Poetry's Place and the Poet's Participation with Fields of Knowledge

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Does poetry writing have a place in writing across the curriculum? If so, what place? What is poetry, and what does it do that might make it valuable to learning academic subjects?

Although the writing-across-the-curriculum movement has demonstrated the effectiveness of expressive and transactional writing to assist subject matter learning, poetic writing remains nearly absent in classrooms and research studies. Yet, when the first theorists of discourse in composition—James Britton, James Moffett, and James Kinneavy–worked out the theoretical models for discourse that became, and remain, central for the research and teaching of writing, they included poetry (in its broad meaning of all literature) as a major mode and function of discourse. These and other theorists and researchers advanced arguments and evidence that poetry offers learners a way to imagine (and to image) through sudden global insight, to organize their experience, and to connect new knowledge to other areas of knowledge; yet, their appeals for poetry's place in a full curriculum have been only rarely heard beyond the elementary school level. Why this neglect? In an essay published in 1983, "The Relation of Thought and Language," Janet Emig demonstrated that even English curricula, as rhetoric and writing textbooks have given evidence since Hugh Blair's first (1784) text, have suppressed creativity. She concluded that the problem was a view of language solely as a "vehicle of communication" (Emig 35).

Since then, some degree of creativity has been restored to composition textbooks, but at the same time literature has become increasingly separated from the teaching of writing, research, and theories on composing. *College English*, for example, no longer publishes poetry or creative non-fiction.

And poetry written by students has suffered the worst neglect, by-and-large complete dismissal. In a summary overview of papers by top scholars envisioning the future of the field and presented at the Composition in the Twenty-First Century Conference, Lynn Z. Bloom critiques the almost total lack of concern for creative writing by the leading scholars in composition studies (276). Shirley Brice Heath's essay in that volume is the only one to present research on teaching creative genres. Reporting on two separate studies of adolescent writers and adult writers, Heath found that people frequently seek out and value creative genres in preference to "gate-opening" genres that lead toward economic advancement. She predicts that writing curricula will inevitably include a wider range of literacy practices that engage the fuller dimensionality of human existence.[1] If she is right, we will see a change in the current state of values Robert Scholes has described: the academy values consumption over production; students are consumers of what others have produced. Even in English departments, the status of the expert writers of literature is far below that of the consumer professionals–the historians, theorists, and critics. If student compositions have little value in a consumer-oriented discipline, even less value accrues to student poetry, which is the least valued sort of production. What Emig noted 20 years ago remains too often the case today: "Too often . . . the teacher [is] interested chiefly in a product he can criticize rather than a process he can help" (92-93).

The perception of language as communicative tool still holds sway and remains the central roadblock to understanding the value of the poetic as a process that assists learning. Despite two decades of theoretical work and research on social constructionism, deconstruction, and other poststructuralisms, the view that poetry is a distinct *kind* of language has been replaced only by a prevailing view that it is a subcategory of rhetoric, and this new perception has served to propel poetry further to the margins of the educational system. Poetry has come to be seen as yet another tool for representing—for conveying—the suppression of individuals through cultural systems. This view serves to disguise an older, and still current, view: poetry is self-expression; poetry merely reproduces what already widely exists; poetry conveys nothing new of knowledge value to a community. On the other hand, if writing is seen as a *process* for discovering

and developing thought, the processes writing poetry acti-vates engage *both* a fuller, more expansive discovery and de-velopment in which the individual actively learns something new. Because poetry remakes reality, it cannot be a mere tool of communication. The chief value of poetry in learning is its capacity to alter the old by incorporating new organiza-tions of reality through a thoughtful participation with and across domains of knowledge.

In this essay, I want to present the case that poetry has an important place in learning precisely because it enables this remaking of old constructs of knowledge into new orga-nizations. Poetry is actively *participatory*, engaging the writer in crossing boundaries among fields of experience and knowl-edge, breaking these into parts, selecting elements from con-structs and rearranging them in new patterns of connection in and across fields. Poetry-making has had this function historically from its earliest recorded times, and it retains this renewing function. This creative, reordering, renewing capacity makes poetry valuable to learning across the disci-plines.

As James Britton's theory of discourse functions has been the central model applied to writing across the curriculum (Fulwiler, *The Argument* 23-24), it seems most useful to con-sider how his category of the poetic has hampered poetry's value as writing to learn and how this category can be re-vised to define the literary as a mode in which learning hap-pens. Particularly at issue is Britton's naming the role of the poetic writer as *spectator* and placing poetry on a pole oppo-site the transactional in which the writer is *participant.* Britton's view suggests the writer is relatively passive, stepped back from specific reality to gain a global view. However the writer is not passive; the writer (and the reader of the poetic) actively participates in construction of a view of reality. To develop this point, I will first consider what Britton had to say about the poet as maker in the spectator role. Second, I will trace a brief history of the poet as a re-maker of knowl-edge. Third, I will consider how relevant contemporary liter-ary theory, particularly the phenomenological and anthropo-logical work of Wolfgang Iser, enables a view of the poet as re-maker. Finally, I will return to Britton to consider his writing on the spectator function and conclude with implica-tions on the value of the participatory role of the poetry writer to learning in the disciplines.

Britton and His Context: the Poet as Imaginative Player, Thinker, and Maker of Order in Language

The first theorists of discourse in the contemporary field of composition were engaged in the task of carving out a paradigm that could ground English in the manner of scientific disciplines. For Britton, as for others, the theory of discourse presented by Roman Jakobson at the Indiana conference on Style in 1958 provided the first such formulation, as it laid out a model of language kinds and functions not restricted to but including poetry. In his conference address, Jakobson was interested in locating the field of poetics within linguistics; as a result, his theory, and those built from it, distinguished the nature of discourse functions as *kinds* of verbal expressions. Jakobson divided discourse functions into six kinds, which were based on six constituent factors of language: context, message, contact, code, addresser, and addressee. All of these, he said, were found in every instance of speech, but one dominated in any speech instance (353). When the poetic function dominated, the kind of discourse was poetic; when the context was dominant, the discourse type was referential; when the addresser was dominant, the kind was expressive discourse. Of the six kinds of discourse based the six dominant functions, these are the three that became most important in Britton's theory. Jakobson asserted that the poetic occurred in all discourse acts. He defined the poetic as a free play of pattern-making: an imaginative play (not held to restrictions of "reality") made into ordered structures. The mode was marked by a high enough density of patterning that it called attention to language, to its madeness, to the materiality of construction dominating its representational and communicative functions. Tzvetan Todorov reaffirmed Jakobson's field definition and research direction in 1982, stating that poetry may be used by other disciplines, but the study of its semantic, verbal, and syntactic aspects were the territory of poetics (8). Poetry can be used in all disciplines because it presents existing views in dialogue with new views of all aspects of human concern: from politics to the natural world. Past, present, future; actual, imagined, and potential: all may be found and studied in poetic texts.

In 1953, Britton recognized poetry's broad and deep relation "to life itself," calling poetry a "strong instinctual drive." Poetry is "an interpretation of experience . . . a penetration of experience, not a mere purveying of a distilled essence, or

key formula, or a mathematical solution. There is something in it of a *reconstruction* of events–and yet an *ordered* reconstruction" (Britton, *Prospect* 21; emphasis in original). In the next three decades, Britton expanded and refined his definition of the poetic as construction, or *making.* He came to view the maker as primarily a "spectator," an "onlooker;" following D.W. Harding's work in psychology, Britton emphasized a stepped back, passive looking instead of the active constructive aspects of poetic activity. Britton was attempting to distinguish the social place of transactional writing from the poetic. And although Britton's discussions on the mental activity of poetry-making clearly show regard for its active nature, the term "spectator" that he settled on conveys neither the activity in consciousness nor the activity of re-making social/ cultural knowledge that is helpful in understanding how poetry writing involves acts of learning.

A Brief Historical Overview: Poetry's Place in Society and Culture as Remaking Knowledge

Poetry has played many roles in different cultures at different times, but one constant is its capacity to reorder structures of knowledge and experience into new orders, re-forming the old when new circumstances and experience require changes in knowledge. Poetry is a social institution in the wider culture beyond educational institutions and existed long before formal education. Before the development of written technology, knowledge was held in rhythmic chunks and narrative paradigms, which made it possible to remember information and ideas more easily. Knowledge was passed on when the oral poet re-assembled the chunks into verse form using paradigmatic outlines. Oral poets did not remember whole texts word-for-word but rather pieced parts of text together. The oral tradition of composition made incorporating change in knowledge—updating it—easy because the verse makers would incorporate new elements and leave out old. For centuries after the advent of writing, poetic forms remembered and supported the values of a culture while creatively renewing them. Poetry was a people's literary store, which held communal patterns of identity and values embodied as narrative and the metaphors out of which narrative is spun. The literary store gave models of understanding and action–guides to make coherent sense of self and society's fit in the world. The pleasure that poetic forms gave came to be re-

garded as force impelling acceptance of values and views presented in literary models; rhetoric and poetry were conflated until the Romantic period two centuries ago. That critical point in history coincided with the rise of modern science, which had by that time overtaken and supplanted a major aspect of poetry's traditional community and cultural function. At the same time, a critical shift occurred in the relationships of individuals to society, marked by the political revolutions in America and France. Poetry became more centered on individual expression, value, and views of the world. Poetry came to be a locus of the individual's envisioning new relations to the natural world and to social institutions (economic, political, religious, family, intimate couple, etc.). But poetry is not primarily a private art, even though it may be written and read primarily in private. Poetry's function of binding an individual to society and culture remains. What has shifted from previous times–and it has been a gradual shift–is the function of poetry as a place for the individual to reconfigure the binding relations in our present circumstance of rapid change and collision of cultures.

As a social institution, poetry serves to mediate between the culture and the individual. In poetry, the writer has a great deal of control in this mediating. Three institutionalized aspects support this control. First, poetry is a mode in which the writer may bring the whole of life–all knowledge, all contexts, and all dimensions of the person–psychological, intellectual, imaginative, emotional, moral, spiritual, even the physical as the breath is used in rhythmic organization and as the emotions begin in bodily sensation. A second aspect is that poetry is a zone of imaginative play, potential, and possibility, where new thoughts arise and are ordered in ways that renew the individual writer. Potentially, poetry may renew culture if a sufficient number of readers experience changed views through experiencing the new configurations available in the work. The third aspect is that poetry assumes a constructed speaker (often called a *persona* in the last 100 years) and addressee; the speaker and addressee inside the work are assumed not to coincide with poet and hearer/reader. This condition sets up the zone for imaginative play–a place for *what if?* What these three aspects mean for writing across the curriculum is that learners know they can draw from a rich knowledge base, play with possibility,

imagine the new, fit the new and old together, and make an ordered construct in which they relate themselves to something larger–the self to other fields, for example, to a body of course material, to a discipline, to other areas of culture and other aspects of his or her own life.

Contemporary Views: The Poet as Maker of Connections Between Self and "Fields" of Knowledge and Life

During the past 20 years, researchers and theorists working on identity issues in many disciplines have come to a consensus that one major aspect of the literary–narrative and its undergirding metaphors–is that it serves to form identity. Narrative is the vehicle by which individuals make their identities–their sameness and distinctiveness–in a community of others. The process is two-way: available cultural forms and materials make the individual, but the individual by making a narrative helps to remake–renew–culture (Habermas 136-7). Charles Taylor finds, in the loss of the grand heroic myths, a loss of the "enchantment of the world," which spelled the loss of connections between head and heart–between reason and the political, emotional, moral, and spiritual dimensions of life (3-4). The major imaginative framework for understanding one's connection to the world–for one's meaning-full place—was lost. Of the literary genres, short story and novel rely most heavily on narrative, but poetry has additionally significant lyric dimension, reaching out-of-time, beyond boundaries, toward the unknown, in a global direction in contrast to narrative's linear movement and structure. (Pure lyric is extremely rare.)

A clear view of poetry's constructing operations and value is presented in Wolfgang Iser's phenomenological and anthropological theories. In the 1970s, Iser developed an interpretive practice and theory of aesthetic response which he termed "a process of re-creative dialectics." Text, author, and reader are the three participants in re-creative interaction. The text is a "reformulation of an already formulated reality, which brings into the world something new that did not exist before" (Iser, *Act of Reading* x). An extension of Jakobson's value of the poetic function as an interplay via selecting and combining elements in new patterns, for Iser the literary is an interplay of patterns of the real into possible new organizations of the real, a dialectic mode since the patterns of the real and the potential interact with readers causing them to

notice and break down old schemata of reality. The dialectic engages a critical looking and potential changing of views of the real. The world of the text constructed by the author is a set of schemata incorporating conventional organizations of the real world and of literary genres. Readers actively construct meaning from the text's schemata using their prior knowledge of them. In literary texts that are not merely reproducing conventional social, cultural, and literary schemata (such as popular romance novels, for example), the world view constructed by the author and embodied in the text presents a critique of conventional schemata by setting them into a new order of relationship that brings them into view against potential relationships. Readers, in the process of constructing an understanding of the text, have to change their views of the world–which is held in schemata as the real– when they assemble the new arrangements of familiar schemata, or they cannot continue to read, to make sense of the text. Both the writing and the reading of literature require acts in consciousness that change ways the world is known, that is, known in human consciousness. Thus poetry is the *remaking of old orders of the world and language into new possible orders* that distinguishes the poetic from the transactional, for in the transactional mode, the participants have to *fit into* existing, conventional schemata of the real world and language use. Both the poetic and the transactional modes require the full range of cognitive abilities– comprehending, interpreting, analyzing, evaluating, and synthesizing. However, the poetic mode uses *all* of these in a richer expanse of world and personal dimensions and uses more intensively the partially unconscious processes of pattern noticing and making, which lead to new insight and knowledge.

For Iser, literary activity is necessary to human consciousness and bears a necessary renewing social/cultural function (*The Fictive* 246). In his early work, Iser focused on the processes of individuals reading individual texts by individual authors. He noted, however, that his ideas explained an essential need and process of human fulfillment (*The Act*, xi). Iser took up this larger human function of literature in *The Fictive and the Imaginary: Charting Literary Anthropology* (1993), proposing that the poetic, or literary, is an ordering mode that must constitute a primary human drive, or it would have disappeared. The poetic is necessary because it con-

nects the "real"—communally-held organized views, or schemata, through which we see and understand the world—to renewing potential views. Iser seeks to explain how the literary provides a cultural place in which the new organization can be tried out in experience as writers connect the imaginary to the real in new orderings, and readers experience the remaking of an old order into a new order. Selections of schemata and their elements are put into a network of new connections among schemata that cause the reader to raise them into consciousness, to consider them critically, to try out new orders of the personal, the social, and the cultural—new ways of ordering and experiencing ourselves and our world. Through the reader's process of experiential remaking, a change in the schemata of the real–the organization of its elements–is brought about. The shared schemata of the real can be changed in a society or culture if enough readers experience new possible ways the world (or a part of it dealt with in the text) might be. The sense of the self and society expands through the imagined versions of self and social realities and renders them flexible to further change. The same expansion happens in a society when enough readers engage in experiencing the imagined extensions of roles; the experiencing is an expansion of consciousness.

As an example of the literary's place as interplay for critique and imagining of potential renewing versions of the real, Iser examines the pastoral genre as a place of imagined mixing of social roles. The playful disordering and reordering of class and gender schemata was envisioned in various ways for several centuries in pastoral works before the roles in actual society began to break down. At the time of the political revolutions of the late eighteenth century, the pastoral ceased to exist, because its function as a place of imagined mixing was no longer necessary. The change in human consciousness had occurred to a sufficient extent to become actualized in the real world. The example of the pastoral demonstrates how the literary "crosses boundaries" of the real, imagines them differently, and composes a new possible order for them that may become part of the real. And it is literature's position in culture as removed from immediate tasks that allows its long term, flexible work to be done (Iser, *The Fictive* Ch. 2).

Revising Britton's Spectator Role:
The Writer as Participant with Fields of Knowledge

Except for its focus on active, participatory reordering of world views and its emphasis on the literary as pragmatic, Iser's re-creative dialectic model and his tri-partite model of individual renewing of social and cultural consciousness—the real— through imaginary and fictive means—share some features with Britton's functional model of discourse. And where they depart, Iser's views offer implications for learning processes.

The distancing from immediate, pragmatic work is the central point on which Britton differentiated the poetic mode from the transactional. The spectator role provided an explanation of non-doing that allowed this distinction to be made. But the conception restrains the view of a more complete range of thought processes, in favor of the immediacy of the work's being an object of value in itself at the expense of its long-range cultural work. (I retain the word "work" here, though repetitive, to give some of the meaning of the German term "Wirking" and because Iser emphasizes on the inadequacy of translating it as "response" or "effect," (*The Act* ix, Note 1)). Iser's model suggests that Britton's spectator role distinction fails to capture the operations of the constructing mind using language creatively for self- and culture-remaking and renewal.

Writing out of the era of formalist aesthetics, Britton is concerned with the nature of the finished individual and unique literary work in its relationship as unique and of interest "in itself" (Britton 1975, 93). Expanding and refining his model in 1982, Britton relied heavily on Jakobson and on Burkean and Kantian notions of the spectator in art through D.W. Harding and Widdowson (*Prospect* 46-58). Intent on building a functional theory of discourse, Britton emphasized the contemplative and "fine art" aspects of the poetic to distinguish it from the useful communicative work of the transactional. Here is Britton's definition of the three types of discourse:

> **Transactional** is the form of discourse that most fully meets the demands of a participant in events (using language to get things done, to carry out a verbal transaction). **Expressive** is the form of discourse in which the distinction between participant

and spectator is a shadowy one. And **poetic** is the form that most fully meets the demands associated with the role of spectator–demands that are met, we suggested, by MAKING something with language rather than DOING something with it. (*Prospect* 53; emphasis and parentheses in original)

Clearly, Britton does sees the poetic as active–as "making": the writer of poetry lets it be, so to speak, rather than putting it forward into a situation to accomplish something specific. In light of the discussion of Iser, the following distinction can be drawn instead: transactional writing does something *in* the world; poetic writing does something *with* the world. Transactional writing has, Britton says, a "localized" context, and the poetic has a "globalized" context (*Prospect* 55). So, the *restriction of contextual area* enables transactional writing to focus on a specific situation and task therein. Poetic writing, however, because it is global, encompasses more fields of knowledge and allows a freer play among discourses. Poetic organizing crosses situational and discourse boundaries, potentially using any available fields of knowledge in the making process. Its arena is global because it is not field-dependent or restricted.

Yet global in this sense does not mean holistic. Rather, it means the participant is moving across knowledge domains, searching for fit and for new ways of connecting their elements. The writer interacts with schemata: writers participate with world views, seeing through them, out of them, and beyond them as they select out of schematic intersections new views of order (Iser, *The Fictive* 9). The interaction takes place among areas of old knowledge and new knowledge, making the writer a creative participant with the old. This participation is social insofar as the institutional role of the poetry writer is assumed to be a re-configuring of the old into new organizations. Likewise, when readers experience a literary work, they participate with it creatively because they must bring their knowledge–the old schemata, as known–and remake it as they read the text. As a process, the writer is moving among the old formations, to a certain extent below the level of conscious awareness, searching for new patterns to bring into consciousness. These may arise as whole images, configurations, or discursive structures.

The process of writing creatively can be related to the process of creating new knowledge. Martin Greenman has applied Graham Wallas's four-stage model of the psychology of new thought to the formation of concepts in philosophy. Wallas's stages are preparation, incubation, illumination, and verification. The preparatory stage is an acquisition of material and ways of using the material (processes, methods). The incubation stage is unconscious; it happens out of sight and for this reason it is often neglected in curricular planning. Incubation cannot be seen directly; it cannot be taught; but it can be allowed, and the writer can be encouraged to emerge. The illumination stage is the sudden coming into awareness of an insight, the "click" or "eureka," the experience of new knowledge comes into view–"an immediate *seeing* of something that one has not seen before" (Greenman 126; emphasis in original). The verification stage, renamed "validation" by Greenman, is also conscious; it involves checking out the insight by whatever methods a discipline uses. The entire process is cyclical in that new knowledge goes into the preparatory base to be used for further thought–a feedback loop.[2]

Poetic thinking and writing and transactional thinking and writing (including disciplinary) both follow this process. They differ in the areas they range over and in the kind of ordering that has to be achieved. In disciplinary knowledge and transactional writing, the new insight has to be assessed for fit with existing structures, then either accepted in, discarded, or held as anomaly for subsequent cycles of thought. Researchers know this cycle well; they are learners, they produce new thought. When they arrive at a new insight that "checks out," it becomes knowledge new to the discipline. Students learning a discipline go through this process in order to learn course material. The old knowledge of a field is new to them. In a sense they recapitulate the core insights of the field when they gradually build up an understanding of its structure, details, and methods. They have to remake their old schemata to accommodate the new information. But the new knowledge does not stay within neat disciplinary borders. It bumps up against other areas of the individual's life, other fields of schemata. This "bumping" knocks the schemata in these other fields, which then requires that learners re-envision, rethink, and adjust the structuring of the other fields. An advantage is that this process adds to the preparatory base learners can use for other

thought, in the same field or in others. This is what happens when cross-boundary thinking emerges in new scientific insights, or in inventions, or in the formation of new fields, for example. Each piece of new knowledge alters the whole, and if some pieces cannot be made to fit, and a sufficiently substantial aggregate of them emerge, a new order of ideas–a new framework, or paradigm, may emerge (Emig, reviewing Kuhn 147-8). And, as Einstein reported, sometimes new thought arrives as image, not word, just as it does in poetry (Gates, *Creativity* 150). Poetry by contrast, is systematic within each poem; new insights must fit the developing system of order it is becoming. But poetry's insights can make connections within structures of a field or with other fields of knowledge and experience. These new insights all feed the preparatory base, for disciplinary learning and for other fields of the learner's life, with new schemata and their elements. The stages for re-creation of knowledge are congruent with Iser's literary re-creative dialectics; thus, offering the view that the process of re-creative learning is a poetic mode.-Britton's model has been widely applied to writing-to-learn pedagogy because his category of expressive writing provided a way of accessing the preparatory base, the store of schemata and elements out of which thought incubates, as a stage toward connecting and forming. In expressive writing, the role of the addresser is a "shadowy one," he says, where spontaneous thought and feeling, that is, whatever is coming into consciousness, can emerge. Writing gives thought a chance to emerge, even requires it, as writing in sentences connects new information to old. The purpose of writing in learning is to generate ideas that can be revised toward the end of either transactional work or poetic work. The shadowiness results, in his view, from an uncertain, loose mixing of the participant and spectator roles. Mixed in role, writing is mixed in structure, with a mix of felt and rational aspects. Writers can explore freely, letting their minds follow threads of meaning until understanding is reached, or if not reached, they can discover the lack of resolution. Anything a person experiences and knows can be brought forward. The function of writing is a wide-ranging search: possible connections and meanings can be tried out. There's no penalty for wrong direction; there is a continuing search for ideas. Like Britton's category of expressive, Iser's imaginary is immediately arising, loosely structured, drifting, the "matrix" of new ideas, to

use Britton's term with an emphasis on the root meaning of the word— "womb." As Britton envisioned it, the expressive was the beginning point for both the transactional and the poetic. Revision toward the transactional narrowed the domains to a local context, and revision toward the poetic moved the writing toward making order in a global context. In view of Iser, the category of expressive is subsumed in the poetic processes of consciousness. What for Britton is an expressive area of crossing back and forth loosely among domains and functions, knowledge and feeling, is for Iser the place for re-creative dialectic. Britton's stepped back spectatorial position is but one aspect of the imagining process as writer and world, reader and text, exchange roles in participatory interaction with the schemata we call knowledge.

The very meager research that exists on writing poetry to learn in the disciplines has given evidence that poetry writing helps students to learn course material and to learn it and value it more deeply.[3] I have explored how and why the poetic as renewing remaking brings about understanding, critique, integration, and synthesis of knowledge; how the poetry writer is a participant with fields of knowledge in the dialectical process of remaking; how the creation of new thought is initially a poetic process.

If Heath's prediction is right, creative writing will become essential—not an "extra"—to human life as our educational population changes and our world becomes increasingly globalized. One indication of this need is that poems began to appear in the media immediately following the events of September 11, and sales of poetry books tripled. In crisis, in confusion, people turn to poetry. They need to renew by remaking the torn views of the world. In totalitarian regimes, poetry acquires a high value; its suppression and regulation by the state and the vitality of banned literary works attest to this fact. As Heath says, people need poetry "at particular periods in their lives" (231). I would argue that as our culture intersects with increasing rapidity with other cultures, the students in our universities need the poetic as a participatory reordering, renewing art in order to deal with the burgeoning information and colliding views of the world and to re-create, intelligently, our world. Poetry writing not only assists learning, it assists meaningful connection of course knowledge to other areas of students' lives and pro-

vides a valuable art in which to continue to search out renewing thought and possibility.

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Endnotes

[1] Poetry is one of the "fine" arts, often classed dichotomously to the "useful" arts, such as medicine, business, engineering, even architecture, which crosses the boundaries of the distinction. As everyone involved in education is probably aware, the fine arts are the first to go when budgets are cut. They are perceived as "extras," not essential, not useful, an enhancement only. I was once told as much by a major media corporation when I was seeking funds—a mere $1,000—to print a collection of poetry written by women in a homeless shelter: the company was already giving money for food and shelter, and poetry was not important. Yet, the evidence of the women's statements and lives demonstrated the opposite, as I reported in "Poetry, Community, and the Vision of Hospitality: Writing for Life in a Women's Shelter."

[2] For a more detailed explanation of the creation of new knowledge, see Martin A. Greenman 1987; Rosemary L. (Gates) Winslow 1989 and 1993.

[3] I say "almost non-existent." A few publications exist on the topic: Marie Ponsot and Rosemary Dean's *Beat Not the Poor Desk* incorporates the literary knowledge of the two excellent poet-authors into a full writing curriculum that blends the ancient trivium with contemporary language and literary theory; Toby Fulwiler and Art Young collected

essays on literary writing in literature classes in *When Writing Teachers Teach Literature*; Art Young explores the use of James Britton's model of the poetic function, focusing on Britton's trait of poetry as including values; Michael E. Gorman, Margaret E. Gorman, and Art Young have done a fine study of students writing poetry in a psychology class; Louise Z. Smith explored the way metaphoric language exposes the gaps and darkness of the unknown, that language is inadequate to represent—the places we must "write" (hypothesize, interpret, understand); Winslow and Mische developed and reported on a curriculum for at-risk students that uses literary and visual art forms, elements, and processes to teach academic reading and writing; and A. Merril has edited a collection of poetry written by students enrolled in a wide range of courses, from humanities and sciences to architecture and engineering.