a podcast, or design a lesson or workshop that other 110 instructors could use for their fourth hour. Since most faculty have at least one or two fourth-hour sessions each semester that are devoted to out-of-class activities they do not staff, we don't believe this would be an unreasonable requirement. Moreover, before implementing the program, we would consult with the Dean and Provost to develop a system whereby 110 instructors could count Studio activities toward their course load and use these hours to earn release time. In addition, we would recommend that Studio teaching be considered as part of a faculty member's College service, which would help to further professionalize this work. We imagine this to be a tough sell, but

there has been some talk on campus of having faculty who regularly teach writing-intensive courses earn release time; having Studio work included as part of an instructor's official workload might help with this effort.

Graduate students would continue to work in the program. In fact, we imagine that a newly conceived program would create more opportunities for graduate students to work alongside classroom faculty, which would address the problems Writer's Group faced gaining faculty support. We would work to strengthen the relationship by having the director of graduate studies and Studio program administrator work together to advertise this teaching opportunity to graduate students and select facilitators. In addition, graduate courses on composition theory and pedagogy could include a unit on Studio pedagogy, with current facilitators talking with other graduate students about the experience.

Embedding the Studio program into 110 in the ways we describe here would help us foster the metarhetorical dialogue among faculty that is currently lacking in the department. An embedded Studio would ideally create multiple formalized spaces in which faculty talk with each other, and with students, about the material conditions of academic writing—and the teaching of writing. Depending on the Studio activities faculty and students complete, both groups would have opportunities to look beyond their individual classrooms and examine writing within the broader context of the College, their disciplines, and everyday lives. It could be argued that these improvements would come at a price, though, as the critical function of the Studio program would be compromised once it's become part of the first-year writing class. In other words, an embedded Studio program would no longer operate outside and alongside the writing classroom, which would limit its possibilities for institutional critique. However, we contend that the revised program we describe here, compared to the small workshop version of Studio, presents more sustainable and realistic opportunities for institutional change because all writing faculty would participate and have a stake in the program.

While we unfortunately won't be able to implement these changes in the short-term, we hope the stories we tell here about our successes and failures help those involved in Studio programs elsewhere, who we suspect experience many of the same issues that led to the cancellation of Writer's Group, devise sustainability practices that best support the specific needs of their institutions and faculty. Studio programs are a vital part of undergraduate writing instruction but also serve an important role in faculty development and graduate education. Meeting these goals requires more

than financial support; it requires a sustainable administrative structure and the ongoing collaboration of faculty, graduate students, and others with a stake in the teaching and learning of undergraduate writing.

Notes

1. In using this enrollment procedure, we were unlike other Studio programs. According to Grego and Thompson, students are placed into the Studio course at USC based on a portfolio and "writing history" submitted at the beginning of their English 101 course ("Repositioning" 63). Miami Middletown formally places students based on "the COMPASS diagnostic test" and "students' Writer Profiles" (Tassoni and Lewiecki-Wilson 74). We wanted to institute more formalized placement procedures but were blocked by the department chair at the time. Our solution at the time, far from perfect, was to visit classes to promote the program and provide classroom faculty tools they could use to recommend the program to students.
2. We've modeled these activities after those in place at The University Center for Writing-based Learning at DePaul, which offers a podcast series called "Hot Topics in Writing," and The Writing Studio at Vanderbilt, which offers a lecture series called "Dinner and a Draft" (DePaul; Writing Studio).

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When Access Is Not Enough: Retaining Basic Writers at an Open-Admission University

Sara Webb-Sunderhaus

ABSTRACT: The author describes the challenges of a four-year, open-admission institution where equality of access has not equaled equality of success for basic writers. While there is a good deal of scholarship on student departure by compositions and experts in student retention and persistence, some models of student departure and success offered by these scholars are inadequate; a more comprehensive approach that embraces the intellectual and social elements of student success is needed. This article argues that the field of basic writing must turn its critical gaze to issues surrounding the success, as well as access, of basic writers at four-year universities.

KEYWORDS: basic writing; retention; student success; higher education; support services

Over the past fifteen years, much has been written about the elimination of basic writing courses at four-year universities. For example, Rhonda Grego and Nancy Thompson discuss the creation of studio courses after the shuttering of basic writing courses at the University of South Carolina; Sugie Goen-Salter articulates the development of San Francisco State University's Integrated Reading and Writing program in response to the threatened elimination of "remedial courses," including basic writing; and George Otte describes the birth and death of basic writing at CUNY's City College. In many cases, this elimination has been mandated by state legislatures and boards of regents who deem basic writing as "remedial" instruction which forces taxpayers to "pay twice" for the same education—i.e., to fund the learning of material that presumably was taught at the high school level, an education that was financed with previously collected taxes. Further, all too often the purging of basic writing at four-year universities has

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been tied to the discontinuation of affirmative action and open-admission policies at institutions such as the University of Washington (Stygall) and the eleven four-year colleges that compose the City University of New York (Gleason). In short, many basic writing scholar-teachers are deeply troubled by the fact that immediate access to education at four-year institutions has been jeopardized for so many of our students.

I share these concerns, as I have had the misfortune of witnessing the end of open-admission policies and the elimination of basic writing at four-year universities that I dearly loved and that were formative influences in my professional development. In 1997, I entered the field of composition as a professional tutor in basic writing courses at the University of Cincinnati's former University College, a two-year, open-admission college on the university's main campus. During the two years I spent at my hometown university, I worked alongside professors in their classrooms and tutored in a writing center exclusively dedicated to basic writers; my decision to enter graduate school and become a professor was largely shaped by the mentoring and encouragement I received from the professors and students with whom I collaborated. Thus, it was crushing for me, both personally and professionally, to learn of the elimination of UCollege in 2003, four years after I ended my employment there to attend graduate school. The rationale for these changes, as explained by Michelle Gibson and Deborah T. Meem—who for many years taught basic writing at the former UCollege—rested in the administration's desire to move the university up the ranks of national research institutions (64).[1] While UCollege was replaced by an open-admission academic unit called the Center for Access and Transition, it too has been disbanded as of Fall 2010, leaving little, if any, room for basic writers at the University of Cincinnati. Later, as a Ph.D. student and basic writing instructor and administrator at The Ohio State University in the early to mid-2000s, I saw the end of open-admissions on the Columbus campus and the resulting decline of the Writing Workshop, Ohio State's basic writing program. The motivation for this change was similar: the new president of Ohio State hoped admission selectivity would raise the university's ranking into the top ten of public research institutions.

Having the opportunity to work with so many gifted basic writing instructors and students at formative stages of my professional development was the defining experience of my career, and it has been painful for me to see these scholar-teachers and student writers cast aside by their universities in a never-ending attempt to scale the rankings of Research 1 schools. Given this personal and professional history, it should be evident that I

am highly sympathetic to our field's concerns about basic writers' access to four-year institutions; I strongly believe that those of us who are invested in basic writing must continue to fight for the place of our students at these universities. However, after teaching basic writers at an open-admission university for the past five years, I have also come to the conclusion that we must expand our conversations about equality of access to include calls for equality of success. We must make room in our conversations about basic writing and basic writers for studies of retention and student persistence[2] and assert more forcefully that access is not enough. Drawing on scholarship of student departure by compositionists and experts in student retention/persistence, as well as my own critical insights gained through teaching and research conducted at my institution, I will argue that we as basic writing scholar-teachers must devote as much critical attention to offering basic writers equality of success as we do to offering them equality of access. It is time to discuss retention and persistence.

Why Access Is Not Enough: The Complexities of Open Admission

Since 2006, I have taught basic writers at Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne (IPFW); I also coordinate the basic writing program. IPFW is a joint, regional, four-year campus of two larger, Research 1 institutions (Indiana and Purdue Universities) and has approximately 14,000 students, most of whom are commuters. While the university does not advertise itself as an open-admission institution, all returning adult students (ages 26 and older) are admitted as long as they have a high school diploma or a G.E.D.; about 30% of IPFW students are returning adults (Office of Institutional Research). Many traditional-age students come to IPFW because they were denied admission to Purdue or Indiana, which have more selective admission policies, and were offered admission to IPFW instead. While IPFW is perhaps not technically open-admission for traditional-age students, fewer than 100 of these students were denied admission for the Fall 2008 semester (Office of Institutional Research). Thus, the university is perceived by faculty, students, and the Fort Wayne community as having a de-facto open-admission policy.

Open-admission institutions are known for having retention and persistence rates lower than those of more selective institutions. According to the most recent ACT data, four-year graduation rates at public, open-admission institutions that award bachelor's and master's degrees—in other words, institutions like mine—stand at 19.6%, fifteen percentage

points lower than those of more selective admission institutions. The six-year graduation rate is 37.2%, twenty percentage points lower than that of schools with selective admission policies. However, even when compared to similar institutions, IPFW's rates are disturbingly low. *The Journal Gazette*, a Fort Wayne newspaper, reports that students entering IPFW in 1999 had a four-year graduation rate of 4% and a six-year graduation rate of 18%. These rates are the second-lowest of any four-year public institution in the state of Indiana (Soderlund).

First-to-second-year retention rates tell a similar, though not as dire, story. The ACT data reveal that public, open-admission schools that award bachelor's and master's degrees retain 65.9% of their students after the first year, but once again, IPFW's rates are lower than those of comparable universities. According to William Baden, Senior Analyst in IPFW's Office of Institutional Research, of the Fall 2006 entering class, 60% were enrolled by Fall 2007. First-to-second year retention rates for basic writers at IPFW are lower still. For basic writing students who began their college education in the Fall semesters of 2003-2007, the retention rate was 56.7%; for first-year writing students, the retention rate was 64.6%.

As a teacher of basic writing, I know the lived truth of these statistics. My dean does not have to tell me that the basic writing course I teach currently has an average DWF (drop, withdraw, fail) rate of 31.05%. As the coordinator of the basic writing program, I receive phone calls and emails from instructors worried that so many of their students are disappearing; even the most cursory glance inside my own classroom can confirm that by the end of the semester, several students are either no longer enrolled or regularly attending class. My heart breaks each term as students—some of whom had been among the most promising performers—stop attending class, replying to emails, and turning in assignments, leading them to automatic failure of the course. Almost all of the students who fail my basic writing classes do so not because they turned in work of poor quality, but because they have not turned in any work at all.

Yet all of these students have had access to an education at a four-year institution. Further, since 2008—when IPFW instituted guided self- placement—all of these students have voluntarily placed themselves into a redesigned basic writing course built on the best practices and theoretical understandings of our field.[3] On the first day of the semester, those of us who teach basic writing at IPFW no longer meet angry students who resent being placed in a non-credit-bearing course; instead, we welcome into our three-credit course students who have chosen to take the class and who often

view it as a fresh start, a place where they can have more time to adjust to a previous lack of writing instruction, an absence from formal schooling, or fears caused by writing anxiety. Our course is built on access, inclusion, equity, and respect for student knowledge—core values for basic writing scholar-teachers, values I share and embrace. But, quite simply, they are not enough for students at institutions like mine.

Equality of Access, Equality of Success: Social Justice and Basic Writing

Students like those I teach should have the opportunity for not only equality of access to the university, but also equality of success once they are there. In her plenary address to the 2010 Research Network Forum, Michelle Hall Kells described the experiences of Hispanic students at the University of New Mexico and contended that while these students have an equal opportunity for university admission, once they are there, they do not persist towards graduation at rates equal to those of their peers. As she writes in a 2007 article, "[T]he Lottery Scholarship in New Mexico mak[es] access to higher education tuition-free for every high school graduate with a GPA 2.5 or higher. However, the absence of support mechanisms across the curriculum for emerging college writers exacerbates students' lack of preparation for the demands of college-level writing," later adding that "more than a third of our first-year college students fail to finish their degrees and graduate" (90). In other words, while these students have equality of access to the University of New Mexico, they do not have equality of success.

I share Kells' concerns and find them applicable to basic writing, particularly in light of Susan Naomi Bernstein's "Social Justice Initiative for Basic Writing," which describes the "unjust educational conditions for students [. . . that impede] successful matriculation and retention" among basic writers. In this article, Bernstein reminds readers of the 1974 NCTE resolution "On Support for Motivated but Inadequately Prepared College Students," which reads:

> Resolved, that the National Council of Teachers of English encourage college and university administrations, and legislative bodies, to allocate sufficient funds to provide individualized and supportive programs for students who are motivated but inadequately prepared for success in colleges and universities to which they are being admitted.

Bernstein argues that, in spite of the many years that have passed since the resolution, its goals have not been reached; thus, she proposes that the Conference on Basic Writing take specific steps to realize more fully the spirit of the resolution. Our field has come closer to meeting some of Bernstein's outcomes more than others. For example, many institutions, including my own, "provide basic writing courses that include college-level content." As described in the previous section, the basic writing program of which I am part was successful in "removing the label of 'remediation' from such courses" as well.

The other measures Bernstein lays out are more difficult to address. Some involve outreach efforts with community partners and taking public in some way the work our students do. Bernstein writes that the possibilities here include "consultations with K-12 language arts students and their parents, teachers, and administrators; multimedia texts including texts for the general public as well as for the profession; face-to-face presentations to conferences and to the larger community." Service-learning would be one such way for basic writing courses to "go public," and as a graduate student, I taught basic writing courses in which my students tutored third graders at local elementary schools in reading and writing. Although establishing and maintaining such partnerships can be challenging, the rising prevalence of service-learning suggests that our field is edging closer to enacting the public role Bernstein describes. Similarly, while it may be difficult to "link [. . .] our efforts for basic writing to social justice concerns for historically disenfranchised communities," this move is certainly not uncommon in our scholarly discourse about basic writing and the courses and curriculum many of us develop, such as summer bridge programs for students from culturally and economically diverse backgrounds.

Where our field has significantly fallen short is in the two areas most applicable to the argument of this article. Bernstein writes that the field of basic writing must work on "[p]ersuading college and university administrators, legislative bodies, and other stakeholders to allocate sustainable funding for programs that provide access and retention services to entering students" and "[e]ducating students about and providing students with necessary resources for obtaining an equitable education." These resources include "financial aid and academic and personal counseling," in addition to removing restrictions that force students to pass basic writing courses before taking classes in other subject areas, including the fine arts. The issues Bernstein delineates have been a challenge for many years, even before the implosion of the United States' economy in Fall 2008—which incidentally

is the same time Bernstein's resolution was published in *BWe: Basic Writing e-Journal*. I doubt that any of us can remember halcyon days in which the courses and additional resources needed by basic writers were fully funded and plentiful, as the needs have been critical for some time.

Bernstein's call has taken on even more urgency since its publication, however, as prospective and current students from the "historically disenfranchised communities" Bernstein references have been the most impacted by the "Great Recession." According to *Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2009*, a report issued by the Census Bureau in September 2010, household income in 2009 was 11.8% lower for African-Americans than it was in the year 2000, and 2009 household income for Hispanics was 7.9% lower than it was in 2000 (8). Unsurprisingly, as household income decreased, poverty increased; CBS News reports that in 2009, "The share of Americans below half the poverty line—$10,977 for a family of four—rose from 5.7 percent in 2008 to 6.3 percent. It was the highest level since the government began tracking that group in 1975." Economic stratification has also worsened. The level of income inequality in the United States in 2009 was the greatest of all Western, industrialized countries and had not been higher since the Census Bureau began collecting this data over forty years ago (Yen). Further, as Smeeding and Thompson write, "With over 8.4 million jobs lost in the recession, unemployment rates are in the 9 percent to 10 percent range and in double digits and higher for young and undereducated workers" (2)—and by "young and undereducated workers," the authors mean those workers without college degrees who are under 34 years of age (2-3).

These are the students who are currently flooding into many of our basic writing classrooms in an attempt to escape the ravages of this economy. Like most regional comprehensive universities, IPFW has experienced record growth every semester since Fall 2008, and my students fit the profile described by Smeeding and Thompson. These students have lost their jobs, their homes, and their certainty that they can provide for their families; according to data gathered by IPFW's Office of Student Affairs, 40% of IPFW first-year students "are between not at all and moderately confident that they can pay their monthly living expenses" (McClellan). These are the students who can least afford to take on additional debt, such as student loans, yet they do so because they believe that a college education is the answer to their economic woes. And when they leave the university before graduation, as so many IPFW students do, they will have accumulated thousands of dollars of debt for their abbreviated foray into the world of higher education—with

very little to show for it in terms of job prospects that will enable them to pay off those loans and support themselves, as well as others who may rely on them.

The disenfranchisement that drives these students to the university is all too often replicated in academe. Bernstein's caution against the "unjust educational conditions for students [. . . that impede] successful matriculation and retention" takes on even greater import in this age of misguided legislation and dramatic cuts to state funding of higher education. I understand the multitude of pressures many basic writing programs face. As the basic writing coordinator at my university, I was part of a team that created a new basic writing course after a state mandate outsourced so-called "remedial" education from four-year universities to community colleges; we are now preparing to fight a possible attempt by the state to remove *all* first-year writing instruction from four-year universities, and we are doing so while coping with significant cuts in state funding. Sadly, the path of immediate access to an education at a four-year institution has been—or soon will be—lost for too many basic writers.

While equal access is incredibly important, there is another issue our field must confront if we are to realize Bernstein's vision. That issue is student success. Though certainly not ideal, basic writers *do* have access to two-year colleges through which they can gain entry to four-year schools; further, some basic writers, such as those at my university, still have access to four-year institutions. In other words, basic writers *do* have a path—even if it is delayed—of access to four-year universities. Where is there an equivalent path of success for these students? That is the question we must seek to answer. As a field, we cannot in good conscience proclaim the importance of equal access to four-year institutions when many of the students who do have such access do not have equal success—not when the economic stakes are devastatingly high for so many of our students. In the interest of social justice, we must address access *and* success for our students.

Integrating into the "Invented" University: Retention and Composition Scholarship

Some scholars have already begun to problematize conceptions of access and argue for a renewed focus on student support and success. Pegeen Reichert Powell offers an overview of retention scholarship and calls for composition scholars to investigate which of our students persist until graduation and why, noting that "[w]hat retention research compels us

to do is to make sure that when we do argue for increased access to higher education, that the structures are in place to help all students persist" (674). Mary Soliday questions our field's discourse of access, writing that there is "a dominant ideology in which basic writing is equivalent to access in ways that exaggerate, or at least simplify, the agency of programs and teachers," further arguing "this influential ideology of access [. . .] tends to downplay or even exclude other factors—especially material or institutional ones—which affect students' access to the BA" (55-56). These factors may include the cost of tuition, books, and housing and/or commuting; the availability of safe, high-quality, and affordable childcare; well-funded, trained, and staffed student support services, including tutoring, advising, services for students with disabilities, and personal and career counseling; the availability of financial aid; and the university's location, particularly if it is readily and reliably accessible to those without a car or to students with limited physical mobility. In other words, these are the very same resources Bernstein reaffirms the importance of in "Social Justice Initiative for Basic Writing," and without them, students will not be retained or receive the "equitable education" which they deserve.

Other scholars have written about revisions they have made to basic writing instruction at their institutions and the impact of those changes on student retention and performance, with varying degrees of attention to the issues raised by Bernstein. Beth Brunk-Chavez and Elaine Fredericksen examine retention and success rates in composition courses at the University of Texas-El Paso; their study, which found that low placement test and diagnostic test scores correlate with low grades, focuses solely on student performance within composition courses and addresses neither students' persistence towards graduation nor the institutional resources described above. Similarly, in "*Stretch* at 10," Greg Glau notes that students who take the Stretch first-year writing course continue into the next writing course at higher rates than do their peers who take the traditional version. Glau also recognizes a relationship between class size and retention, writing that " 'retention' rates for students taking [the required writing sequence] are all higher than they were when class sizes were larger" (43); issues of retention rooted in needs beyond the writing classroom were outside the scope of the article. Finally, McCurrie describes a summer bridge program at Columbia College Chicago and how administrators, basic writing teachers, and students define success differently, further arguing that these differences impact retention efforts. McCurrie writes that today's economic climate and its attendant impact on students have pushed his program's instructors

to re-define access and earnestly reflect on the consequences of student failure, as "we must consider the potential financial and personal damage to students who are not likely to succeed at the college" (41). Without the type of reflective action and resources endorsed by McCurrie, Soliday, and Bernstein, we risk that access will become nothing more than an empty promise, as it sometimes feels at institutions like my own.

In addition to the research compositionists have done on retention and persistence, educational theorists and those working in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) have produced a large body of scholarship on issues surrounding student access and success. Among these scholars, arguably the most widely-known and influential is Vincent Tinto, whose theories about student persistence and departure—first published in 1975—are referred to as the "Tinto Model." The model's principles of effective retention are as follows:

- Effective retention programs are committed to the students they serve [. . . and] put student welfare ahead of other institutional goals.
- Effective retention programs are first and foremost committed to the education of all, not just some, of their students.
- Effective retention programs are committed to the development of supportive social and educational communities in which all students are integrated as competent members. (Tinto 146-47)

The Tinto Model has been widely accepted among retention scholars as a valid understanding of student departure, and its influence is seen in the rising prevalence of student support services and programs such as learning communities, intrusive advising, and academic support and success centers and their attendant programs. Many of these scholars argue that such measures improve student retention, persistence, and success, and research at my own university supports such a claim. For example, in her study of a learning community section of a basic writing course, Rachelle Darabi found that "82% of students enrolled the following year versus the overall retention rate at IPFW of 65%" (67). Additionally, students enrolled in this particular class had a DWF (drop, withdrawal, fail) rate of 25%, in comparison to the 31% rate for basic writing classes offered that term that were not part of a learning community. These data have prompted my university to offer an increasing number of learning communities each year.

However, Tinto's theories have not been without their critics. William G. Tierney writes that the Tinto Model, with its emphasis on student

integration, has "the effect of merely inserting minorities into a dominant cultural frame of reference that is transmitted within dominant cultural forms, leaving invisible cultural hierarchies intact" (611). In other words, the Tinto Model suggests that if students will only assimilate into university life and adopt the values of academe, then students will be successful. The role of oppressive social forces such as racism, sexism, and classism in the academy are not accounted for, according to Tierney.

Ernest T. Pascarella has argued that the Tinto Model is limited to four-year, residential college students and does not address the experiences of students at two-year colleges; Pascarella, along with co-author Patrick Terenzini, would later write in *How College Affects Students* that this exclusion is a weakness of much retention and persistence research. The thrust of this argument is that since the needs of two-year, commuter, returning adult, and/or part-time students are quite different from those of students found at four-year residential institutions, these "non-traditional" students require a different model that recognizes their needs.

In response to these critiques, Tinto has returned to and revised these concepts multiple times, most notably in the second edition of *Leaving College: Rethinking the Causes and Cures of Student Attrition*, accounting somewhat for the experiences of students of color, returning adults, commuters, and two-year college students. However, these revisions are still inadequate because they fail to take into account students' abilities, desires, and motivation to integrate themselves into full-fledged membership in the academy—or, to use the words of David Bartholomae, to "invent the university" for themselves. As those of us who teach basic writing well know, the students who are most at risk of not "integrating into" (Tinto) or "inventing the university" (Bartholomae)—first-generation college students, poor and working-class students, students of color—are the very same students who are disproportionately represented in basic writing courses. How should our curriculum and pedagogy work to help our students invent the university for themselves—or, more accurately, *re*-invent the university—as a space which better reflects their cultural norms? How do we likewise address the needs of students who don't necessarily want this membership or who, for various reasons, cannot pursue it at this particular stage of their lives? Given the current economic climate, some students steeped in the literacy myths prevalent in American culture may be reluctant to commit their time and money, to take on the financial burden, and—in some cases—sacrifice personal, familial, and cultural relationships in the name of joining the academy when there is no longer any guarantee that doing so will result

in enhanced employment opportunities and economic status. How do we make higher education relevant for these students?

The question also remains as to how possible it is for all students to do the type of "integrating" or "inventing" which Tinto and Bartholomae claim is necessary. Bartholomae asserts that "the ability to imagine privilege enabled writing" from the students he studied (607), never questioning what this privilege means, how it works, and who does—and does not—have it. Further, as Harriet Malinowitz has noted, Bartholomae assumes that all students want to obtain this privilege and put it to use in their writing (83), a questionable assumption, at best. As alluded to above, many, though not all, basic writers experience conflicts between their schooling and relationships (especially with family and friends), work, and cultural identity (DiPardo, Mutnick, Rose) and may not want to "integrate" into the academy if doing so implies turning one's back on loved ones and the community with which one identifies. Further, Mutnick argues that according to Bartholomae, "it is the individual's failure to appropriate the knowledge and the discursive conventions of the academy that will result in his or her exclusion from it" (40). While it is certainly valid to claim that writers must understand the demands of the audience for which they are writing—and this general idea is one of Bartholomae's claims in "Inventing the University"—at the same time, critical attention must be paid to the inequalities in which those demands, and writers' abilities to meet those demands, may be rooted. And it is this area that is overlooked in "Inventing the University," as Mutnick writes that Bartholomae "does not question the oppressive structures that undergird the [educational] system as a whole, nor the fact that those who enter universities start out in unequal positions determined by more than their familiarity with academic language" (40). In short, like Tierney's previously cited critique of the Tinto Model, Bartholomae's argument is one rooted in assimilationist tendencies.

It is virtually impossible to discuss persistence and retention without Tinto, as it is similarly difficult to theorize basic writing without alluding to the work of Bartholomae. These scholars continue to play an enormous role in theorizing the issues this student population faces, and as compositionists, we particularly need to be aware of the Tinto Model's enormous power in fields other than our own. Yet Tinto's and Bartholomae's models have been thoroughly debated and tested over many years. Scholars have firmly established their deficiencies, as well as their strengths, including Tinto's insistence on educating all students and his concern for community and student welfare. Similarly, Bartholomae's work has forced us as compositionists to consider the connection between reading and writing; the importance of

assignment sequencing; and the role particular academic discourses play, whether for good or for ill, in students' acclimation to the academy.

While I am troubled by Bartholomae's lack of attention to the complexities of privilege and his emphasis on assimilation, what interests me most about his essay for the purposes of this article are issues that have been addressed neither by the field of composition as a whole, nor by the essay's detractors. As a field, we have argued that, in order to succeed in the university, students must somehow—whether through assimilationist or adaptive techniques—find a place for themselves within the university, but we have spent very little time exploring *how* actual students do so; or, to use Bartholomae's term, little scholarship investigates how real students go about "inventing the university" for themselves. We have spent even less time exploring how marginalized populations, such as basic writers, invent the university and succeed in it. Instead, we have tended to focus on how these students have failed to invent the university and, more commonly, how the university has failed these students.

We rarely discuss what enables the success of students like Nicole,[4] a first-generation, working adult student in her early 30s who returned to school while single parenting her own two children and her orphaned teenage sister. Nicole earned an A- in my basic writing course and is on track to another excellent grade in first-year composition, while coping with the loss of her job, the foreclosure of her home, and the demands of higher education after fifteen years away from school. According to much of our research, Nicole is at-risk; stories of students like her have been told many times before, and they typically end in the same way: the student fails the course, drops out of school, or falls off the researcher's radar. My own scholarship tells some of those stories, too; they are, to some extent, unavoidable, and they touch on important issues for study and analysis. Our field would be remiss if we did not examine them.

Yet this emphasis has inadvertently led to a lapse in our scholarship: we have not sufficiently questioned how marginalized students find ways to succeed in the academy. If, as Bartholomae asserts, privilege enables writing, then what will enable basic writers to imagine the university, as many of them are, like Nicole, students for whom privilege may be so limited that it is difficult to imagine? What is it that enabled Nicole to negotiate *her* entrance into the academy? Her supportive classmates, many of whom were also single parents, strike me as one possibility; her intense desire to model perseverance and academic achievement for her children and her sister is another factor in my mind. Her connections with on-campus resources,

such as the writing center and IPFW's Center for Women and Returning Adults, were vital as well. I know from talks with Nicole that the basic writing courses' semester-long investigation into the transition to college was important in helping her figure out university life. But what about other curricular and pedagogical decisions I made in the courses Nicole and I shared? Most of all, what was the impact of Nicole's life outside the writing classroom, outside the university? What role did these factors play in Nicole's academic performance?

These are the questions we must seek to answer by constructing a model of student performance that goes beyond some of the dichotomies related to Bartholomae or Tinto, one that is as concerned with student success as it is student access, one that takes up the call put forth by Bernstein in "Social Justice Initiative for Basic Writing." What is needed is a theoretical and pedagogical framework that seeks to support and educate all students by supplying them with institutional resources and assisting them in developing and deploying, in Tinto's words, the "supportive social and educational communities" needed for academic success, while also being respectful of students' desires and goals and the conflicts inherent in any writing classroom.

Conclusion: Insuring Access and Success for Basic Writers

In their article "Powerful Institutional Levers to Reduce College Student Departure," John M. Braxton and Meaghan E. Mundy list forty-seven recommendations for decreasing student departure, classified according to Tinto's principles of effective retention. Their recommendations most applicable to basic writing teachers—or any teacher of writing—are as follows:

- Clarify institutional values and expectations early and often.
- Intentionally tie the curriculum to students' lives outside the classroom to bring students into ongoing contact with one another and with campus resources.
- Attend to the holistic development of the student [. . .] by promoting growth and learning not only in the classroom but in the university community as well.
- Promote student awareness of and access to appropriate co-curricular programs and resources—i.e. support groups, peer counseling, mentoring programs, faith-based groups, residential colleges, and community service groups—that connect and support students in their incorporation into the university community. (99-100)

There is clear overlap between Braxton and Mundy's recommendations and Bernstein's proposal, especially in regards to connecting students with institutional resources and community partners. These recommendations also build on the type of pedagogy basic writing scholar-teachers have enacted for many years. We teach classes that typically have fewer students than other first-year courses at our universities, which allows us to get to know our students better and establish the type of personal connection lauded by retention scholars; we routinely—if not daily—read our students' writing and hear them speak in the classroom, acts which can give us insight into their thought processes and feelings and once again contribute to the connection between student and professor; and the reading and writing processes emphasized in most of our classes give students daily practice in skills that are foundational for college success. While we can learn from scholarship on retention and persistence, as compositionists we already know a great deal about our students, thanks to the nature and values of our field.

That being said, retention and persistence are admittedly complex, multi-faceted problems that encompass issues far beyond the reach of the basic writing classroom—or any classroom. However, the decisions we make about basic writing program administration, curriculum, and pedagogy can impact our students' decisions regarding their educations. At my university, for example, over the past three years, we have initiated guided self-placement, a curriculum accessible and relevant to students, and the establishment of a peer cohort in some basic writing sections. While these administrative and pedagogical initiatives are not new and individually may not impact student success rates, together they can and have made a difference at my institution; basic writing DWF rates have dropped 15 percentage points since we instituted these changes, and retention in basic writing and first-year composition has significantly improved as well.

Under the right circumstances, these types of initiatives can improve retention and persistence rates. However, this strategy should entail multiple support structures that go beyond a writing program, including real commitments to the work of writing centers, advising, summer bridge programs, services for students with disabilities, and other support structures including childcare and financial aid. Students at my university would be more likely to persist if the support structures were better; for example, our writing center's funding is dependent on the dictates of the ever-changing student governance association, and the child care center was closed and its building sold to make way for an omnipresent drugstore chain. Without such resources, basic writers are being set up to fail, an unconscionable breach

of the trust—and the thousands of dollars—our students invest in higher education. This is yet another reason why the outsourcing of basic writing to community colleges, which typically have even fewer of these support structures, is a formula for disaster. Universities are less able to provide these resources to students in this economic environment; to think that most two-year institutions can do so is naïve, at best, and deliberately misguided and destructive, at worst. Today we face an educational crisis that relegates more and more of our students to the academic margins, the very place where they can least afford to be. We must remain focused on that fact as we continue to argue for the importance of research and support for practices that facilitate access *and* success for basic writers at four-year universities.

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Notes

1. According to the university's website, students who do not meet the university's increasingly selective admission policies or who are current students in an associate degree program will be forced to enroll at one of the university's regional campuses or at Cincinnati State, a community college.
2. Retention refers to the number of students who return for the subsequent academic term. Most studies of retention focus on first-to-second year retention, since this is when most students who will depart from a university do so. Persistence refers to the number of students who continue with their education until they attain a degree. While these two concepts are often conflated in general usage, scholars who study student departure typically differentiate them in this way; thus, I have chosen to follow their example here and maintain the distinction.
3. For more about the creation of the new basic writing course, see "The *Kairotic* Moment: Pragmatic Revision of Basic Writing Instruction at Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne," co-written with my colleague Stevens Amidon.
4. A pseudonym.

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News and Announcements

Basic Writing in the News at CCCC in Atlanta

In an era of greatly reduced public funding for higher education accompanied by the increased vulnerability of basic writing and the students it serves, members of the Council on Basic Writing (CBW) introduced the following "sense of the house" motion at the annual business meeting of the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) on April 9, 2011:

> Be it resolved that basic writing is a vital field and its students and teacher scholars a productive force within composition; is under attack by exclusionary public policies; and therefore must be recognized publicly and supported by CCCC as a conference cluster and with featured sessions.

The motion was unanimously approved, and the discussion it generated was reported in an article in the April 11, 2011, edition of *Inside Higher Ed.* Commenting on the need for this motion, Professor William Lalicker of West Chester University, who drafted and introduced it, said, "Labor, justice, access and equity all come together around basic writing" (www.insidehighered.com/news/2011/04/11). These issues were in the forefront of discussions at the various CBW meetings held at the 2011 CCCC Conference in Atlanta.

As a result of the strong organizational support for this motion and the resulting publicity, we anticipate that discussions around basic writing will have more visibility at the 2012 CCCC to be held in St. Louis.

Ann Del Principe Receives *TETYC* Award at 2011 CCCC

The Two-Year College English Association has awarded Ann Del Principe the 2010 Mark Reynolds *Teaching English in the Two-Year College* Best Article Award. Her article, "Variations in Assessment, Variations in Philosophy: Unintended Consequences of Heterogeneous Portfolios" (*TETYC*, September 2010), is based on her work as Director of Freshman English and as an instructor of both freshman English and basic writing at Kingsborough Community College, City University of New York. The award was presented at the 2011 CCCC Convention in Atlanta.

Call for Papers
Special *TETYC* Issue on English as a Second Language in Diverse Genres and Voices

Teaching English in the Two-Year College is pleased to announce a special issue devoted to second language learning and teaching in the context of the first two years of college, community college, and intensive academic ESL programs. We are also interested in hearing from those involved with international education/EFL programs. The issue, to come out in September 2012, will be guest-edited by Natasha Lvovich and Martha Clark Cummings (Kingsborough Community College, CUNY). **All submissions are due by September 1, 2011.** Please conform to *TETYC* regular submission guidelines as outlined in all issues of the journal, and send manuscripts via e-mail attachment (.doc or .docx) to tetyc@wcupa.edu.

We welcome traditional research studies (empirical and quantitative, as well as qualitative/ethnographic/phenomenological) and nontraditional forms of inquiry and creative work (narratives/essays, case studies, teacher diaries, interviews, poems) focusing on second language learning and teaching. We will also accept artwork relevant to the theme of this issue (photographs and drawings, high-resolution graphics files, etc.).

Suggested topics may include but are not limited to:

- studies related to second language acquisition emphasizing the integration of theory and classroom practice
- adult second language learners and the academic process
- immigrant experiences and sociocultural identity in the academic context
- EFL experiences
- curriculum and teaching methodologies
- memory and language performance
- writing in a second language
- affectivity and language learning
- teacher training and professional development

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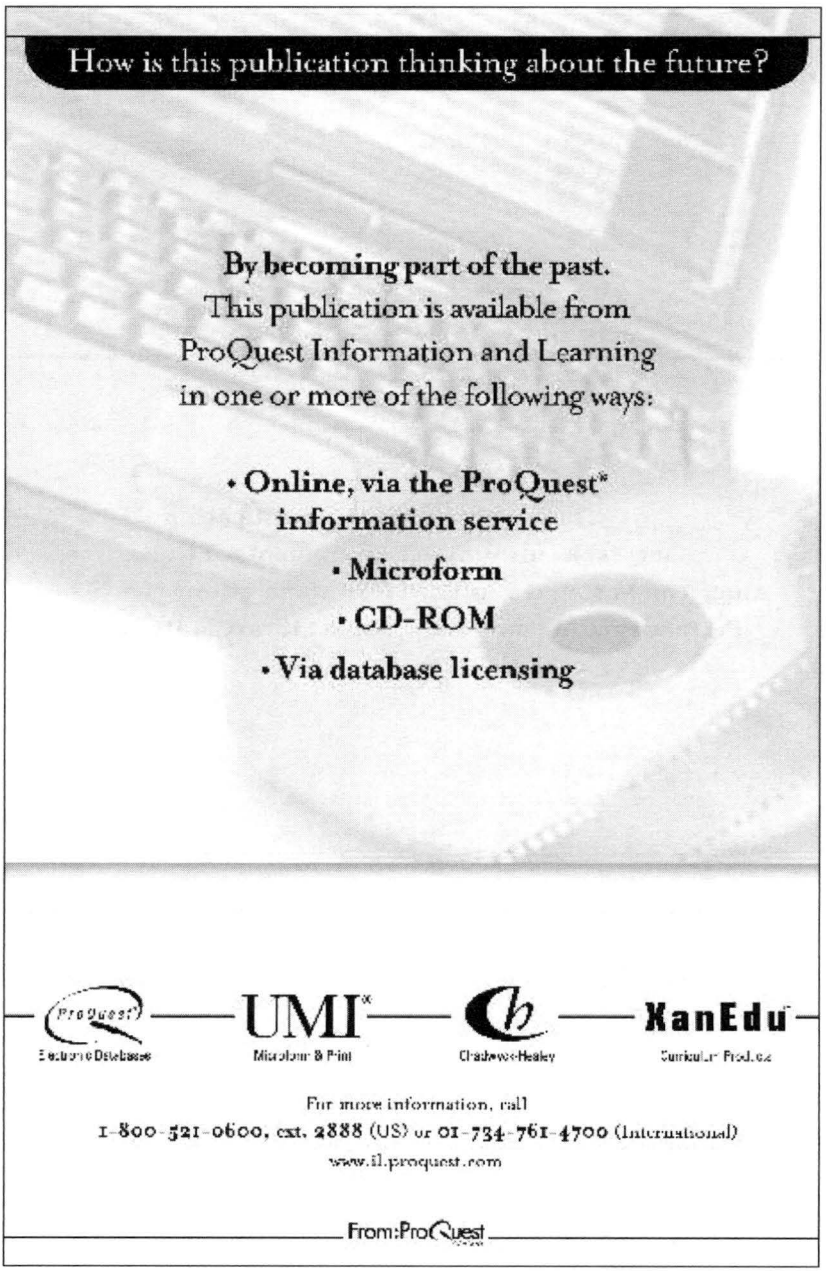
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