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Access and
English Studies

In this issue

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OPEN WORDS: Access and English Studies

is dedicated to publishing articles focusing on political, professional, and pedagogical issues related to teaching composition, reading, creative writing, ESL, and literature to open-admissions and "nonmainstream" student populations. We seek critical work in areas such as instructional strategies, cultural studies, critical theory, classroom materials, technological innovation, institutional critique, student services, program development, etc., that assist educators, administrators, and student support personnel who work with students in pedagogically difficult settings. Articles should consider the particularities of these settings— issues, for example, surrounding the identifier of "open access," intersections of race, class, gender, sexuality, and disability, regional and cultural differences, and the range of competencies students bring with them to classrooms— in light of the aims of English studies to empower students' critical and creative endeavors. We value works pertinent to specialists yet accessible to non-specialists, and we encourage submissions that take into account what interactions with students teach us about the broader, democratic goals of open-access educations and English studies.

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Editor's Introduction:

Displacement of Emotion and Identity in Composition Studies

LIKE MANY ACADEMICS, I turn to the simple games on my computer when I'm either stressed, facing a writing block, or wiling away time before a meeting. I play Solitaire, Free Cell, Spider Solitaire, and especially Hearts. I know this practice does not vary from the norm too much. However, I have always had a strange imagination, and it has taken over my playing of these games. Whenever I click on one of these games, I pretend I am a sports broadcaster of some sorts and do a running play-by-play in my mind. Since I cannot be both the broadcaster and the player, I refer to myself as the card player in the third person (occasionally verbalizing to the puzzlement of my colleagues; my family does not care as much. They know I'm weird). I imagine I am in some Las Vegas casino and that spectators are cheering and booing my every decision.

For Solitaire, Free Cell, and Spider Solitaire, I am, of course, playing alone so the broadcaster has no one else's moves to scrutinize. Since, in this little world of mine, I am the premiere player of these games, I am subject to all sorts of criticism during the broadcast. The color commentator can be especially harsh when he shows up. But essentially, the game is just me against the cards. I either win or lose. But Hearts is not that simple. You have to play Hearts against someone. The computer, thus, has to create three players to make it a competitive game. For whatever reason, the computer names them Ben, Pauline, and Michelle.

When I first started playing Hearts on the computer, I cast myself in the role of the rookie. The broadcaster thought I was a hotshot with too much ego and too little knowledge. And, indeed, the other three players had their way with me as I experimented with strategies to beat them consistently. As I learned the game, though, I realized I was developing a dislike of the other players, especially Pauline and Michelle. They seemed to make plays designed to favor each other, holding onto the Queen of Spades, for example, until they could dump it on me. The broadcaster would note the collusion between the two of them, but I couldn't seem to strike an alliance with Ben to counteract it. Eventually, though, my strategy developed to a point where I could outsmart them. Their hatred for me grew as they lost game after game.

When I bought a laptop computer for my home a few years ago, I did something drastic. I wanted to start fresh and get away from the animosity between myself and the others. So I switched the default names. I created three new novices who were going to try their luck against Bill the Master—Veronica, Ed, and Jackie. They were reverent toward me and took their losses stoically. I liked playing against them, but I found after a while that I did not respect Veronica's game as much as I did the others. She seemed to make silly plays and, frankly, did not appear ready

to play in this upper tier of Hearts players, in front of all these fans, in this prestigious Las Vegas casino. My disdain for her became a topic of conversation between the play-by-play announcer and the color commentator. They often found fault with me, claiming I played in ways to expose Veronica's weaknesses and often undermined my own play against the others, resulting in defeats that were simply not necessary. But I liked playing against the three of them.

For my new office computer, though, I created other players, so I now compete against Jeff, Susan, and Kelly there and Veronica, Ed, and Jackie at home. I have immense respect for the new players. They all employ sound strategy, and I find myself in very intense games. Susan knows the game well. Her cleverness confounds me. Jeff can play wildly, seeming to hold high cards for no good reason, but he wins often enough to make it interesting. Kelly is shrewd but quiet. We have some awesome contests. When I beat them soundly, I am proud.

My daughter, Katrina, now attending my university, will stop by my office once or twice a week (or more if she needs money), and she will catch me playing Hearts, wondering what it is I'm muttering under my breath. One time, as she sat down with her lunch, she heard me complaining about a particularly tricky move Susan had made that threw a wrench into my strategy. The broadcaster was wondering what Thelin would do now. I looked at Katrina and said, "She's so smug," referring to Susan. Katrina, who, again, knows I'm weird, still thought this behavior was odd. "Daddy," she scolded me. "Susan's not real. You're the only real person in the game."

I thought of Katrina's remarks as I was preparing this issue of *Open Words*. Too often when compositionists talk about students, we will impose identities upon them. While in Hearts, I have created identities for players whose moves are determined by a program, our students are very real, even the ones we might only know from a projection in a distance learning classroom or as a mere name in an online community. We perceive little clues based upon patterns in their writing and start constructing identities for them. Some of these identities are ubiquitous among composition practitioners—the struggling student, the ESL writer, the student with proficiency who just won't push herself harder. While we create positive identities from time-to-time, the negative ones stick with us.

When we create negative identities, we have an emotional response. We react to caricatures, really not all that different from my reactions to Veronica—some of those reactions appearing in our written comments to students, some of them affecting the manner in which we teach, some of them finding their way into hallway discussions with colleagues. In so doing, I fear, we fail to explore the genuine feelings that these very real students have. In fact, the more that we create an identity for the students, the more the students become those identities, at least in the way the institution treats them. Certainly, one of our roles as educators should be to respond to the emotions of the students—their needs, their concerns, their joys and sorrows—rather than the emotions we generate toward caricatures that end up defining students.

Through historical and case study research, I believe the articles in this issue respond to the

challenge of allowing students to create their own identities, especially in relation to the place in which they find themselves. Our lead article for this issue is Nathan Shepley's "When the Margins Move: Lessons from the Writing of One University's First Female Graduate." Shepley studies Margaret Boyd, the first female graduate of Ohio University, and traces her development as a writer, which seemed to parallel the amount of nurturing she received. "Affective Matters: Effective Measures for Transforming Basic Writing Programs and Instruction," written by Kim Davis, Suzanne Biedenbach, Cara Minardi, Amanda Myers, and Tonya Ritola, looks at one institution's efforts to transform remediation, arguing for an affective pedagogical model of instruction. Readers will hear real students coming to grips with their writing. William DeGenaro's "'Where Did All the White Girls Come from?': Difference and Critical Empathy in and out of the Service Learning Classroom" picks up on the notion of critical empathy as an important teaching goal. DeGenaro views empathy as a rhetoric and problematizes a service learning incident at a foster home through that lens, showing critical empathy as something moving beyond sentimentality toward consciousness raising. Finally, Lisa Lebduska studies the history of the G.I. Bill and the reaction of English departments toward it in "Composing in the Wake of War: The G.I. Bill and the Teaching of English." She shows the many identities placed upon returning soldiers and connects the outcomes of the bill to aspects of teaching writing still with us today.

I suspect that many instructors possess enough reflection to realize how much we rely on profiles of students and how damaging they can be. In Basic Writing scholarship, for example, much has been done to complicate notions of who the "Basic Writer" is. We understand that such a student really does not exist. Yet, I worry that we continue to fall back upon such caricatures, often in subtle ways. As I look at some of the suggested assignments in textbooks advocating the genre approach, I see the caricature of the successful student emerging—students who have life experiences appropriate for a memoir assignment, students who have a sub-culture they can study through an ethnography, students who have read enough to craft an effective literacy narrative. In defining the type of student who will succeed, we also implicitly create the type of student who will struggle. My hope is that this issue of *Open Words* will problematize some of the assumptions we make. For while I will continue to impose characteristics on Veronica and the rest during my Hearts contests, our students deserve better. When I log out, Veronica is gone. Our students still remain, even when we log out, figuratively or literally.

William Thelin
January 2014

Nathan Shepley

When The Margins Move: Lessons from the Writing of One University's First Female Graduate

IN THE INAUGURAL ISSUE of _Open Words_ (fall 2006), contributor William DeGenaro called for scholars to study the politics and history of basic writing at specific institutional sites. Spurred by Mary Soliday's research at the City University of New York and aware of teaching challenges unique to other institutions, DeGenaro argued, "We need to localize the history of basic writing and locate the origins of English remediation at our own institutions" so as to better understand the relationships between higher education institutions and surrounding community members (57). Since then, scholars such as Kelly Ritter, Nicole Pepinster Greene, and Patricia J. McAlexander have produced local histories that describe college writing programs designed to reach students whose writing has been labeled, somehow or other, "basic"; and this body of work has produced institutionally flexible and widely accepted program goals. Among the characteristics of "the successful writing program" envisioned by Greene and McAlexander in their introduction to _Basic Writing in America: The History of Nine College Writing Programs_ are the following (here summarized):

- The program's students have been accepted to the institution.
- Diverse student populations are represented in the program.
- The program's work is integrated into the institution.
- Faculty support the program's goals.
- The program's leaders adapt writing instruction to changing needs.
- Experienced and reliable faculty members teach in the program.
- The program is not stigmatized by alienating labels. (17)

To my knowledge, all of the characteristics above, particularly the push to include basic writing in institutionally recognized courses and programs (DeGenero 57-58; Ritter 91), have the general support of writing teachers and researchers. Furthermore, it takes only a small step to adapt Greene and McAlexander's goals to the teaching of marginalized students, by which I mean students who, due to structural inequalities in education (see Ritter 140) or inequalities attributed to identity markers (e.g., race, gender, or age), must leap more hurdles than most students in order to satisfy academic requirements. Studies showing a need for targeted student support and

dedicated faculty now flourish in local studies of *marginalized* student writers in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Hobbs; Welsch; Gold; Kates).[1]

But what I find most striking about Greene and McAlexander's characteristics of "the successful writing program" is that as with many pedagogical and administrative recommendations supported by local historical research, the characteristics could apply to the case of a student named Margaret Boyd, who in 1873 made institutional history by becoming the first female graduate of the 1804-founded Ohio University in Athens, Ohio. Boyd had been accepted formally to Ohio University. Her gender identity was acknowledged in college catalogues after her first year as a student. She worked alongside her male peers in classrooms taught by male professors, inaugurating a period of gender diversity that would blossom thereafter at her institution (Davis 10). Her educational needs were noticed by at least one prominent professor who advised her in informal settings. By the time of her graduation, Boyd appeared anything but stigmatized; her peers were instructed to view her graduation as an honor to their university and graduating class.[2] However, for all this inclusion and attentiveness, Boyd emerged from her university a writer exceedingly well prepared to continue writing *at* Ohio University. Soon after graduating and relocating to an employment site where different expectations and interactions structured her daily life, she exhibited few signs of adapting and her writing grew narrow in focus, flat in tone, and brief to the point of nonexistent.

Thus, in this essay I use the case of Margaret Boyd to propose an amendment to insights gleaned from histories of basic writing programs and marginalized writers. Whereas previous local histories have pluralized notions of students, teachers, and institutions (Moon 4) and have established reasons for current writing instructors to think about institutional particularity (Ritter 9; De-Genero 57), I argue that our historical studies, if they are to inform our current writing classes and programs, should also explore the significance of students' *movements across institutions*. In Patricia Donahue and Gretchen Flesher Moon's edited collection *Local Histories: Reading the Archives of Composition*, Kathleen A. Welsch comes closest to such a study when she analyzes college student Mahala Jay who in the 1850s attended Oberlin College followed by Antioch College. Yet after summarizing differences between Midwestern and Northeastern attitudes toward higher education, Welsch focuses on the influence of Richard Whately and Samuel Newman's rhetoric manuals

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1. As I widen my scope to include marginalized student writers, I heed Mary Soliday's point that in the 1980s-90s, owing to problematic impulses that diverted attention away from economic inequality, many colleges and universities conflated the terms *basic* and *remedial* with ethnic minority students (112). One reason that I use the category *marginalized writers* throughout this essay is that I see the term accounting for students who were categorically denied equal educational and occupational opportunities in the mid-late nineteenth century, my primary period of focus.

2. Also, Boyd had been enrolled in Ohio University's Preparatory Department during 1868-69, her first academic year at this institution (Ohio University). Preparatory departments operated as precursors to developmental education and a way for nineteenth-century colleges and universities to offer "subfreshmen coursework to sustain enrollments" (Soliday 27).

on Jay's college writing (17). Still deserving detailed study are the specific kinds of interaction that differentiated the daily Oberlin College experience from the daily Antioch College experience, and ways that Jay prepared or didn't prepare at Oberlin for a rhetorical education at a differently configured institution. Nowhere can we see the effects of these factors as clearly as through the writing of a student's dealings with one institution followed by another.

I pick up with this concern, albeit by focusing on a student at a different pair of institutions, one academic and the other occupational. Although Margaret Boyd was but one student, her movement from college to a post-college workplace is a characteristic applicable to the lives of many students, past and present, and a characteristic that should help those of us teaching today use "local conditions both on and off campus" (DeGenero 66) to fine-tune our writing pedagogies. In 2006, DeGenero worried that insights taking the form of individual literacy narratives fail to engage with systems of power, with "the broad social context of literacy" (55). But as I explain in the next section, Boyd's words, emerging from and describing her growth at two institutions, invite analyses of institutionally facilitated relations that structure everyday life. Her case suggests that unless buttressed with sensitivity to institutionally specific influences, generous academic support given to marginalized writers and the full integration of marginalized writers into composition programs may lead the writers to conclude that mastery of course expectations equals mastery of rhetorical awareness—or, more bluntly, completing coursework equals success. Moreover, Boyd's case alerts us to the need to view marginalization itself as contingent on intra- and inter-institutional factors. For one thing, Boyd's status as female gave her difficulties at Ohio University and at the high school in Monroeville, Ohio, where she then taught, but it was only at the former site where, nurtured by a certain support system, her commitment to her writing improved. For another thing, her gender, which I argue is directly related to the challenges that she faced, worked in conjunction with other factors at Ohio University and the Monroeville High School to affect her writing experiences.

Even if modern-day students continue to be marginalized in various ways within and across institutions, one factor linking many of them to Margaret Boyd is their status as academic firsts. Perhaps, like Boyd, they are the first female student to attend and graduate from a particular university, or more likely the first student in their family or neighborhood to enroll in college, the first student of color at their college to receive a certain scholarship, the first out-gay or -lesbian student at their college to obtain a campus leadership position. If our work to assist writers from previously excluded or unrecognized groups attends to the influence of multiple institutional sites on rhetorical practices learned in college, we stand to help the writers plan for difficulties of the kind that ensnared even a student who made history by destroying gender barriers at her university.

Method and Justification

The writing that Boyd left behind constitutes a diary in which she recorded her thoughts about her immediate surroundings from January to December 1873, a period encompassing the

second half of her senior year at Ohio University (when she took an elocution class that completed her rhetorical education) followed by her first term as a high school teacher in Monroeville, a few counties north.[3] While this diary was not a composition in the sense of a piece of writing completed for college credit, it was a document that Boyd treated as a record of her writing progress and her social and intellectual development. In her first entry, from January 1, 1873, she wrote, "This book was given to me Dec. 25th by sister Kate [i.e., Catherine Boyd, Margaret Boyd's older sister]. I must try and write every day. In after years it may be nice to look over. I must try to improve a great deal this year, every way" (her emphasis). For my purposes, her diary entries provide important information in two ways: (1) by showing local interactions that bore on Boyd's outlook on her writing and her intellectual development at Ohio University and at the Monroeville High School, and (2) by illustrating changes in her writing's focus, tone, and regularity after she moved from one site to another. I examine the latter point in reference to her Monroeville-based diary entries because these show stark differences from her earlier university-based entries.

The main interactions Boyd discusses that affect her outlook on her writing and her intellectual development entail the presence of a mentor whose influence extends beyond a single venue, guidance from multiple sources about how to handle new problems, and the availability of peers willing to speak up on her behalf. At Ohio University, these factors assumed the form of a professor who also acted as a minister and administrator, a professor and several classmates and friends who offered her advice, and classmates who showed support for her even if faculty did not. At the Monroeville High School, comparable versions of these factors are nearly absent, limited to occasional interventions from an apparently well-meaning colleague and brief visits from out-of-town friends. In tracking the rise and fall of these kinds of interactions in Boyd's diary, I heed the well-supported point that many nineteenth-century college students were taught to value abstract, impersonal writing (Welsch; Simmons) and not diary writing, which was coded as feminine (Johnson; Miller). However, if we take seriously the claim that for many nineteenth-century women, literacy was "life, for in their diaries they could shape and control their experiences by means of mastering language" (Temple and Bunkers 198, their emphasis), then we should examine a female student-turned-teacher's diary writing for the clues it offers about a writer's commitment to, and feelings about, her writing. Boyd's own words, then, provide the focal point for my analysis, with other primary and secondary sources providing contextual detail.

To focus, via a writer's writing, on institutional issues as I'm doing is to evoke the role of *nomoi*, or the singular *nomos*, in determining one's rhetorical effectiveness. In her 1991 book *Rereading the Sophists: Classical Rhetoric Refigured*, Susan C. Jarratt explained that *nomos* "designat[es] the human, and thus necessarily discursive, construction of changeable codes" (74), which pertain

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3. The original copy of Margaret Boyd's diary is held in Series 2, Box 1, Folder 17, of the Boyd Family Collection (MSS 15), Robert E. and Jean R. Mahn Center for Archives and Special Collections, Alden Library, Ohio University, Athens, OH. My first exposure to Boyd's diary was through this archive. For subsequent reviews, I used the Ohio Memory Digital Collection's digitized version of the diary.

to communication and other areas of life. Jarratt stressed that "by implication the term could be taken to deny the possibility of any discourse—'literary' or 'philosophic,' for example—isolated from the operation of social customs and political power" (74). In my study, I find that Boyd did not manage to change the *nomoi* of her post-graduation place of employment, yet the modern-day work of tracing others' influences on her, discerning the forms and locations of that influence, cultivates awareness of how intra-institutional customs shaped her writing.

Although gradually they have been subsumed by recent and expansive discussions about writing ecologies and economies, Jarratt's and other scholars' rehabilitations of *nomoi* (e.g., Lindblom) continue to offer a helpful frame for analysis. *Nomoi* might be understood generally, for example, as "socially relative customs" (McComiskey 33), but they also might be conceived more precisely as "continuously renegotiated agreements for the making of meaning that constitutes the discourse work of a particular community" (Lindblom qtd. in Gillam 55). Ken Lindblom's emphasis on social conventions as made and remade from community to community applies to my study because the interactions that Boyd discusses were constructed and reconstructed based on each web of human activity in which she participated, each institution in which she claimed membership. By looking at Boyd's writing during and after college, we do the important work of exposing the danger of focusing on only one of those social webs—for Boyd, to be sure, but also for writers today who navigate various discourses as they write their way through college and hopefully beyond.

Outsider and Insider: Margaret Boyd at Ohio University

In addition to being the first female graduate of Ohio University, Margaret Boyd was the first female student enrolled at the University, and during her first year at this institution, catalogues listed her as the gender-ambiguous "M. Boyd" (*Ohio University*). This is to say that her gender mattered, a point reiterated each time a twentieth- or twenty-first-century historian remembers her because she was female in a certain time and place.

In order to see more clearly how gender marginalized Margaret Boyd at Ohio University, we must first understand the degree to which identity factors besides gender worked in her favor for this site's administrators and faculty. In terms of geography, age, and family background, she was very much an insider. She grew up just a few miles east of Athens, and shortly after her father's death in the summer of 1867, her family moved to the middle of the town. Her admission to Ohio University in 1868 made her twenty-three years old, easily old enough to avoid justifiable accusations of immaturity. But perhaps most important is the fact of her family connections. Many of Boyd's siblings had strong ties to Ohio University or to the high school closest to it. One of her brothers, Hugh, graduated in 1859 from the University, became a minister and professor, and "was at one time offered the Presidency of Ohio University," according to the recollection of one of Margaret Boyd's classmates (Davis 9). A second brother, William, assisted Ohio University's chair of the Preparatory Department in the mid 1860s (Hoover 135) and graduated in 1866 from the University (Hoover 139). And Kate, the sister who had given Margaret Boyd her diary, exerted

lower-level educational influence by becoming principal of Athens High School in 1865 (Davis 9). A broader though no less relevant point concerns the fact that in 1842, Margaret Boyd's maternal uncle, Dr. Charles Elliott, co-founded Ohio Wesleyan University where he worked with Solomon Howard, President of Ohio University from 1852 to 1872—a period encompassing all but Boyd's final year of college. Besides this advantageous connection, Dr. Elliott exerted statewide influence through his editorship of a Methodist newspaper (*The Western Christian Advocate*) and his articles on popular issues of the day (e.g., slavery) (Davis 8). Too, the Elliotts were prominent Methodists, as were many of Ohio University's leaders and supporters at that time. By heeding these details, we see that Margaret Boyd's ties to Ohio University leaders failed to save her from extensive, perhaps exceptional, criticism and hardship during college. Based on her diary entries, her gender continued to attract special challenges.

During the first half of 1873 (the last half of her senior year at the University), Boyd referred repeatedly to the influence of her professor, William Henry Scott, who taught several classes, including rhetoric, and who had recently become president of the University. His multiple duties, including unofficial roles such as counselor and advisor, give us a sign of institutional *nomoi* that structured Boyd's experiences. In early 1873, Scott served as professor of Boyd's elocution class, which involved students writing and then presenting orations before Scott and the rest of the class members. (As Gerald Graff and James A. Berlin have noted, in the early 1870s, required composition courses were not yet established at most colleges and universities. Rather, much of the in-class and out-of-class writing that students did was designed to prepare the students for public readings and debates.) This dynamic is noteworthy because even if, as Wendy Hayden has found, "The woman speaker was less of a novelty or rarity by the 1870s" (451), descriptions from Boyd's diary suggest that her experiences in a male-dominated public speaking class still challenged the class's conventions and pushed Boyd to perform in a forum that was well outside her comfort zone. As we shall see, the gendered spatialization that Nan Johnson describes in *Gender and Rhetorical Space in American Life, 1866-1910*, which marked "orations, serious literary poems, and essays on intellectual and political issues…[as] the province of men" (34), inflicted a high degree of social stress on Boyd, producing a situation that makes the general sense of spatial transgression experienced by many marginalized writers particularly visible.

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The difficult matter of elocution class aside, Professor Scott's involvement in Boyd's life extended to a range of activities inside the classroom and out—and this too is noteworthy as an aspect of *nomoi* that characterized Boyd's late-college life, helping her to reflect on her experiences and see how particular communication challenges pertained to each kind of campus activity. In her

diary, Boyd alludes to sermons given by Scott, visits from Scott to her home, and the occasional appearance of Scott at literary society meetings in which Boyd participated. Readers of her diary will find that Professor Scott, who at times caused her stress, especially during January and February of 1873, just as often served as a source of guidance and inspiration. Thus, in her senior year, a large part of Boyd's rhetorical education, that is, the instruction she received concerning how to speak and write effectively, revolved around Professor Scott and the many spheres of student life that he entered. Overspilling the boundaries of coursework, Boyd's rhetorical education took a whole-person cast fitting Arthur E. Walzer's definition of rhetoric: "Historically, rhetoric is a complete art for shaping students—influencing how they think…how they express themselves…and how they move and sound" (124). Boyd did "try to improve a great deal" in her writing, as she wrote in her diary on January 1, but that work served as one component of a larger process of performing as a member of a male-dominated environment.

However, the existence of support at Ohio University did not negate adversity. Boyd's expressions of pain include shame at not keeping up with her peers academically, as when she wrote, "I study hard and do not like to miss any thing and when I do I can hardly keep the tears away from my eyes" (January 16). The painful feelings she discusses include fear of disapproval concerning her writing and speaking specifically, as when she wrote,

> Read a selection in ~~reading~~ elocution class this morning. I am to be no [sic] essay next
> Saturday. I am getting so I fairly dread to write. It seems to me that I can not write as
> well now as I could one year ago. Prof. Scott is so critical I am afraid to let him see or
> hear any thing that I write. –I study some today. (January 18)

Perhaps her fear was justified in light of other entries from January and February that link Boyd's discomfort to Scott's physical or intellectual presence. For example, one day she wrote, "Prof. Scott lectured [at a church service], [sic] He spoke on the importance of having a sound body. I feel lonely today" (January 26). And: "Raining and very slippery today. I do not need to go [out] this afternoon[.] Scott is away, I am so glad" (February 3). Then, after days of referencing her fatigue and her diligence in preparing an oration for elocution class, she noted an in-class failure whose details go unspecified but whose effects seem to her very real: "I speak my oration this morning. O! how I felt. I could not keep from crying all the way home. O dear!" (February 8). Such outpourings appear most commonly in the opening two months of Boyd's diary entries, though comments about her struggles did not vanish with the approach of her June 26 graduation date.

These and other entries assume another level of meaning because despite whether Boyd always *states* a connection between gender and her perception of her academic problems, such a connection is made for her by the fact that no woman prior to her had attended Ohio University. Too, her awareness of institutional lag time in the journey toward gender equality would have been compounded by any exposure she had to nationally circulating advice literature linking "success with manhood" and extra-domestic "failure with womanhood" (Hilkey qtd. in Johnson 50), to say

nothing of influential faculty and administrators at other colleges and universities who portrayed women as "too weak" for college and likely to "weaken higher education by their feminization of it" (Ricks 62-63). So when, after receiving her exam grades, Boyd wrote, "No wonder I am not marked as well as the boys. I could do as well as they if I were as strong" (June 7), we should see her acknowledgment of a hierarchical gender binary as more than a throwaway remark. Shortly thereafter, a mere ten days before graduation, she shared, "Prof. Scott shows me my diploma today. I do not like the masculine endings. What a sad thing it is to be a girl" (June 16), thereby reacting to her gendered otherness in a document meant to serve as the culminating symbol of her academic achievements. Finally, when preparing for her commencement ceremony itself, which in that time period could involve days of oratorical events, she commented that she met her friend and classmate John Merrill Davis to prepare: he read his "oration" to her while she, as a female, read her "essay" to him (June 25). These moments underscore the fact that even as the well-connected first female student enrolled at Ohio University, she never fully transcended gender-based restrictions, and the effects of those restrictions permeated her diary entries.

If viewed beyond the context of her institution, Boyd's difficulties seem still more considerable and her triumphs somewhat modest. After all, she became the first female graduate of her university many decades after female students began graduating from nearby Oberlin College on a yearly basis. She left her university with less visual grandeur than did the congress gaiters-attired Lydia Short, the second female graduate of Indiana's Butler University, over a decade earlier (Weidner 259). And her graduation year places her on the eve of the largest demographic change to have affected American higher education in that era: the rise of female students (Soliday 45-46). So I must stress that in this study I am tracing signs of the supportive (and constraining) interactions that structured the writing and educational outlook of a student in a particular institutional context. At Ohio University, a classical education in the tradition of early nineteenth century educational ideals still reigned, and, contrary to the growth found at newer agricultural and mechanical universities, enrollment stayed low and local through the 1870s. Boyd's peer John Merrill Davis recollects that the class of 1873 consisted of seven students (10). Thus, small accomplishments for a student such as Boyd may be read as breakthroughs, and the fact that Boyd recorded struggles as she referenced supportive figures and positive changes of attitude gives us much to consider.

Entries from January to June 1873 that showed Boyd meeting others' approval and experiencing academic progress increasingly countered her negative entries. More importantly, these entries expanded in detail and came to constitute the bulk of her comments as she finished her coursework. The entries, which highlight *nomoi* concerning the depth and breadth of her support system, allude to female companions who were beginning to take part in university life, supportive male peers who in time appeared to constitute most or all of her elocution classmates, and gradually Professor Scott himself. An early example appeared after a week of negative entries, when she shared that a female friend assisted her by sharing a quote that read, "No real progress without pain & labor" (February 25). Boyd referred to this friend and similar people as her "sisters"

and expressed appreciation for their kindness. Additionally, in some of her February entries Boyd mentioned moments of in-class laughter and restorative visits to friends. Concerning her male classmates, Boyd began noticing their support as early as January when she wrote, "Scott wants to know if I ever speak orations. I say, 'no.' He says he would like to have me speak an original oration two weeks [from now] if I will. The boys say yes I must" (January 25). Although we now know the anguish that she experienced on February 8 when she delivered her speech, it is worth remembering that initially she, a woman in what for 1873 was still a male-dominated space, received encouragement from both her male professor and her male peers.

Looking ahead to Boyd's last few weeks as a student, we see two types of support from her peers, support that points to features of *nomoi* that her post-graduate web of social activity would fail to reconstruct. The first type of support coexisted with the limitations that she experienced as a woman and gave her signs of shared peer resistance to established rules; the second type of support yielded opportunities to overcome her setbacks. The former type appeared on May 24:

> I do not debate as the boys want me to. Scott requests me to write an essay. The boys do not want me to do it but I guess I must, [sic] I think myself that Scott might tell me what…he does expect of me, but I will do the best I can any how. I would not have cared so much if the boys had not taken it up so quick[.] They are good & I like them.

Despite the fact that Scott asked her to write an essay, presumably unlike his request to his male students to debate, Boyd's male peers wanted her to join them in debating as they do. Their support, whatever its exact form, was sufficient to make her care more about this gender-based difference in expectations. Furthermore, beyond mere support, the input of friends resulted in a changing of gender restrictions in at least one important instance. On June 17, a day after she noted her sadness about her diploma's masculinized word endings (this document would have been written in Latin), she wrote that two friends, at least one of whom was male, accompanied her "to Scott's room." She added, "I tell Scott I do not want a diploma with masculine endings and he says he will have it fixed. We four look it over together and find there are only two words that need changing." Given the gender distinctions that color many of her other interactions, I suspect that the gender of at least one of Boyd's friends, rather than her group's size, gave her thoughts about her diploma an effect that they would otherwise lack for a professor who was accustomed to graduating male students.

Her evolving relationship with Scott became more apparent around the same time. By the semester's final weeks, we find a turnaround in Scott's responses to her orations. On May 10, with a note of surprise, Boyd recorded, "Scott rather praised me." Weeks later she attended a class party at Scott's home where she shared that she had "a nice time" (June 10). On June 18, eight days before her graduation date, she wrote, "Had a long talk with Scott today, get back my essay. He says I need not fear about it" (June 18). It is worth remembering that this assurance about her essay came soon after her June 7 entry in which she worried about not being "as strong" as her male

peers. Then, only four days before graduation, she remarked on a public lecture that she heard at church, a lecture whose speaker goes unnamed, though it is likely to have been Professor Scott in his role as university president. She wrote, "[The lecturer] tells the boys that they may well be proud that they belong to the class that contains the first lady graduate. I can hardly keep the tears from my eyes such a day" (June 22). In this formal venue for guidance—a venue that Boyd treated as a regular and significant site of instruction, her diary entries suggest—the lecturer framed Boyd's status as a point of pride for Boyd's class as a whole. Here, prior to the commencement day's events, we find a public and authoritative endorsement of Boyd's part in the University, a reversal in the *nomoi* of the University's earlier (1868-69) masking of Boyd's gender.

However, it was her graduation-day entry that most vividly conveyed the status she had attained after completing her elocution class, among others, and becoming her university's first female graduate. On this day she referenced speeches given by other students and the essay from which she, as a woman, read. But signs of her difference as a woman and lingering doubts do not trump her feelings of worthiness upon seeing and hearing others' support:

> Day of all days—Commencement day for the class o [sic] .73 [sic] They all do well. Do not forget any of their pieces. I was so very ~~tired~~ frightened before I went up on the stage that I thought I would fail completely. I did much better than I feared. They cheered me as I went up and I think that helped me. I received two boquets [sic] one from Ema and one from Kate Dana. After we are dismissed so many come to congratulate me. I get tired of it. (June 26)

If Boyd had reservations about her university or knew of reservations that her university had about her, she made no mention of them. Instead, she noted the crowd's cheering, the bouquets awarded her by female supporters, and the apparently exhausting number of people who congratulated her. This entry combined with the validation of an authority figure four days earlier in the presence of her male peers demonstrates Boyd's newfound comfort within her cohort: not only had she advanced in her studies and graduated from a previously all-male institution, but she would leave a historic example to future generations of students at Ohio University.

Beyond recording a marginalized writer's rise to local prominence, Boyd's early 1873 diary affords an intimate archive of factors that accompanied her academic progress, factors that may warrant updates as they are applied to higher education institutions today. Evident in the *nomoi* structuring her rhetorical education in that time and location were her guidance beyond classroom walls, guidance from people with the power to influence university customs, and the contributions of students who valued their first female member. These at least overlap modern-day composition-ist Sara Webb-Sunderhaus's defense of the "personal connection" students in basic writing classes feel when the students talk with their instructor and write about their "thought processes and feel-ings." Also, the cross-venue emphasis in factors that constructed Boyd's connection to her writing at Ohio University is echoed in Webb-Sunderhaus's desire for "multiple support structures that go

beyond a writing program" (111).

However, I think the most important lesson from Boyd's diary for those of us who work with writers from underrepresented groups in our composition classes is that our ongoing focus on student achievement at the university level may lead us to overestimate our students' preparation to tackle complex communication challenges at non-academic occupational sites. As the second half of Boyd's diary shows, even the most vivid of college success stories—and Boyd's case was touted by those who knew her in college as precisely that (Davis 10)—can, if followed beyond graduation, expose disconnects between university success and other site-specific successes.

When the Margins Move: Margaret Boyd in Monroeville, Ohio

In order to appreciate the role that the Monroeville High School played in changing Margaret Boyd's newly triumphant attitude toward her development, we should first notice the scant attention paid to this period in histories that commemorate Boyd for future generations of Ohio University affiliates. Thomas Nathaniel Hoover, author of *The History of Ohio University*, references Boyd's experiences teaching in Cincinnati (139) but not Boyd's immediate post-college employment in the small town of Monroeville. Betty Hollow, author of a more recent institutional history, *Ohio University, 1804-2004*, refers to Boyd only in the context of the University (62). Before the publication of these books, alumni articles had developed a habit of focusing on Boyd's achievements and skipping or minimizing coverage of her time in Monroeville. For example, one 1941 article mentions only the fact that Boyd taught at Monroeville for two years before then describing her later teaching experiences at Wesleyan Female College, complete with this college's ties to Boyd's uncle; the article then discusses Boyd's subsequent return to Athens, Ohio (Jones 3). Contrary to these accounts, I turn now to fall 1873, the time of Boyd's first experience as a teacher and the time of her dramatic shift in attitude toward her writing and her social and intellectual progress.

In light of nineteenth-century trends regarding women and work, Boyd's transition from gender-trailblazing college student to schoolteacher—a new professional identity—should have placed her in the position of experiencing less opposition and more support than she had known in college. Scholars of gender and education have shown that by the 1880s, women constituted a majority in the teaching profession (Biklen 50), perhaps owing to the fact that generally, female teachers were paid less than their male counterparts (Kaufman xxi). As a female teacher in 1873, Boyd would have been unlikely to give her employer unwanted expenses and even less likely to surprise her fellow townspeople. In fact, by the early 1870s, the appearance of a schoolmistress in small-town America had become so common that it was a source of stereotypes. From the East Coast came the image of the female teacher shrouded in "genteel poverty, unbending morality, education, and independent ways," and as this figure traveled west she was perceived as "moral, self-sacrificing, discreet, dedicated to the welfare of children, and capable of bringing out the best in men. She [was] unconcerned with personal goals or needs" (Kaufman xvii). On a basic level, such an image may have applied to Margaret Boyd in the great swath of land between the East

Coast and the pioneer. However, Boyd's diary entries indicate that despite entering a profession where women were expected and approved, she found few relationships at her new workplace to help her overcome work-related problems; and her diary, a record of her writing commitment and overall development, took a jarring turn before the year's end.

One difference between the stereotypical 1870s schoolmistress and Margaret Boyd was that her diary shows Boyd to have been immensely concerned with her personal goals and needs, finding few such fulfillments at the Monroeville High School where she spent her days and where, in the evenings, her thoughts returned. While giving lessons and helping her students pass exams, she craved people with whom she could express her doubts, seek consolation, and develop perspective on her occupational challenges. Another difference between Boyd's teaching experiences in Monroeville and the work of other female teachers concerns motivation for entering and staying in the profession: many nineteenth-century American women taught because teaching offered some combination of financial compensation, humanitarian service, intellectual development, independence (Biklen; see also Kaufman xvii). In light of the accomplishments of Boyd and her family members, I find financial gain an unlikely driving force behind her teaching (though when enrolled at Ohio University Boyd did express the widespread student desire to graduate and live without financial worry). Independence seems at best secondary for her given the prevalence of family and friends in her diary entries and her eventual return to Athens High School where she worked with her sister. That leaves the motivators of intellectual stimulation and service to others, signs of which scarcely appear in her fall 1873 diary entries. Boyd's teaching experiences in Monroeville were a far cry from the portrait of female teachers sketched by education scholar Sari Knopp Biklen, who writes, "While some teachers picked up methods of teaching from teachers' institutes or from their normal school training, others observed children, talked with colleagues, or corresponded with friends who taught at other locations. Thinking and talking about such concerns created great satisfaction" (59). By contrast, Boyd's fall 1873 diary entries show a dearth of support from intra- or inter-site networks of female (or even male) teachers. No figure with various kinds of influence and few peers showing unfailing support for her emerged here.

During the first few months of her job as a high school teacher, that is, from September to December 1873, Boyd described an occupational context in which her needs quickly exceeded the social support available. Here, the *nomoi* that had offered her well-defined and understandable roles as a student were unavailable, and whatever *nomoi* existed in this new environment remained either invisible or inaccessible to her. Boyd did befriend a colleague named Michael, receive visits from Athens-area friends, and write of occasional happy outings, such as on October 17 when she reported having "quite a social time" at a local parsonage. In other words, the mere fact of social contact does not vanish during her Monroeville days. But more often, particularly as she focuses on her work at the Monroeville High School where she redirected the energy that she had put into her past college classes, her diary's tone grows morose, and she bookends any expressions of satisfaction with comments about her loneliness and her deteriorating relationship with her

students. Additionally, by November her diary entries themselves grow shorter even as she adopts a tendency to stop writing for days at a time—a decided departure from her writing habits when a university student. Both the meager professional support that she alludes to and the lackluster force of her diary entries themselves point to an occupational experience that terminated her January 1 hope of improving her writing throughout the year.

Readers today who have experienced the transition from undergraduate college student to high school teacher may find some of Boyd's feelings familiar, yet I would point out that this familiarity fails to negate the need to consider Ken Lindblom's "continuously renegotiated agreements for the making of meaning." Whereas "[Boyd] herself changed [Ohio University], questioning traditions with her determination" (Hollow 117), no such change occurred in Boyd's time at her new workplace. As early as a Saturday in mid September (13), she shared her first specific comment about one of her students, noting that a student delivered a recitation in Latin. Two days later, Boyd wrote, without explanation, "Beginning a new week. The third week of school too. Good. I am about sick" (September 15). Preventing us from interpreting her "sick" comment as simply a reference to her physical condition is a string of worries and disappointments that she associates with her students. On September 29, she wrote, "I start to school today feeling somewhat <u>down</u>. One month is up and I feel a sort of dread to begin another weeks [sic] work. My examination papers were some of them poorly done and I can not help but blame myself somewhat though I did the best I could, Oh dear." The next day her entries took an even more dismal turn: "The big boys are so ugly I can not tell how to govern them. I have been trying to lead them but they do not lead very well I must try and compell [sic] them after this. I never can tell how to govern a boy any how" (September 30). Although she had overcome many gender-based difficulties as the first female graduate of her state's oldest public university, she struggled when attempting to manage her male pupils at the Monroeville High School. We should notice, too, that in her September 30 entry she characterized herself as struggling alone, neglecting to mention anyone whom she consulted for support or solutions. Her correspondences with friends and her visits from others continued, but in her diary she wrote nothing to indicate that she brought her teaching problems to their attention, as she used to bring her academic difficulties to Professor Scott's attention at Ohio University.

Shortly after dwelling on the difficulty of managing male students—students who seem to have been a far cry from her male college classmates, who had received instruction about how to view her place among them—Boyd wrote of teaching duties and occupational scrutiny pervading much of her daily life. On October 6, she commented on her role as a teacher extending into the evening: "I had to keep the boys tonight to get their lesson in Arithmetic[.] Michael very kindly stays till they are dismissed." This was followed the next day by an entry that concludes, "I stop to talk with the 'judge' [reference unknown] tonight after school. It does me so much good. *He is the only one that I can talk to and feel that I am not watched*" (October 7, my emphasis). Surely Boyd would have been accustomed to standing out and receiving public scrutiny at Ohio University; recall, for instance, the diary entry from her graduation day. But at her workplace in early October,

the scrutiny that she faced rang differently.

In late October, she commented repeatedly on the behavior of her students, male and female, and sometimes her criticisms about students' behavior extended to younger boys in the town at large, as when she shared that after attending a wedding with a female companion, "We come home through town I get <u>so vexed</u> at some little boys, Monroeville manners" (October 22). One striking feature of this comment is that it has no counterpart in her diary entries from the first half of 1873; at Ohio University she did not use her diary to express frustration at the manners of college students or others around her. After October 22, her interactions with her students became a source of continual tension, even if she experienced occasional satisfaction from a lesson well handled. For instance, on October 23 she commented on Michael's temporary absence from work and her discomfort as she anticipated the next few days at school: "Michael leaves today before recess in the forenoon. I am to run the affair for the rest of the week. I feel so very uneasy. I hope things will pass off well." The next day did go well, with the students passing their examinations (on an unspecified subject). On this day, Boyd wrote, "The scholars are all good," and added, "I like them for it." However, her fatigue from this day is equally evident: "I am so tired at night that I can hardly stand. In fact I came nearly falling off my chair After I was left alone in the school room" (October 24). Five days later we find,

> The boys were running in the hall today and Mr. Michael told them (four of them) that they should remain in at recess all the rest of the week. In the afternoon he went to a funeral and left me alone. Those boys would not mind me one bit. I felt so very bad. I do not think Michael did just right to go off and leave me alone with those four big boys to look after at recess." (October 29)

Lest we conclude that Boyd struggled exclusively with her male students, we should consider her entry from two days later: "Today my girls in the Physiology class did not have their lesson in the afternoon and I kept them in at recess. Still they would not recite and I keep them there after school till about six and then leave and tell them I will hear them recite on Monday at recess. Michael kept Fred Martin too so I had company Fred rather saucy" (October 31). This time she had Michael nearby, but tellingly, she wrote nothing to suggest that he helped her cope with or resolve her problems even though he appears perfectly capable of handling his own students. Rather, she was thrown back into her frustrations and self-doubts, now while occupying a role that, by the gender standards of her time, should have given her opportunities to channel her knowledge and grow by helping others.

By mid November, Boyd's silences rivaled her words for prominence in her diary, and at this point I quote more frequently to emphasize her entries' brevity and narrowness of focus. On November 10, she described feelings that persisted over the next few weeks, writing, "I do not feel very well today Do not go to hear Miss H. recite I have so much else to do. A letter from Lucy." Then, after alluding to writing that she did complete: "I go to hear Miss H. tonight after I come

home I write a peice [sic] on the 'Casket,' A paper Clara and Laura Fish are getting up for next Friday. *Somehow I do get so little time for writing. Or any thing else for that matter*" (November 11, my emphasis). Now I ask readers to picture diary pages ordered by date, one full page per day, on which the following comments appear (I include the entirety of Boyd's entries from November 17 to November 25):

- November 17: "I do not go to hear Miss H I am not feeling well."

- November 18: "Still feel badly."

- (No entry on November 19.)

- November 20: "A letter from Emma Dana."

- November 21: "A letter from Yarnell."

- November 22: "Work hard."

- November 23: "Go to church in the morning but stay at home at night."

- November 24: "The same old story."

- November 25: "A letter from Emma D."

While Boyd reported a pleasant Thanksgiving break, her comments thereafter—the final handful of entries in her diary—suggest a troubling, unsupportive work environment. One day she wrote, "The boys are awful ugly today. I go to prayer meeting but do not take a part. It is all I can do to choke down the big sobs that will rise all I can do" (December 4). This entry hearkens back to February 8 when, after delivering an oration in Professor Scott's elocution class, she cried all the way home. But in early December, her reference's proximity to ever-growing silences and brief expressions of unease points to a general shutting down of her writing. Also, contrary to religious meetings that she had attended in the spring, the prayer meeting at Monroeville did not appear linked to an influential figure from the institution where she spent most of her time. Her December 4 entry is followed the next day by the comment, "Michael talks to me this morning and I was so foolish as to let the tears come into my eyes. I am sorry I was so weak. Wonder if I will ever be strong and able to controll [sic] my feelings." Again, her words echo the self-doubt that she experienced around Professor Scott at Ohio University, but this time she neglected to mention a solution and failed to show signs of reassurance after interacting with her male colleague. Finally, amplifying the effect of these entries is the fact that the next five days produced no diary entries; the reader finds blank pages for nearly a week.

Here we arrive at Boyd's last four entries of 1873, each of which I find suggestive enough to share in its entirety. The first consists only of "A letter from Kate Hoyt" (December 11). The next is a casting of herself as a non-writer: "The scholars were extra good today I am glad for I am so tired. I somehow do not write any more in my diary or any place else either" (December 12). The day after this: "I sleep more than half the time today I feel sick and tired and disappointed I did

not get any letter from home this week" (December 13). Her last entry consists of a carelessly presented review of her daily actions: "Just the same old thing over again, Not Sunday I do not mean but Sundays work I am glad to have Sunday come [then after a skipped line] I write to day to Lucy at Carthage, Ella at Athens Kate..Mansfield. Berry..Delaware an C.R.L. Rossville Shawnee Co Kansas" (December 14). While ordinarily I refrain from judging Boyd's diary entries on the basis of mechanics, grammatical correctness, and logical connections, the ubiquity of these issues in her last entry is undeniable, a conspicuous contrast from her January 1 entry when she hoped to improve in all ways a "<u>great deal</u>." After transitioning from Ohio University student to Monroeville High School teacher, her diary entries grew inconsistent and her attitude toward her writing and intellectual development showed few signs of improving.

Then there are the facts of Boyd's post-Monroeville life. We know that she taught in Monroeville for only two years, after which she moved to Cincinnati and taught for four years at Wesleyan Female College, "a school established largely through the influence of her uncle, Dr. Elliott" (Jones 3). This transition is important because it shows Boyd accepting a demographic shift, from teaching male and female students to teaching only female students, and a familial shift, from taking a job outside her family's immediate influence to taking a job partly created by her uncle. After Wesleyan Female College, she served as a high school principal in Martinsville, Indiana, for four years and then moved back to Athens, Ohio, where for the rest of her professional life she taught and worked as assistant principal at the Athens High School, mere blocks away from Ohio University. During the same period her sister Kate served as principal of Athens High School (Davis 9). So in Margaret Boyd's return to Athens we see a return to her sister, one of Margaret Boyd's supporters from spring 1873. Although both Ohio University and the Monroeville High School had challenged Boyd, it was to the doorstep of the former site, complete with its faculty and peer support and its adaptations to her needs, to which she returned.

Preparing for Movements Across Institutions

As historians of marginalized writers and remedial writing have shown, local and historical information may prompt us to take another look at conditions surrounding the teaching of writing or the administration of writing programs today (e.g., Soliday 10; DeGenero 55). The case of Margaret Boyd follows suit. While writing and learning support programs at various universities can be compared for how they reach different students, and such work can persuade us to localize our goals for writing programs and classes (Donahue and Moon; Ritter), Boyd's movement across institutional sites urges us to examine how well our pedagogies enable students to write for enriching purposes at institutions governed by different *nomoi*, and her case opens up room for comparing the significance of students' movements as they involve different aspects of identity or background. By emphasizing this dimension of students' writing lives, I am not looking at students' movement across *communities*, a concept that has been shown to mean any number of unproblematized social configurations (see, e.g., Butler; Harris), but, more specifically, at students' movement across insti-

tutional buildings or campuses that draw in, and dispense expectations to, designated people, and that evolve from distinct histories, purposes, and interests.

Highlighting writers' movements across institutional sites is all the more important for those of our students who come from underrepresented groups and who face exceptional academic challenges, especially if these students are the first within a demographic group to reach a particular milestone. Like Boyd, such students may receive a shock upon discovering that environments that ameliorate social discrepancies can disappear at the boundaries of their college campus. Additionally, focusing on cross-site movement encourages us to frame an institution's formally or informally recognized margins as movable, contingent on institutional factors. Much as Kelly Ritter argues that we "cannot speak about composition at the first-year level as if it were always a static, universal course common to all institutional types or all institutional missions" (16-17), I argue that we cannot speak about marginalization as if its effects are predictable from one site to the next. If they were, then we would have falsely assumed that Margaret Boyd was entering a safer, better-supported work environment upon leaving the male-dominated Ohio University and beginning work as a teacher in a public Midwestern high school.

The reexamination that I am proposing is no small feat. If initiated at an administrative level, it could involve discussions about the work environments in which we expect our students to write (Scott) and the degree to which college courses should encourage on-the-job training in writing (MacKinnon 421), discussions underway in critical pedagogy and professional writing. However, we may instead advance the discussions that we need to have by starting from the ground up, that is, with small pedagogical changes that suggest directions for future course changes. As a starting point, writing instructors could use Gina Hunter's institutional ethnography assignment to help students expose codes that construct outlooks and actions at the students' academic institution. Her approach "requires learning to 'see institutionally' and to question the stylized facts and accepted categories used by the institution" (Hunter 25). For example, her students might analyze the makeup of student organizations or institutional policies and procedures (Hunter 28). Or we could begin smaller, by analyzing negotiated and renegotiated uses of a campus buzzword like "success" at the students' current college or university. Lisa Mahle-Grisez has defended such an approach, having her students interrogate success, education, and material conditions, and finding that doing so "requires asking [students] to critically investigate their own language use and their membership in the myriad social and cultural networks surrounding education" (64). One way to make Mahle-Grisez's approach applicable to present-day versions of Margaret Boyd is to have students explore changes that accumulate as the students track the effects of one kind of social and discursive code—a policy, expectation, or keyword—from one institutional site to another. The immediate goals would be to unpack what does not translate from site to site, interrogate what is at stake in modifying one's language accordingly, and practice making the desired changes—or practice proposing communication changes to the site's members. A broader goal would be to instill in our writing classes the expectation of new writing experiences (e.g., new factors affecting writing pro-

cesses and new factors affecting the uses and effects of texts) based on even short moves beyond the confines of the students' current academic institution.

The rhetorical sensitivity that I am endorsing does not have to be the exclusive province of upper-level rhetoric classes. It deserves attention even as students learn what language moves hold power at their academic institution as opposed to other sites, and why, so that these language moves retain their status as institutionally mediated constructs. In the long run, no one wins if, after graduating or otherwise leaving college, motivated students find themselves silenced, unheard, or unable to effect change at an institutional site.

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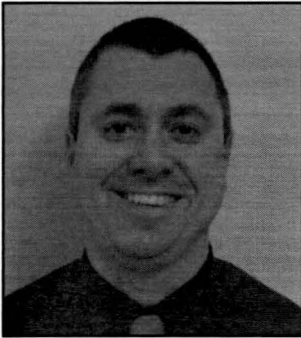
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Affective Matters: Effective Measures for Transforming Basic Writing Programs and Instruction

BASIC WRITING IS AN EMOTIONAL UNDERTAKING for students that begins during the placement process when they discover, possibly for the first time, that the institution they plan to enter has deemed them less than prepared to take regular college English and, therefore, a number of other courses for which that class is a prerequisite. At that moment, basic writing becomes a high-stakes course, and students are marginalized as conditional members of the larger college community. They carry the "if I do not, I cannot" weight that comes with the message of remediation; if they do not successfully complete their remediation classes, they will not be able to move forward as college students or obtain a degree. While those of us who willingly work with basic writers may be committed to following the charge of Mina Shaughnessy that we connect supposed deficiencies to systemic realities rather than to students themselves (403-404), we also understand that feel-good messages about how students end up in remediation are insufficient by themselves to address students' angst, attitudes, and other negative perceptions about having to take basic writing courses. These affective issues associated with simply being placed in basic writing are sometimes compounded by students' lives outside of the academy, especially at institutions where a significant number of students do not live on campus.

Everyday demands and crises associated with work, family, and life in general pull at students' abilities to complete and/or commit to completing assignments or to simply attend classes about which they already have conflicted emotions. In other words, all of these factors combine as affective issues that basic writers face, and they become the elephants in the room. We can ignore them, but they will not go away. If we are to be successful in our efforts to transform remediation with the goal of helping more students progress through the academy toward graduation, we must find ways to account for our students' affective matters. For as Sally Chandler claims, "effective pedagogies teach to students' affective as well as their cognitive positions" (66).

Our investigation of the importance of affect to transformation efforts occurs in the context of several statewide initiatives which have led to a reconsideration and reconfiguration of the basic writing program and practices at our open-access institution where a significant number of students test into basic writing. Even at our own institution, we recognize that there cannot be a "one-size fits all" approach to the goal of successfully promoting student movement through basic

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writing in new, or perhaps just restructured, ways. However, our analysis shows that the success of transformation efforts often depends on how the affective issues of basic writers are addressed when decisions are made at the programmatic level that will impact what takes place day-to-day in the basic writing classroom. In particular, we begin by examining how policy issues lead to programmatic decisions that translate into transformative classroom models and practices. We propose an affective pedagogical stance as an essential component of any transformative classroom, regardless of the model chosen; such a stance creates a context and includes specific strategies to draw out and ameliorate, when possible, the affective issues that can impede students' success. We conclude by addressing how attention to affect can be factored into programmatic and pedagogical decisions tied to transformation efforts and basic writing instruction in general.

Our Transformation Efforts as Driven By State Initiatives

Our efforts to transform remediation, to change what take places in the basic writing classroom, are tied to a Complete College America grant that coincides with a state-wide mandate to collapse all developmental writing instruction into one course beginning Fall 2012. For Georgia Gwinnett College (GGC), our two-tier basic writing sequence became one course; prior to the change, students with the lowest placement scores were required to complete two basic writing courses before taking first-year writing. Of the two driving reasons for change, the Complete College American grant is the overarching impetus. Complete College America is "a national nonprofit working to increase the number of Americans with a college degree or credential of value and to close attainment gaps for traditionally underrepresented populations" (United States 21). GGC is one of only two four-year colleges among the four institutions in Georgia working on this transformation initiative. State transformation goals and developmental education are central to the mission of GGC because it is a relatively young open-access, four-year public liberal arts college committed to educating the whole student.

Located outside of Atlanta, Georgia, GGC opened in 2006 with 118 students, grew to 8,000 in fall of 2011, and enrolled just over 9,000 students in fall of 2012. The institution's rapid growth and student demographics can be attributed to the fast-growing county in which it is situated. Our student population mirrors that of Gwinnett County; the U.S. Census Bureau (2012) reports a county population that is roughly about 50% white, 20% African-American, 20% Hispanic and Latino/a, and 10% Asian. Within the institution's ethnically and economically diverse population, a high percentage of students are first-generation. Based on incoming student academic and demographic information, nearly 50% of incoming students test into at least one developmental course (basic writing, math and/or reading), and of this percentage, 50% report heavy family responsibilities, 27% work more than 20 hours per week, and 38% work 11-19 hours per week.

Committed to the charge of the Complete College America grant and the needs of our student population, we implemented the first phase of our efforts to transform our basic writing offerings in the Spring 2012 semester, one term before we would also have only a one-course basic

writing offering. We chose a co-requisite model, sometimes referred to as concurrent enrollment, that draws from the Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) developed by Peter Adams at the Community College of Baltimore County (Adams et al.). According to Complete College America, "co-requisite developmental education enrolls students in remedial and college-level courses in the same subject at the same time" ("Transform" 2). Our team teaches a special co-requisite model that consists of a tripod of linked courses: two sections of college-level, first-year writing tied to one companion section of basic writing. Per Figure 1, the students in our basic writing sections are mainstreamed and accelerated through their same-semester/same-instructor enrollment in the first-year writing sections.

Figure 1: The Instructional Model-Phase 1

One Section of Basic Writing (16 total students)

Two Sections of First-Year Writing (20 students per section)

8 → 8 | 12 Regularly Placed Students

+

8 → 8 | 12 Regularly Placed Students

A Tutor
Curriculum Support Software
Access to Technology

We select basic writing students whose placement test scores indicate that, even though they are not quite ready for first-year writing courses without some support, they are likely prepared to handle the rigor of taking two English courses in one semester as long as one of the courses acts as a support to the for-credit, first-year course. The data from the Spring 2012 semester indicate that the co-requisite enrollment model proved successful for such students in that their pass rate (86%) was higher than the aggregate for students taking the same course throughout the college (55%). Based on our success in the Spring 2012 term and as part of the second phase of our transformation efforts, we expanded the number of co-requisite-enrollment sections of basic writing from six to eleven for Fall 2012, and midterm data reflect that we can expect similar student success/completion rates.

We are excited about the continuing success of our co-requisite sections, but as we faced the Fall 2012 term, we knew that the data from those sections alone would be insufficient to carry the weight of our overall goal. Each semester, GGC offers about 30 basic writing sections, which means the 11 co-requisite sections are only a portion of the total. Yet, as part of our participation with the state of Georgia on the Complete College America grant, we committed to transforming *all* of our basic writing sections. Thus, the larger part of the second phase of transformation efforts, and possibly the most daunting, was to ensure that we were going to "do things differently" in a college with a relatively brief institutional history and in a course in which the student population was about to go through a fundamental change.

As stated previously, our transformation efforts coincided with a state mandate that we could no longer offer two basic writing classes, which meant that all Fall 2012 sections of basic writing would include a student population with a wider range of writing competencies. Given this expanded student population in one level of basic writing, coupled with a need to demonstrate "doing things differently" as part of the transformation efforts tied to the Complete College
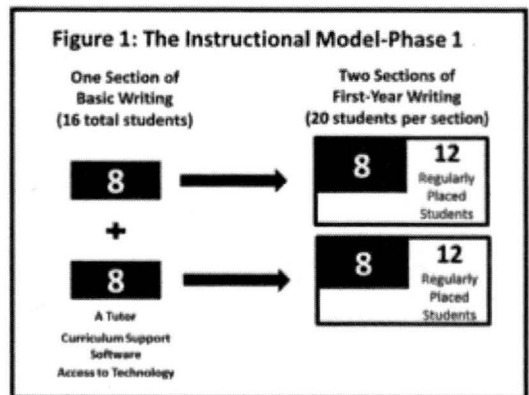
America grant, we spent the months leading up to the Fall 2012 semester grappling with two driving questions: 1.) What would constitute "doing things differently" in the one basic writing course? and 2) What had we learned from the successful co-requisite course that might support improved basic writing instruction in general? In our approach to answer the first question, we conducted a context-specific analysis of GGC and its student population and concluded that a one-size fits all solution was not viable. As Sallyanne Fitzgerald so aptly states, "we need to serve the students who come to us with curriculum appropriate to our context—our students, our faculty, our institution" (224). When we stepped back from the data collected during the Spring 2012 implementation of the co-requisite model to assess the take-aways, we discovered one overarching focus.

Affect was a common thread across our different sections and equated to more than just an acknowledgement that our basic writing students brought affective issues with them into the classroom. We had adopted, and have subsequently trained others to adopt, a pedagogical stance that: 1) created a context in which students could engage with the affective issues that might impede their success as college students and writers and 2) employed specific strategies designed to draw out those affective issues that could be addressed within the scope of our writing classrooms. We do recognize that there are issues in students' lives that we cannot and ethically should not tackle because they are beyond the realm of our influence or expertise. For those, we support pointing students toward resources that can help them, such as on-campus counselors, financial aid, etc. Yet, the presence of such issues does not negate the need to focus on the affective matters that we can address in the process of creating successful classrooms and students. To define what we mean when we say "affective matters" and to frame the affective stance that we advocate, we integrate claims from the intersection of educational psychology and neuroscience with those of composition studies.

Framing Affective Matters

Our broadly defined definition of affective matters—as including but encompassing more than emotions—is borrowed from educational psychology and reflects the cross-disciplinary nature of our initiative. Four of us have concentrations in rhetoric and composition, but one of our team members, Amanda, is an educational psychologist with a background in writing instruction. Her participation in the construction of our transformation initiative was invaluable in helping us see the ways in which theories in educational psychology could inform our efforts. In particular, claims in educational psychology support a holistic view of learning as a complex undertaking that resists the separation of cognitive and affective issues.

Affect as linked to whole-body theories of learning is rooted in the 1956 work of Benjamin Bloom, an educational psychologist who developed three key taxonomies of learning that included the interconnected areas of cognitive, psychomotor, and affective domains, also referred to as knowledge, skills, and attitude. Bloom describes affective behaviors as "changes in interest, attitudes, and values, and the development of appreciations and adequate adjustment" (7). A further

explication of how learning is linked to affective behaviors occurs in Bloom's 1964 collaboration with David Krathwohl and Bertram Masia (Kathwohl, Bloom and Masia). According to Krathwohl, Bloom, and Masia, the affective domain differs from the cognitive domain in that one emphasizes what students can do (cognitive) while the other is concerned about whether they will do it (affective), which we rephrase somewhat as whether students are willing, or motivated, to use what they have learned or whether students are willing to do the hard work of acquiring the skills to complete particular tasks (60).

The claims of Bloom and his colleagues about how learning occurs through affect have been corroborated more recently in the work of Mary Helen Immordino-Yang, an affective neuroscientist and education development psychologist, and Antonio Damasio, a neuroscientist. In their 2007 article, "We Feel, Therefore We Learn: The Relevance of Affective and Social Neuroscience to Education," Immordino-Yang and Damasio begin with the claim that "[a]ny competent teacher recognizes that emotions and feelings affect students' performance and learning" (3). Thus, "[t]he more educators come to understand the nature of the relationship between emotion and cognition, the better they may be able to leverage this relationship in the design of learning environments" (Immordino-Yang and Damasio 9). They make clear the deep connections between emotion and learning and the ways in which real or imagined emotional triggers (what we refer to as affective matters) can impact the learning process. It is from such scholarship—Immodino-Yang and Damasio as building upon the work of Bloom and others— that we construct our definition of affective matters as considering, but not stopping at, emotions. In the basic writing classroom, we accept that emotions often factor into students' responses to being told that they are not quite ready for first-year writing, "which proceeds from assumptions about what they cannot do" (Adler-Kassner and Harrington 6). However, we are more interested in how their emotional responses, or the things that trigger emotional responses, result in behaviors that might interfere with their success as writers.

Several scholars in composition studies acknowledge the need for a holistic approach to teaching writing, one that does not separate students' cognitive learning from affective responses and behaviors (Alcorn; Chandler; Crawford; Elbow; hooks; Micciche; Reynolds; Worsham; to name just a few). We turned to educational psychology and neuroscience first in constructing our definition of affective matters because much of the work by compositionists focuses more limitedly on affect described as emotion. As we look at how compositionists address emotion in ways that pertain to our work with basic writers and as we move to explore claims related to how emotions drive actions and are tied to contexts, we acknowledge that discussions of emotions are closely tied to feminist scholarship.

Several compositionists, such as Mary Hiatt, bell hooks, Susan Jarratt, Eileen Schell, and Lynn Worsham, address how emotion in the classroom is sometimes classified and embodied as feminine. While we acknowledge how feminist scholarship contributes to a holistic approach to teaching students as putting aside the mind/body split, we argue that our efforts are not wholly

feminist. Or maybe we are in ways adopting Jarrett's claim that "feminism is for men as well as women" (117). We are women working on a transformation initiative that will teach men and be taught by men. At GGC, all faculty are required to teach basic writing and our efforts, or take-aways as tied to affective matters, will filter into all training we offer as we continue to work on the college's transformation efforts and champion an affective pedagogical stance—one that we view as essential given the student population at our open-access institution where about half of all students take at least one developmental English, math, or reading course upon entering college. Our emphasis is not on taking a gendered perspective regarding the need to grapple with the emotions of basic writers. Instead, as stated in the introduction to this article, we are merely presenting ways to address the elephant in the room, the affective matters that are often difficult to overlook because they underlie students' presence and actions in our classrooms.

...the elephant in the room, the affective matters that are often difficult to overlook because they underlie students' presence and actions in our classrooms.

Worsham's seminal article, "Going Postal: Pedagogic Violence and the Schooling of Emotion," is at the heart of many contemporary discussions in the field regarding the importance of emotion and writing instruction. Worsham problematizes emotion as it relates to dominant versus liberatory pedagogies, insisting that liberatory pedagogies not reify subjectivities that silence emotion, particularly for certain subordinate groups. According to Worsham:

> Their increased emotionality does not need reasons; it is simply given and justified by the structure of subordination. Cognitivism nevertheless capitalizes on the fact that those in subordinate positions can and must be taught, especially in school and workplace, that emotional responses (such as anger, rage, or bitterness) are always inappropriate and unjustified personal responses—forms of emotional stupidity, so to speak, if not psychopathology—rather than suppressed social responses to the objective conditions of humiliation wrought by structures of subordination and exploitation. In general, the dominant pedagogy of emotion refuses the expression of anger by subordinates. (224-25)

Worsham's claim, that those who are subordinated are schooled not to express or address their emotions, is relevant to our assertion that the affective issues of basic writers matter in the classroom and in programmatic decisions that impact classroom practices.

Those in the field who explore emotion as linked to something students do in their writing or as related to particular contexts include work by such individuals as Christa Albrecht-Crane, Sally

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Chandler, Jennifer Edbauer, Laura Micciche, and T.R. Johnson. Micciche, in particular, focuses on the importance of emotion to teaching and learning. She joins Worsham in arguing against perceptions of emotion as inconsequential and feminine. Micciche "challenges longstanding views of emotion as unreasonable, as a mark of feminine excess, and as exclusively personal. . . . For too long emotion has stood for subjugated knowledge, by functioning as analog to women, opinion, the personal, and the body" ("Doing" 6-7). In Micciche's work we hear a nod toward the emotions-drive-actions claims in educational psychology ("Doing" 105). However, her focus on awareness of emotion primarily as a rhetorical concept that revitalizes theory and practice is a bit short of our more pragmatic assertion about actively addressing the affective matters of basic writing students in ways that will aid in their success ("Doing" 6; "Emotion" 177).

In her work, Chandler conducts an analysis of how emotions manifest in students' writing. She "suggests that writing assignments that press young adults toward critical thinking and identity shifts can evoke stressful emotions that, in turn, evoke discursive patterns inappropriate for the demands of critical analytic writing" (54). Chandler's following claim about emotions in contexts makes her work important to our definition of affect: "By creating learning contexts to address learners' emotions, and thereby lessening defense, instructors can help students make conscious and therefore more powerful composing choices" (67). Albrecht-Crane also addresses the fact that, because emotions are "ubiquitous," existing in the texts students write as well as inside and outside of the writing classroom, they should be addressed. Albrecht-Crane charges educators to "think through and with affect because something valuable, critical, something *political*, happens when we relate affectively to each other across the spaces of the classroom" (563).

From the intersections of educational psychology, neuroscience, and composition studies we claim that effective instruction necessitates close attention to the fact that learning and emotion are intertwined. There is no split between body and mind. How students feel about a subject, a class-room, and even a writing task should not be overlooked in the process of helping them become better writers. This claim is especially relevant for basic writers in particular because simply being in the course can be an emotionally loaded experience, which is sometimes exacerbated by the fact that students are also entering the unfamiliar terrain of the academy. Such emotional triggers can adversely impact students' motivation and elicit certain unproductive behaviors. Thus, we actively seek to address these affective matters along the continuum of emotions to actions. Considering students' affective matters is just the first step. The goal is to address them in ways that ameliorate unproductive behaviors and reinforce positive ones. Regarding negative behaviors that might inter-fere with students' success, sometimes a conversation of the almost obvious might do; other times, it requires strategies, planned activities or processes. The combination of careful consideration of students' affective matters coupled with related practices designed to address them fall under the umbrella of what we call an affective pedagogical stance. This stance facilitates an environment in which affective matters are dealt with as a matter of course.

The following section includes three representative examples of what did, and can, take place

when an affective stance is adopted; we conclude this section with a video bridge that adds students' voices to the stories we tell. We then discuss the implications of adopting an affective stance as it relates to programmatic changes amidst a climate of change, offering suggestions for how to think about affective matters along with specific strategies for how to address them.

Representing an Affective Pedagogical Stance

The three representative examples in this section—told as classroom stories—reflect key affective matters that we focus on as central to our pedagogical stance: motivation, emotions and writing, and an overall holistic pedagogy. They reflect our conscious decisions as framed by the pedagogical stance. As an implementation team we met regularly, sometimes twice a week, to discuss the transformation initiative in general and to think through what to do and how to be in the basic writing portion of our co-requisite model, where students were concurrently enrolled in basic writing and first-year writing at the same time with the same professor. Regarding what to do, we opted for pedagogical freedom. We agreed that the curriculum of the first-year writing class would drive that of the companion basic writing class since the overarching goal was students' successful completion of first-year writing. In basic writing, we employed scaffolding by creating assignments that fed into, or honed skills for, ones that students had to complete for first-year writing. Deciding how to be is where the affective pedagogical stance informed our actions in the representative examples we share as particular classroom stories.

1. Addressing Student Motivation

We focus on students' motivation as central to an affective pedagogical stance in our reliance upon educational psychology and the claim that the affective domain impacts what students are willing to do (Bloom; Immodino-Yang and Damasio; Krathwohl, Bloom, and Masia). According to M. Kay Alderman, when students are motivated, they are more likely to develop to their potential, and it is the responsibility of educators to help students find their personal sources of motivation that can assist students in developing goals for success and plans to deal with the obstacles that might get in their way of success (11-15). One way instructors can help basic writing students become motivated to succeed is by integrating self-regulatory practices within their writing process pedagogy through the implementation of a well-planned system of goal-setting and self-monitoring activities. In academic situations, the term "self-regulation" is defined as, "the self-directive process through which learners transform their mental abilities into academic skills" (Zimmerman, "Developing" 2). According to Barry J. Zimmerman, self-regulation is a cyclical procedure involving personal, behavioral, and environmental processes. Self-regulatory practices involve using feedback from previous tasks to adjust behaviors required to perform a current task ("Attaining" 13-39). This feedback for basic writers leads to concrete points of reference that assist students in deciding what actions must be taken to fulfill their writing and academic goals, despite the myriad of affective issues that might interfere with their motivation to succeed.

SUZANNE'S STORY

In my spring 2012 co-requisite sections, I had two single mothers who juggled responsibilities and seemingly conflicting demands in their lives. One woman, Sheila,[1] is in her thirties. The other woman, Rhonda, is in her forties. Both women were more than ready to achieve the dream of a college education. They each entered college with this goal; however, they were both immediately taken aback when they tested into basic writing. They both saw it as a defeat and as a large road-block to achieving their long-term goals. Sheila also placed into basic math, furthering her feelings of frustration.

As part of my quest to instill self-monitoring and self-regulating skills in my students, I implement a system of goal-setting and self-monitoring activities. Such activities may seem out of place in the writing classroom, but I address them because they have a direct impact on students' success. At the beginning of the Spring 2012 semester, I asked students to think and write about their long-term goals—about what brought them to college in the first place—about the goals they had as students that semester, and finally, about the goals they had for basic writing and first-year writing. Next, students were asked to narrow their lists of semester/writing course goals into one list of five specific goals. Because most of the students had affective issues beyond their classes, I allowed them to create their list of goals focusing on any combination of their goals for improving their writing and their "life issues."

After deciding on a list of five targeted goals for the semester, and after extensive class discussion, students were asked to think and write about any obstacles, intrinsic and extrinsic, that might get in the way of them accomplishing their goals. They were then asked to think and write about plans for how they might alleviate and/or lessen the obstacles they had identified. In order to have a better chance of achieving their goals, students must also set proximal goals to help keep them motivated, to help them manage their time, and to guide their progress. In a well-planned system of goal-setting, frequently set proximal goals are advantageous because they provide continuous sources for self-monitoring throughout the process; therefore, in my basic writing course, students were asked to complete proximal goal sheets for each of their first year composition essay assignments. Students were asked to evaluate their performance, analyze why they did or did not meet their short-term goals for the assignment, and then to set goals for the next assignment. At the end of the semester, students were asked to write a self-assessment essay as part of their final portfolio for the first-year writing course.

Even though both Sheila and Rhonda received fairly high grades throughout the semester, they both also struggled with self-efficacy due to their obligations outside of school. Their personal lives were in a constant battle with their academic lives. Both women had several challenges

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1. All names of students in this article are pseudonyms. References to their work are made with their permission.

outside of the classroom throughout the semester that greatly affected their motivation and confidence for succeeding in college. In spite of this, both women credited the goal-setting, self-monitoring, and self-regulating activities for helping them get through the semester.

In her final portfolio self-assessment essay that she titled "Student Triumphs," Sheila wrote:

> Insecurity in my own academic capabilities has been one of my most formidable intrinsic blocks. This performance anxiety has had a major effect on me. And while I anticipated this before I started classes, I did not understand exactly how much this anxiety would affect my work . . . I have learned to approach each obstacle individually, the way I do my assignments, which has allowed me to keep from becoming overwhelmed and dropping out of school completely. . . Additionally, extrinsic factors such as my responsibilities as a parent, a daughter, a sister, and a grand-daughter are a severe strain on my time and finances. Even with all these obstacles, I am somewhat confident that I can accomplish my goals next semester. Though I still struggle with my own academic insecurities, I plan to face this intrinsic roadblock . . . I will need to focus more on my own success so that I can support the people I care about . . . My motivation for accomplishing these goals is knowing that in a few years I will walk across a stage. . .

In her final portfolio self-assessment essay, Rhonda wrote:

> Initially, I had set my standards too high. I wanted to start my first semester off, by taking on 12 credit hours. . . . My goal was to prove to the College that I can do the required assignments with no problem . . . every time I received an unwanted grade, I would start questioning myself as to why was I putting myself through this . . . When I tend to stress, the stressing brings along self-doubt, and lowers my confidence . . . The biggest fear of all was making a choice of going back to school after thirty years of being away from any form of education, and I have proved to myself that I can do this if I just stick to my plan. . .

Because Sheila and Rhonda scored below the cut off score on the entrance grammar-type exam, they were both subjected to an exit version of the same exam. When they were informed of this well into the semester, it temporarily set both women back a little in terms of their confidence and motivation. I had to intervene by holding individual conferences with both of them. The conferences were focused on discussion and confidence-building and not on reviewing test material because both women already possessed strong academic writing skills. They needed supportive discussion, not grammar drills. Once the women felt ready, they took the exit exam, and I am happy to report that both Sheila and Rhonda successfully passed all exit requirements and earned an A in both basic writing and first-year writing.

Because I was able to help both Sheila and Rhonda rebuild their confidence, they were motivated to take the required exit exam. Students' motivation to succeed in school can be directly linked to their beliefs about intelligence, ability, and effort. An affective pedagogical stance helps

students interrogate their own belief systems as affective matters that can interfere with their motivation to succeed.

2. Not Overlooking Students' Emotions

Affective matters, although not wholly emotional, are tied to emotions because emotions drive actions. An affective pedagogical stance sees feelings as central to learning (Immodino-Yang and Damasio) and intersects with claims in composition studies (Chandler) that affective matters can be seen as something students do in their writing. Chandler argues that writing instructors need to think of "writing not as a product, or even a process, but rather a complex intersection of discourses—including emotional discourses—that orchestrate what and how we will compose within a given context" (67). In so doing, Chandler's goal is to suggest ways for writing instructors to allow students to address and overcome emotions that function as obstacles to writing. Once students have addressed their emotions, she suggests instructors "orchestrate interactive reflections to help students examine changes in their writing patterns in light of the relationships between discourse and emotion," and in order to provide students opportunities to move from personal to public discourse (66). The benefit is that students who recognize the emotional aspects of their writing can gain perspective and overcome negative emotional responses to writing and the writing process. Chandler's metaemotional approach complements metacognitive approaches to writing instruction intended to help students develop a more holistic understanding of and more control over their writing. Although Chandler's article focuses on sophomore student writing associated with a service learning course she taught, we find much of what she argues applies to basic writing students.

CARA'S STORY

In recognition of the problem anxiety can create for my basic writing students, I provide an opportunity for students to discuss their anxiety in an assigned literacy narrative, the first paper of the semester. The assignment specifically asks students to use the paper as a way to introduce themselves as writers and to include discussions of their successes, hindrances, confidence levels, and goals for their own writing. We begin this paper by freewriting about the subject on the first day of class and students work through drafts and revisions over the course of one month.

One pattern I have noticed in responses to the assignment is that students often choose to discuss a specific, traumatic event that shaped their writing. I also noticed that there tends to be marked differences in the way they discuss their emotions between the first freewrite and their final revision. To demonstrate the importance of addressing student emotion, my focus will be on one student named Julie. She admitted she felt "dumb" because she was required to take our basic writing course. Her literacy narrative addresses and rethinks some of the emotional responses she has had when writing for school. It is my belief that it is because she dealt with her emotional responses to writing that her post-course survey indicates improved self-efficacy.

Julie's central anecdote is about a writing contest at her school when she was in fifth grade.

She reports:

> I was determined to win. In fact, I was almost certain I would win [the contest]. This was
> the point in my life when I began to have a different outlook on writing. This experience
> changed how I felt about writing. I ended up not winning. I didn't even make it to the
> final three. I started to doubt myself, more so my writing. I took this defeat to the heart.
> In my mind, this meant that I couldn't write, which in fact, I still believe to this day. At
> this point, I swore never to embarrass myself like that ever again, which resulted in my
> shying away from writing, but not completely. I still kept a journal, but I knew no one
> would ever read it or judge me as a bad writer. (Julie's first draft).

Julie's narrative identifies the particular place and time when she began to feel anxious about
her writing. In fact, although students situated their anecdotes differently, nine of my thirteen
students expressed they felt nervous or anxious about writing. Like Julie, who reports having felt
humiliated, when discussing the reasons for their anxiety or lack of confidence the majority of stu-
dents point to teacher criticism and to a fear of being judged by peers, both of which made them
feel "stupid" or "dumb."

Over the course of one month, our class peer reviewed papers, revised, met with our class
tutor, and revised again. Below is Julie's revision:

> At that time I had a passion for writing and was willing to do anything for an opportunity
> to show off my work, but little did I know the contest would shift my love of writing to
> fear that would prevent me from writing for a public audience for a long time. . . . Prior
> to the contest, I enjoyed writing a lot. As matter of fact I loved writing. . . . There was
> something fascinating about writing. Sometimes I would hear a still small voice inside
> of me that just wouldn't give me peace until I wrote in my journal and that calmed the
> voice.
>
> Losing the contest was by far the worst thing that could have happened to me as a
> self-proclaimed "writer" in grade five. I really took the defeat to heart. I began doubting
> my writing ability. Rather than viewing the loss as a learning experience or a stepping
> stone, I took it as a slap in the face. Fear took over. Fear of not being able to write good
> enough for a public audience, especially in school whether it was teachers, principals,
> heck even my peers fell in that category. For that very reason I didn't write again publicly
> with pleasure for a long time. I hated it, well at least on the surface it seemed; but deep
> down inside I secretly wanted to learn how to write in a way that would appeal to
> everyone and anyone whether they were young or old. . . . Most of all, I wanted an-
> other chance to prove to myself that I could write but that was far too dangerous. The
> thought of feeling humiliated if people once again responded negatively to my writing
> was far too dreadful.

I was torn between two different emotions. I simply imagined I would someday be able to write freely and beautiful as I did in my journal but heartbreakingly, fear led me to close up any part of me that was willing to write for a public audience, but now that I am in college I feel more stress free concerning my writing ability. Writing to an audience no longer intimidates me and to my surprise I have gained a different view. The audience now serves a guide to writing. Their response (negative or positive) only helps me in improving my writing. Whatever feedback I get from them, I either take it and put it to good use or leave it and try to write better the next time instead of shutting down completely like I previously did.

Being given the opportunity to take both English 99 and 1101 at the same time has made a tremendous impact on me and has given me the encouragement I needed to enjoy writing once more. The English 99 class alone has helped me in becoming more open to writing on so many different levels. I no longer feel pressure when I write as if I am writing to compete. I have learned not to overthink the whole writing process and just let my writing flow as thoughts flood my mind. Even though it may seem I am learning how to write all again, at least now I am writing to let my audience know that I too have opinions and why they matter . . . It has been a really long journey for me and to see how far I have come motivates me more and more to break out of my shell and practice writing in order to improve my skills. I'm not saying this is the end of all difficulties that accompanies writing but now I know to tackle the challenges slowly one step at a time. I can finally say I feel free from the fear that has hindered my ability to learn how to write for so many years especially a public audience. (Julie's final draft)

Excerpts from Julie's papers illustrate how she used the assignment as an opportunity to process and rethink her emotional response to her writing experiences. Each draft allowed her to gain more distance about what her experience meant. The result is that she reclaims her love of writing more emphatically in the last draft, as evidenced by "[a]t that time I had a passion for writing and was willing to do anything for an opportunity to show off my work," and "I enjoyed writing a lot." She also is able to reflect to the point where she recognizes that she had time to grow since her fifth-grade experience and did not have to feel badly about writing anymore; "I can finally say I feel free from the fear that has hindered my ability to learn how to write for so many years especially a public audience." Julie is able to do this because, in part, she acknowledges that she didn't actually know much about writing in the fifth grade: "I may not have fully grasped the true meaning of writing at that time." Most importantly, Julie is able to understand that her response to her fifth-grade writing contest was an emotional one; "fear led me to close up any part of me that was willing to write for a public audience," that no longer defines her as a writer. She has grown to become a writer who can think through and manage her purposes with the needs of an audience; "I am writing to let my audience know that I too have opinions and why they matter." Rather than seeing an audience as an entity she must please, she recognizes that she can depend on it to help her

make her writing clearer: "[t]he audience now serves a guide to writing. Their response (negative or positive) only helps me in improving my writing capability. Whatever feedback I get from them, I either take it and put it to good use or leave it and try to write better the next time instead of shutting down completely like I previously did." Processing her emotional response allows Julie to understand herself differently in writing situations.

Julie's new knowledge makes her understand she has developed strategies to succeed: "I know to tackle the challenges slowly one step at a time." Finally, recognizing how much she has grown motivates Julie "to break out of my shell and practice writing in order to improve my skills." Julie's writing demonstrates research that recognizes a pattern of student writing that includes "a narrative structure that move[s] from an emotional to a more reasoned stance, [comes] to closure, and allow[s] the author to gain increased distance from upsetting events" (Chandler 61).

Understanding the emotional aspect of their writing process can give students more control of their writing and allow them to rethink what their responses mean. Julie's post-course survey is telling. She initially reported that she could never adjust her writing to the needs of any audience, that she could sometimes motivate herself to write papers about topics that did not interest her, and that she never shared her writing to others for feedback. Julie's post-course survey indicated that she could sometimes adjust her writing to the needs of any audience, that she could always motivate herself to write papers about topics that did not interest her, and that she sometimes shared her writing with others for feedback.

I chose to have students complete literacy narratives as part of my adoption of an affective pedagogical stance. They help provide ways for students to engage in emotional discourse to process important metacognitive and metaemotional issues; through this processing, students come to understand and recognize their own skills and become self-directed.

3. Creating a Context for Affect

Our overarching goal of adopting an affective pedagogical stance represents a holistic approach; in doing so, it eschews the mind/body split that is challenged in both educational psychology and composition. A holistic stance demonstrates the premise in the work of Bloom and others that what students will do as part of their learning process is encapsulated in how they feel. In composition studies, in particular, the work of Worsham is most helpful for advocating a holistic approach to teaching writing. Basic writers in many ways are members of the subjugated groups that Worsham refers to, individuals who in dominant pedagogies are schooled away from addressing their affective matters: "In particular, [such] pedagogy provides and limits a vocabulary of emotion and, especially to those in subordinate positions, it teaches an inability to adequately apprehend, name, and interpret their affective lives" (223). Instead, we advocated, and through thoughtful intention, created contexts in which the affective matters of basic writers could be named, understood, and addressed, when possible, in ways that reconfigure the subordinate positions of our students. We were deliberate in sharing with them that they had entered a space in

which they and their perceptions of, or feelings about, writing and the writing process, along with college in general, mattered.

AMANDA'S STORY

My classrooms are open and relaxed. I spend a great deal of time getting to know each one of my students so that I can better apply the affective pedagogical stance as a holistic teaching approach. This takes time but is especially important for the basic writing student. I need to know how each student approaches writing so that I can offer better feedback and instruction. I also typically know where my students grew up, a little about their families, what they enjoy doing in their spare time, and other personal information that surfaces during conversations, writing, and conferences. Our conversations lead me to the knowledge I need to effectively apply a holistic teaching model for individual students. As a result, students more willingly open up about struggles with depression and anxiety, any disabilities they may have, and how their personal lives impact their school work. I have also found that this process works best when I also openly share my life, experiences, and struggles as well. My students know a great deal about me as a professor and person; we discuss my experiences in school and as an only child. They know I grew up in a small southern town, that I struggled as a first-generation college student, and that I like unicorns and hate goat cheese. This shared knowledge makes it possible for me to instruct students more effectively; if I want to motivate a student and really holistically "reach" a student, I have to know more about the individual than just his or her writing habits.

> I have to know more about the individual than just his or her writing habits.

In my co-requisite classes, the essays combine personal or reflective experiences along with analysis. My approach exposes students to the idea of discourse communities, and I also borrow from Min-Zhan Lu's notion of creating contact zones (Lu constructs her approach based on Mary Louise Pratt's work in her noted article "Arts of the Contact Zone"). Students begin the class with a narrative where they consider how their home, family, and experiences growing up have affected their writing and language. We then discuss the home and local community as the first discourse community and transition into the second essay, where students choose to analyze a discourse community to which they belong. My classes also do a presentation where students choose a discourse community they are passionate about to share with classmates. Every semester I have live music performances, original poetry readings, dance, crafting, painting, and many more unique ideas from students. I then push students to see how behavior, language, and values shift in each of our communities. To me, it combines every element of a holistic model because students engage their bodies, cognitive, and socio-emotional selves with the work.

The following excerpt comes from a student's narrative in which I asked students to reflect on their history with writing and their process:

> I was very shy growing up; I was always nervous talking to others and making new friends. I never really knew how to interact with others and I just always felt weird when I was engaged in a conversation with people my age. I only had three friends when I was a child but I always got along better with adults and was more comfortable around them and to this day most of friends are a few years older then me. Since I was shy and kept to myself I usually would draw little cartoons and eventually began to write stories to go with them. That was always my favorite activity in school when my teachers would tell us to write a story about whatever we wanted and to be creative. I would write about make believe adventures I would go on with my friends, or dreams I had and even about what I would be like as an adult. I could just be creative and in my stories and be whatever I wanted; I could think of anything and wrote it down and just went from there and that's what writing is to me. Being able to put any of your thoughts or dreams down.

The passage reflects the type of work I receive from students on the topic. Here the student openly shares her struggles with making friends her own age and how this leads her to drawing and writing. In almost every instance, students in co-requisite classes find, through this assignment, that something in their past has indelibly shaped who they are as writers; sometimes the death of a grandfather prompted their first song lyrics and other times a cute boy in the third grade inspired tentative love notes. Students share such first experiences as failing to spell the word "between" correctly in a spelling bee and the scary teacher who forced them to write the word "chew" on the board 100 times because of the way they pronounced "you." After I read these essays, I know something very personal about my students, and I reciprocate by sharing some personal aspect of my life that I see as relating. The exchanges help generate a bond between my students and me.

The open and ongoing exchanges I have with my students create a holistic context in which they and their affective issues matter. The bond I create with them allows me to actively position myself as a resource to help them process and address affective issues that might impede their success in and outside of my classroom. My affective pedagogical stance manifests in students' comments and behaviors as they become increasingly willing to do the hard work of college writing.

A Video Bridge: Adding Students' Voices to Our Stories

The following short video includes the voices of some of Amanda's students who, in their own words, communicate how the pedagogical stance she adopted motivated them to succeed: http://podcasting.gcsu.edu/4DCGI/Podcasting/GGC/Episodes/30564/458791841.mov. The video ends with a brief commentary by Cara and, in less than two minutes, does what we cannot adequately express in the many words we included (and excluded) from this article. What makes the video such a rich example of our commitment to adopt an affective pedagogical stance is the fact that it was not created to exemplify the claims we forward regarding the stance.

In a serendipitous moment at the end of the Spring 2012 term, we had an epiphany in a team meeting. We wanted to record some of our students, but we were headed into the period between classes and exams. Amanda's class was the only one that had not ended for the term. Because she had one more class session on the day of our meeting, she offered to talk to her students to see if they would be willing to come back for the videotaping. That the students actually agreed to meet with us for the taping after their class ended for the term underscores her claims about the type of student-teacher relationship she worked to build during the term.

The entire video process, from conception and execution, took place over a three-day window. We had the epiphany to create the video on Tuesday. Two of us (Amanda and Kim) tested available technology on Wednesday, which is when we decided it would be great to also interview any available team members. With the help of our technical department, we recorded everyone on Thursday. There were no rehearsals for Cara or any of the students.

In the video, the students use the term "Segue" or "Segue Model," which is the name we selected internally for the co-requisite model in which the students were concurrently enrolled in basic writing and first-year writing during the same term, with the same instructor. In their own words, the students provide a testament to our commitment to a holistic pedagogical stance that promotes motivation, makes rooms for students' emotional responses, and creates a context where their affective issues matter.

Implications for Pedagogies of Transformation

As Wendy Olson claims in "On the Institutionalization of Basic Writing as Political Economy," basic writing—which is "at once a program, a classroom, a pedagogy, a practice, a certain kind of student—not to mention programs, classrooms, pedagogies, practices, and students" is *"always"* in crisis (55). Within the current crisis characterized by calls for transformation shaped by public outcries regarding costs and college completion, we share our stories and students' voices not as a charge for "this is how it must be done" but as suggestions and related strategies that reflect careful attention to students and contexts when participating in, and responding to, calls for change.

Since public discussions about the need to transform remedial education rarely focus on students, they are even less likely to include a focus on how students' affective issues should be factored into the restructuring of programs and curriculum. Instead, public reports on basic writing tend to oversimplify or render invisible the population in need of basic writing instruction; they consist of reductive arguments that focus on costs or the relationship between basic writing instruction and the college completion agenda. Shannon Carter draws attention to one such discussion that challenges the viability and cost of basic writing instruction in the academy at large. According to Carter:

> More recently, we have begun to hear echoes of the same rhetoric of exclusion, most clearly in response to the Secretary of Education's "commission on the Future of Educa-

tion" (2005). In the "Issue Paper" . . . Charles Miller and Cheryl Oldham "set the context" for this "National Dialogue" by declaring the very existence of basic writing as a major reason for the American postsecondary education's "diminished capacity" (2006). As they explain, "[s]everal institutions of higher education are admitting students who lack adequate preparation for college-level work, thus expending precious resources in remediation." (7)

While reports of basic writing instruction and the college completion agenda are somewhat less dire, who students are seems tangential to the focus on data-driven results and costs. The U.S. Department of Education published a *College Completion Toolkit* in March 2011 that includes this focus on the data and costs associated with college completion and developmental education. The report begins with a focus on how much revenue a college-educated populace can contribute to a state's tax base (1). It goes on to make the following cost-benefit claims regarding remedial education in general:

> Bypassing developmental or remedial education increases the likelihood of course and degree completion. More precisely tailored assessments and placement policies combined with individualized instruction thus can increase student achievement and decrease the student- and state-borne costs associated with semester-long remedial courses. (19)

The goals of degree completion and transformation to promote achievement are laudable; however, reductive statements such as those stated above need to be coupled with what takes place in the basic writing classroom and students' stories to provide a balanced picture of what must be done to effect change.

As we join institutional and public conversations about the transformation—and we should join them—a key question we need to ask is, How do we adapt our institutional practices so that we foster change that aligns with our actual students and their affective positions? We offer two broad suggestions and specific strategies as ways to address this question:

1. *Work to understand specific student populations and their needs when developing, implementing, and/or revising programs and curricular models.*

That context matters is not a new concept in conversations about basic writing and transformation initiatives. Editors Gerri McNenny and Sallyanne H. Fitzgerald connect these two areas in their 2001 edited collection, *Mainstreaming Basic Writing: Politics and Pedagogies of Access*. McNenny's introduction provides the context for the long-standing nature of transformation conversations; she explains how "[t]he call to examine the role of basic writing programs was sounded quite competently [as far back] as 1992 . . . by numerous audiences—by politicians, boards of trustees, university administrators and the public alike" (1). Fitzgerald sums up the underlying theme of the book based on the work of its authors: "The best approach depends on the context of the college or university" (221). This claim, like the transformation debate itself, is somewhat timeless. We of-

fer the following suggestions and strategies for context-based transformation efforts:

- Incorporate individuated program structures and delivery modes to address different types of students and the range of students' needs. Flexibility in program structures is especially important for nontraditional students who have the motivation to get it done but whose life commitments can become obstacles in the pathway to successful course completion. At GGC, we did not adopt a one-size fits all approach to transforming our basic writing program. Instead, we added an accelerated, early-exit model to the co-requisite model as a way to "do things differently" as part of our transformation efforts. Students can complete their basic writing course a few weeks earlier (at weeks 11 and 13 versus week 16) if their work in the term and submitted writing portfolio indicate that they are ready to handle the rigor of the first-year writing course they will have to take in a subsequent semester. The early-exit model has already been adopted by other Georgia institutions participating in the state's transformation efforts. This model works particularly well for students who may only need basic writing as a refresher course but whose lived realities makes the co-requisite model impractical. The students are able to complete their writing course early enough in the term so that they have the remaining weeks to focus on their other courses and outside commitments. However, for students who need a bit more time to hone their writing skills, such a model is also effective since most of the core writing instruction takes place in the first 10 weeks of the term. Students then can spend the last several weeks getting the individuated instruction and support they need to help them improve their writing and polish their portfolios.

- Explore holistic curriculum models that allow students to address their lived realities, like identity formation, career goals, and the impact of their emotions on their writing, the writing process, and their long-term success in the institution. Basic writers, especially, need instruction that moves them from the margins to engaged, participatory members in their institutions. This is less likely to occur without holistic approaches that consider the many factors such students struggle with inside and outside of the classroom.

- Provide information and training for faculty and other internal and external audiences that adequately profiles the basic writing students impacted by transformation initiatives. A lack of understanding of who the students are in a particular context can lead to less-than-effective basic writing programs and methods. At GGC, we provide extensive training for basic writing faculty that includes discussions about state and national transformation initiatives, research about best practices related to basic writing instruction, and strategies that exemplify an affective pedagogical stance.

2. Recognize that in all strategies and programs, affect matters.

Any efforts to transform remediation or rethink practices associated basic writing instruction should include more than an assent to the role affective matters play in student success. If "learning, in the complex sense in which it happens in school or the real world, is not a rational or disembodied process" (Immordino-Yang and Damasio 4), affective matters are central to thinking about, talking about, and implementing any effective change. Below are programmatic strategies that can be employed to support attention to affective matters:

- Develop institutional-wide collaborations that help faculty and administrators outside of basic writing understand the role affect plays in learning and student success. At GGC, we have implemented block schedules that link reading, math, and other general education courses taken by developmental students. These blocks of faculty cohorts are trained to understand how important affect matters are to the students' success.

- Create cross-disciplinary programs designed to enhance pedagogy across the institution. While it is important for basic writing teachers to assume an affective pedagogical stance in the classroom, faculty across campus have much to learn from them, particularly at institutions like GGC where a large population of students take developmental courses upon entering college. Recently, Cara created a best practices teaching certificate titled "Writing as a Tool for Learning," which includes a series of workshops that help promote an affective pedagogy. Our team members teach several of the workshops, which are based on a common read, Mike Rose's *Lives on the Boundaries.*

We are actively working to create an institutional culture that addresses the affective matters of basic writing students. How they feel about writing, the writing process, the institution, themselves, and even the realities of their lives that act as stimuli for emotional responses within the classroom should not be marginalized in ways that are reminiscent of how the students are sometimes marginalized in the institution. Affective matters are myriad and complex, but we have learned that not doing the hard work of considering and addressing them is not doing the complete work associated with initiatives to transform basic writing programs and instruction.

Top-down initiatives meant to transform basic writing instruction need to be carefully developed to assist instructors in addressing affective issues. However, in order for students to succeed and to reach national graduation goals, an affective pedagogical stance is vital in the classroom. An affective pedagogical stance:

- Resists the separation of cognitive and affective matters by understanding the complex relationship between emotion and cognition that impacts learning and writing. In other words, it enacts a pedagogy that is holistic by accepting emotional responses as part of the learning process.

- Allows instructors to recognize that one pedagogical stance will not succeed for all stu-

dents or for any one student all of the time. Instructors need time to get to know each individual student and the student's needs to create a bond that situates the instructor as a useful resource and guide. In other words, learning to see students as individuals with specific needs allows instructors to assess students' learning and suggest or collaborate with them to develop specific strategies for overcoming affective issues that hinder student progress. One strategy to get to know students is via the individual conference. Another strategy is for instructors cultivate the practice of overtly encouraging students on a one-on-one basis to view them as resources for writing instruction and college success in general.

- Creates a context in which students have opportunities to engage with their own affective issues. Instructors should include assignments and activities meant to draw out affective issues so they may be discussed and addressed. Assignments may include goal-setting and self-monitoring activities that teach students how to be self-directed learners or writing assignments in which students discuss, process, and rethink emotional responses to past writing assignments, such as literacy narratives.

Most importantly, instructor intervention needs to be flexible and appropriately responsive to the needs of individual students. Lastly, program development and classroom praxis need to recognize the complex relationship between cognition, emotion, and student learning for improved success rates of students through basic writing on to graduation.

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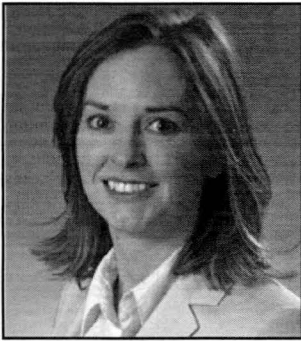
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William DeGenaro

"Where Did all the White Girls Come From?": Difference and Critical Empathy In and Out of the Service Learning Classroom

I TEACH SERVICE LEARNING COURSES at a branch campus of Michigan's flagship university system.[1] Located in Metropolitan Detroit, the campus serves a racially and ethnically diverse student body comprised of significant numbers of working-class and/or first-generation college-goers. The classroom itself often becomes a space where differences collide; for instance, a typical class includes first- and second-generation immigrants from the Middle East as well as white first-generation university attendees from the working-class, "downriver" suburbs of the deindustrialized Motor City. Service learning courses tend to add *additional* layers of difference, immersing students in community-based sites of learning, often within Detroit city limits where African-Americans comprise a majority.

Like many writing teachers in open-access environments, I appreciate how these encounters with difference provide occasions for writing, learning, and critical inquiry. As a field, writing studies has progressed beyond simplistic conceptions of multiculturalism thanks in part to critical/problem-posing pedagogy (Freire; hooks; Seitz; Shor; Tassoni and Thelin), theoretically sophisticated critiques of service learning (Bickford; Coogan; Cushman; Herzberg; Welch), and a journal like *Open Words* with its emphasis on race/class intersections and nuanced representations of teaching in open-access and diverse settings. Critical pedagogy has helpfully foregrounded the tension between student-centeredness and productive use of socio-political context in the classroom. The service learning literature has reminded us to attend to material conditions and pursue modes of public engagement that affect material change. And the journal you hold in your hands (or more likely have accessed on a screen) has resisted "lore" in favor of theoretically rich discussions of sites of difference like branch campuses.

This essay presumes that difference is both an ethical good and a subject worthy of ongoing investigation and considers how the concept of empathy intersects with difference in service learning courses especially. First, an explanation of some key terms. *Empathy* refers to the capac-

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ity to imagine the point-of-view or emotional state of another person. In its uncritical iterations, empathy can involve illogical or unethical leaps wherein empathic individuals fail to recognize the limits of their own understanding of the other person. Thus *uncritical empathy* is imagining another person's experience while failing to recognize that one's understanding is necessarily limited. *Critical empathy,* on the other hand, acknowledges that human understanding is partial and that material differences limit our capacity to imagine fully another person's experience and emotions. I argue that *critical empathy* is a useful teaching tool and a useful rhetorical device for moving forward the goals of teaching across difference—difference in the aforementioned classrooms and, in service learning classes specifically, difference outside of the classroom. Uncritical empathy seeks comfort and resolution and obscures difference (*I feel good about myself because I have walked a mile in your shoes*). Critical empathy imagines and contextualizes multiple perspectives across difference and accepts discomfort as part of the learning process.

I begin with a service learning anecdote to illustrate how difference and discomfort can and do circulate in pedagogical situations. A group of my students and I arrive at an inner-city Detroit foster home, a residential institution that serves mostly African-American young men. The students—mostly young women in their twenties with white, Middle-Eastern, and African-American racial/ethnic affiliations, the majority, though, being white—and their white male professor begin to exit the car. The students are enrolled in an upper-division, service-learning writing course that has partnered with the foster home and this is their first visit to the worksite. A young man exits the foster home's residence hall, sees us, and wonders aloud, "Where did all the white girls come from?"

The question is largely rhetorical, in that I don't think the young man expected an answer. Two of the "white girls" laugh. I wave at the young man, who nods in a friendly manner, and walks toward the facility's cafeteria. We walk in the opposite direction, toward a small administrative annex where staff members at the foster home lead what ends up being a very productive orientation session for us. The students appear to be unfazed by the comment and none of us bring up the encounter with foster home staff. I had done very little, too little perhaps, to prepare the class for our first visit to the foster home, in part because this was very early in the semester and in part because the purpose of our first visit was an orientation session, not a session that would involve (or so I thought) direct contact with clients. At the orientation session, we meet key staff members; learn about the facility's operations, history, and funding structure; review logistics; and discuss the semester's collaborative projects, which include rewriting a volunteer manual and generating content for the facility's website.

What's Empathy Got to Do with It?

Empathy as a teaching goal (*I'm going to teach my students to have greater empathy for other people*) can lead to unreflective, bad teaching, particularly when well-intentioned teachers conflate empathy with charity or, perhaps worse, take the emphasis off student writing. In its worse

incarnations, empathy in service learning writing classrooms leads teachers to think their students can heroically save the less fortunate by understanding them and become better people by writing about them or for them. Uncritical empathy not only leads to bad teaching, it also opens practitioners of service learning and critical pedagogies to a host of criticisms. "Save the world on your own time" is Stanley Fish's widely circulated screed addressed toward teachers focused on the moral or empathic character of their students and the social problems that confront them. Fish argues that empathic awareness isn't a worthy learning outcome; his argument loses some of its force and credibility when *critical empathy* is framed as both an ethical good *and* a pragmatic, useful skill.

First of all, a good deal of compelling evidence in the fields of neuroscience and psychology suggests that college students in particular are becoming less empathic (cf. Konrath et al.'s meta-analysis of the research, which suggests a particularly sharp decline in the first decade of the new millennium); the findings of those studies frequently end up in the popular press, perhaps because they make good copy. Declining empathy and/or the media hype surrounding declining empathy represent kairotic moments, timely occasions to investigate how rhetorics of empathy circulate. Further, the concept of empathy fundamentally involves human interaction—how we imagine one another, how we communicate with one another, and the stances we take on issues of public importance. Empathy is a rhetorical performance insomuch as we adopt a way to act interpersonally and use symbols like words, gestures, and rituals. Given empathy's connection to the concerns of rhetoric classrooms and writing classes focused on the public sphere, incorporating empathy into the curriculum in thoughtful, reflective ways makes a great deal of sense.

Indeed *empathy is a rhetoric in most every sense of the word*: a symbol system, a means of persuasion, a transaction, a set of tropes, a performance, and a way toward identification. When that young man posed his question about "white

Which responses are empathic on our part?

girls," he expressed an observation regarding the materiality of race, gender, and identity. At the foster home, he is surrounded by mostly young, African-American men; the presence of racially diverse women was notable to him. As a rhetorical utterance, we were his audience and he was in some ways asserting his presence, raising his voice. And as audience members, we were left to react and respond with utterances of our own: to laugh (as several of my students did), to nod (as I did), to speak about the possibly inappropriate nature of the comment with the staff (as none of us did until later), to respond factually ("we're from the University and we're working with the staff," as none of us did at all), among other possible responses. Which responses are empathic on our part?

To "report" the young man may have gotten him into trouble. To respond critically or with any type of admonishment on our part may have alienated the young man, thereby decreasing our chances in the future of establishing a productive relationship with him. We had little time to consider our response, but just as his statement was a rhetorical utterance, so too was our reac-

tion or lack thereof. Comments my students later made suggest to me they were thinking at least somewhat empathically, certainly about not wanting the young man to get into trouble and, further, taking into account his youth when assessing the extent to which the comment was inappropriate and problematic. We thought our day's learning would consist solely of the knowledge and information shared by the staff in the foster home's annex; the comments outside taught us something as well—about the young man and his context, about ourselves and our contexts. Our responses were not perfect, or even necessarily positive, but they were moments of contact with difference, moments that in equal part suggested how we empathically exist with others in the context of a service learning encounter.

Empathy can be a useful framework in the service learning writing classroom—a topic of investigation, a teachable rhetorical device, a lens for reflective writing. Why? Because empathic awareness is a useful rhetorical skill with the particular ability to foster audience awareness and understanding across difference. These are ethical ends that challenge Fish's assertion about the irrelevance of the moral development of students. We ought to be concerned with student development vis-à-vis civic, ideological, and moral outlook. But beyond the ethical ends, teaching empathy as a rhetoric has utility. Responding, speaking, and acting empathically, to some, is an ethical imperative. For a class focused on rhetoric and communication in public arenas, empathic utterances and behavior also have practical value. I mentioned the value of establishing a relationship with the young man at the foster home; several collaborative student projects would involve significant interaction with the young clients; a poor relationship would adversely affect the quality of those writing projects. At every turn, though, we need to take care to problematize empathy and guard against the charity mentality. Critical reflection on the empathic interactions with difference can help contextually foreground *both* the practical utility and ethical dimensions—and this is a valuable step in moving away from empathy as "just" charity.

Toward Definitions of Empathy, Uncritical Empathy, and Critical Empathy

Uncritical empathy often foregrounds comfort, good feelings, and individualism. The person feeling empathy (think of a student doing service learning, or even encountering difference through a print text) feels reassured due to his or her own actions and reactions. That individual feels comfortable, happy, and satisfied. Uncritical empathy does little to go beyond narrative. In "Pleasurable Pedagogies: *Reading Lolita in Tehran* and the Rhetoric of Empathy," Kulbaga argues that "eliciting compassion through personal narratives obscures social, political and economic" context (510). Similarly, Suzane Keen, a scholar of theories of narrative, and folklorist Amy Shuman have offered challenging critiques of the pervasive assumption that exposure to other people's stories somehow translates into ethical perspectives. The work of theorists like Keen and Shuman remind us we can't assume that a print text for instance leads to the ethical transformation of our students. It is not enough to have an experience (via a print text or for that matter a service learning encounter) because such an interaction is too pat; we run the risk of falling into one of the traps of uncriti-

cal empathy: a sensation in students that makes them feel enlightened but may end up, as Kulbaga argues, erasing material context.

Critical empathy, on the other hand, seeks to contextualize, increase meta-awareness, and help all parties become not necessarily better people but better rhetors. Critical empathy allows for discomfort and emphasizes a larger context. It is a response, though not a corrective or panacea, to what theorist Peter Breggin calls the culture's "crippling preoccupation with oneself" (124), a preoccupation that signifies not only a problematic individualism but also a lack of meta-cognitive awareness of the self's relationship with other agents. Understanding others *begins* with this kind of self awareness and *continues* with open and honest engagements with experiences that do the important work of provoking discomfort and "conceptualizing identity formation as a process of becoming" (Ryan 687). The rhetoric classroom can offer a forum in which students engage with, critique, and contextualize texts and experiences and "become"—to borrow the useful terminology compositionist Cynthia Ryan recently introduced—rhetors capable of complicating simplistic conceptions of self-in-society and employing empathic awareness of the various agents involved in rhetorical situations.

A critical and contextual version of empathy offers rhetors the possibility of transcending a limited and limiting individualism. In the classroom, critical-contextual empathy begins to push beyond the limited pedagogical work that a decontextualized rhetorical analysis of a text, utterance, or event might accomplish. Instead of just unpacking atomized rhetorical features, consider the circulation and the implications of the phrase (a phrase like "where did all the white girls come from?") from multiple points-of-view. We can discuss feelings, but we also ought to think about the speaker, the listeners, the diction and syntax, the place, the material realities (as we understand them), etc. Critical empathy is about more than understanding the speaker. We need to understand, and then complicate that understanding. I would argue this need is especially great in open-access environments like my university, where encounters with difference are not abstractions but rather daily occurrences.

Unpacking "Where Did All the White Girls Come From?"

A rhetorical situation such as the moment when the young man at the foster home asked "Where did all the white girls come from?" presents an opportunity for various agents to listen analytically and perform empathy. The narrative floats among various agents and *potentially* facilitates questions about the implications of difference. The aforementioned service learning class can appropriate that story as a moment to voyeuristically stare at the foster home. I can appropriate the story in the context of my own academic writing. And/or, mindful of the problematic aspects of empathy, I can acknowledge the contexts (a conversation among students, back on campus in the classroom, in the pages of an academic journal, etc.) in which stories are re-told, re-circulated, and re-imagined.

We need to respond pedagogically to rhetorical situations that foreground difference and

provide opportunities for teachers to engage in problem-posing about empathic responses. Most of the students in my class were young women in their 20s from a variety of racial and ethnic backgrounds including Arab-American, African-American, and Euro-American. The residents of the foster home were mostly African-American, teen-aged young men. The racial diversity of the class helped to mitigate partially the racial dimension inherent in many campus-community, service learning relationships. Happily, we didn't *completely* fit into the too-common scenario of white volunteers marching into an African-American community. But race was still a major factor and a part of why the exchange was uncomfortable.

In teaching scenarios that raise issues of difference and lend themselves to empathic response, academic projects that contextualize empathy and difference help. In the scenario at the foster home, for instance, one of the African-American students in the class—in addition to organizing an impressive town-hall meeting in which representatives from Michigan's Department of Human Services met with service providers to discuss better public-private collaboration—did an independent research project on the role race plays in responding to Detroit's foster care crisis. She shared her research with the class and kept us mindful of one particular issue of difference. She did some of the work of contextualizing race and identity. The discourse of empathy in the classroom was able to transcend a superficial or touchy-feely level. We searched for greater—albeit "as if"—understanding.

The ability to meet some of the residents of the agency where members of the class worked coupled with this young woman's research to provide an opportunity for critical, contextualized empathy. For instance, students confronted (through both experiences at the foster home as well as open, sometimes uncomfortable conversations in the safe space of the classroom) how age and gender informed their relationship with the young men. One Saturday morning we joined a group of the students to do some gardening (the foster home participates in a local urban gardening initiative, and urban gardening was the subject of another student's independent research project). Several of the young men boasted that the night before they had gotten drunk. This was yet another powerful rhetorical situation because my students had to consider the ethical and empathic dimensions of how they responded. Should they react disapprovingly? Should they report the students to the foster home staff? Should they laugh? The situation was also powerful because of the complex ways that identity informed the conversation. Reflecting on the experience the following week in class, students thought empathically about the experience and wondered the extent to which the young men were showing off, trying to impress "college girls." Students also speculated on the social class dimensions, wondering if popular conceptions of "college kids" influenced their boasts and whether they were rehearsing what they imagined to be what most college students do during their weekends. The classroom discussion was lively, and I did my best to allow—even encourage—exploration of identity markers and issues of difference. We all were imagining multiple points-of-view; considering how those points-of-view are gendered, raced, and classed; and thinking about what various rhetorical utterances and response might signify. That's an exercise in

(critical) empathy as well as an exercise in rhetorical awareness.

But "Where did all the white girls come from?" was the moment that was most complicated in terms of the empathic potential. This was a loaded moment, one begging for empathic analysis and reflection, another awkward and complex instance in which difference became explicit. As the teacher, my own affective response was conflicted. On one hand, I worried about the degree to which the mostly female students might feel threatened or objectified by the comment. On the other hand, I worried about how to broach that concern without perpetuating a racist impression of the adolescent African-American young man who had made the statement. Reflecting on how to discuss this moment in the classroom cried out for a complex set of empathic considerations. How might the women in the class perceive this comment? How might the African-American women in the class perceive any implication on my part that the African-American young men at the foster home present a threat to them? How might our discussion in the classroom impact how the students interact with the foster kids?

Making the issues of difference an explicit part of the conversation was crucial. So was my owning up to my own hesitations. Setting that kind of honest tone helped students become willing to speak openly. The young women in the class *reported* (I hope they were being honest) that they did not feel objectified or threatened by the comment; however, the opportunity to engage with difference honestly and openly was no less valuable. One young woman in the class who happened to be a somewhat introverted, Arab-American Muslim who wears a traditional hijab (head covering) made the comment "Nobody's ever called me a white girl before" during our discussion. Yet another complex rhetorical utterance. On one level, the comment was meant as a humorous, self-referential identification, a reference to her own ability to *pass*. A woman whose skin color and head scarf mark both her ethnic and religious difference having some fun with a comment that ironically constructed her as *not* an Other. She was essentially saying, *Do I really look like a white girl?* On another level, the student's words commented on the messy nature of identity and empathy, reminding the class that race, quite literally, is not a black and white matter and that empathy necessarily requires that we situate our own gray areas, our own biases, our own intersectional identities as raced, gendered, classed members of the culture (and members of a classroom community). The intellectual work (for instance, the independent research projects that further provided us an understanding of race and the foster care situation in the region) of contextualizing our experiences at the foster home were important, but during our class discussions, what came up over and over again were our "feelings." There was no escaping the affective dimension, no matter how much I attempted to focus discussions on rhetorical dimensions and strategies and the critical context of our service learning work. And perhaps those affective dimensions were just as important.

Affect, Empathy, and the Service Learning Experience

Compositionist Susan McLeod calls on teachers of writing to transcend reliance on *other*

people's stories as a method of empathy promotion (emphasis mine). In *Notes on the Heart,* McLeod says that "having students participate in activities designed to get them into the shoes of the 'other' for a time will help develop empathy and promote more open beliefs" (82). By way of evidence, McLeod also points to data on cognition and makes a compelling case that empathic pedagogies that facilitate cognitive dissonance seem to have the most potential. Opening our students to discomfort and disruption or, in McLeod's terms "dissonance," has potential value. I think about my Arab-American student's comment about being called a "white girl" as a moment of the kind of cognitive dissonance to which McLeod refers. Her comment moved beyond the superficial mode of pleasurable affect that Kulbaga critiques. This young woman wasn't just feeling better by identifying with the young man and his narrative, she was inserting herself into the narrative and putting her own identity in conversation with his. There was a messy version of cognitive dissonance at play: she was at once the "other" (as an Arab-American) and the "white girl" (the representative of University culture). She had power (the cultural capital of her own sense of humor, the privilege associated with higher education) but also a lack of power (as the potential target of a sexist comment).

> ...she was at once the "other" (as an Arab-American) and the "white girl" (the representative of University culture).

This young woman used the foster home narrative's *potential* to reflect on identity and power. Empathy is potential, in the same way that affect is potential. Empathy can become something larger—for example: consciousness, awareness, action—and move toward *critical empathy* if coupled with honest and open inquiry into social context, movement beyond just "feelings" for another person, and acknowledgment of one's distance from the actual experience. Empathy can become an ethical, affective stance instead of the co-optation of a story or a sentimental/unproductive way one feels in the presence of an Other. In *Ugly Feelings*, Ngai reminds us how affect and emotion differ from one another: "The affect/emotion split originated in psychoanalysis for the practical purpose of distinguishing third-person from first-person representations of feelings with 'affect' designating feelings described from an observer's (analyst's) perspective, and 'emotion' designating feelings that 'belong' to the speaker" (24). Critical empathy can aim for an other-centered point-of-view that is reflective of affect's origin in the world of psychoanalysis.

Affect refers to a bodily sensation we have concerning the world around us, a pre-cognitive and pre-conscious relationship with any phenomenon. Our bodily selves encounter phenomenon constantly: experiences, texts, artifacts, individuals. Before we think, speak, write, or react, we encounter. Affect refers to this initial encounter and as such exists independent of rational thought, independent of any utterance on our part. Initially we feel the phenomenon, and this is why we of-

ten link affect with emotions or pathos. However, affect encompasses what theorist Brian Massumi calls a "capacity" or "potential." Affect is a sensation that our bodies experience that *can* lead to a variety of visceral responses but does not always or necessarily result in catharsis nor any of the discourses traditionally associated with pathos. Massumi writes, "Emotion is qualified intensity... affect is unqualified" (28). Nor does an initial, bodily contact with a phenomenon necessarily result in any type of action. That is why Massumi emphasizes potential when he talks about affect-as-sensation. In Massumi's conception, we may or may not act. We may or may not speak. But we experience a sensation. Affect informs and influences our rhetoric. No matter how logocentric we may be (or strive to be), no matter how purposeful we are, our language use flows from our bodies. Where there are bodies that feel—that experience the sensation Massumi describes—there is affect.

Empathy starts with stories and emotions that our bodies feel. As we attempt to foster an empathy that is *critical*, it's helpful to think of empathy in the classroom with the "as if" element that Richmond and Teich emphasize. Stay mindful, Newcomb suggests, of the "space between people" (118). Drawing on Hannah Arendt, Newcomb argues that ethical action is more likely if "compassion" does not serve as the only basis for identification. Mindful of Newcomb's suggestion, contextualized—triangulated, even—and reflective and honest (blunt and agonistic, even) understanding of another person or of another person's story may have greater affective potential. To contextualize might mean doing independent research and further inquiry that situates both the story/experience/individual as well as one's own story/experience/self. In the triangulation, difference becomes a part of the equation. *This is how we are similar. This is how we are different.* Fleckenstein argues that during empathic episodes, thinking and feeling become recursive and complementary forms of cognition, forming a "network" that is "the heart of social activism" (705). She writes, "It (empathy) recognizes difference in the midst of identification and it motivates other-centered social action" (714). What better reason do we need to experiment with pedagogies of empathy?

As I've argued throughout, discomfort is one of the most valuable affective manifestations of critical empathy, though likely not the only manifestation. My Arab-American student illustrates that humor is another expression of critical engagement with others, including others who are marked, for example, by racial difference. As with many instances of critical humor, this student spoke something often considered taboo, something that perhaps other individuals are thinking but too fearful to say or something that perhaps highlights an absurdity. Consider an iconic moment in the classic Mel Brooks film *Blazing Saddles*, a moment characterized by syntax similar to what we heard on our first visit to the foster home. The African-American sheriff played by Cleavon Little lures several members of the Ku Klux Klan to a remote location so he can steal their robes to use as a disguise. To get the Klan members to chase him, Sheriff Bart taunts them by yelling, "Where 'da white women at?" The dialogue draws its humor from the absurd, taboo, outrageous nature of the sentiment that African-American men represent threats to white women and the idea that

a violent groups of extremists like the Klan can be characterized as playing a wacky, screwball cat-and-mouse game with persons of color. It's an offensive moment, except that the absurdity and humor end up *disempowering* the Klan. What does this moment of gross-out humor have to do with service learning and empathy? The Mel Brooks film uses humor to strip racism of some of its power, similarly to how my Arab-American student used humor to strip a potential moment of objectification of some of *its* power. Both the film's speech act and the young teen at the foster home's utterance (somewhat similar utterances, at that) create complicated sensations in audience members—sensations that provoke, discomfort, inspire emotion, and have the potential to do something more depending on how we engage with them.

But beyond the discomfort and humor as affective manifestions of empathy, it's the "something more" that most interests me about sensational moments. Some audience members remain offended by a film like *Blazing Saddles* and for reasons that are legitimate, prudish, or perhaps both. The film insults our sense of decorum (and we're not even talking about the scene of campfire flatulence) and perhaps our liberal sensibilities. But what *starts* with an initial, affective sensation like offense, disgust, or shock, can transform into reflection and/or action. Acknowledging and even highlighting difference can lead to empathy. That scene in *Blazing Saddles* can remain nothing but potential, but with reflection and thought can serve as a critique of racism's absurdity or perhaps even inspire a more empathic mindset. Likewise, service learning opportunities—which so frequently involve our students confronting difference and experiencing emotionally loaded moments—have empathic and active *potential*. What do we as teachers of rhetoric working in sites of *difference* do with the potential?

Teaching Critical Empathy

A small but spirited body of scholarship within writing studies has engaged with empathy and its pedagogical possibilities. Caccia has helpfully developed curriculum ideas involving empirical research projects that engage writing students with subcultures for whom mainstream society sometimes lacks empathy. Richmond has suggested that for our students, empathy can "minimize power relationships," but that we ought to foster a realistic sense of the impossibility of fully understanding another perspective (40). Empathy always needs to maintain an "as if" element as opposed to feigning a direct, one-to-one correspondence (Richmond 43; Teich 146). In the interests of using empathy as a rhetorical tool for disrupting homogenizing imperatives in the culture, I would echo the importance of Richmond's call for teachers to differentiate empathy from total immersion into another's perspective and put a slightly different spin on empathy's effect on power relationships. Empathy, as a rhetorical stance, does not have to "minimize" power relations; when contextualized and critiqued, empathy can potentially *reveal* power relations, showing to us the implications of our identity markers and offering an opportunity to analyze how much cultural capital, power, and ethos members and non-members possess in various contexts and while interacting with various audiences. Our classroom discussions in the weeks after our initial visit to the foster home did not

devolve into simplistic articulations of our feelings about the statement or the young man's perspective. We didn't presume to know his story or his experiences. But we did seek to attempt a closer understanding. We listened to the young man and tried to unpack his words, their meaning, and their circulation.

Another pedagogical dimension of empathy as a rhetorical tool for understanding difference is simultaneously listening to students and encouraging students to listen to others. In the literature on empathy and the teaching of writing, scholars call on Carl Rogers' version of critical listening (McLeod 115-116; Teich 145-146). Teich, for instance, draws on Rogerian psychology to remind us of the value of "analytical listening," referring to both the method of restating another's position to be sure one understands that position and the stance of openness to change one's perspective (145-147). This, Teich argues, is a crucial component of empathy. Moving in a different direction, Lindquist makes a compelling argument that teachers ought to "*perform* empathy" (201, emphasis mine), for instance, by feigning a naïve stance as students articulate their own positionalities. Lindquist describes this version of pedagogical empathy as "strategic positioning for the purposes of learning how to best serve others" (199). These examples illustrate the role that empathy already plays in our pedagogy, as well as the need for a pedagogical theory that opens up wider possibilities for the teaching of critical empathy. I felt anxious during those post-mortem discussions of the foster home, worried in particular that the young women in the class felt objectified, but, in retrospect, I think my own deference to what *students* had to say (opening up the floor during class for any and all thoughts on the incident) was its own kind of performance of empathy, per Lindquist's empathic pedagogy. I don't think I was faking objectivity or naivete as much as putting my own affective responses aside to listen to others. We listened to the young man. I listened to students.

Critical empathy as a pedagogy does not automatically mean a sentimental, colonial, or otherwise ethically problematic stance. Nor does it necessarily mean critical consiousness-raising. Empathy creates an as-if, metaphorical relationship among agents that *can* remind us of material differences and can be a route to contextualized, reflective (though never first-hand or direct) knowledge (see especially Nussbaum [2001] for a useful discussion of reflection and ethical action). Shuman writes, "Empathy is one kind of obligation, sometimes creating a possibility for understanding across differences, sometimes involving sentimentality, sometimes romanticizing tragedy as inspiration, but in any case compromising the relationship between tellers and listeners" (20). The compromise is what matters, or perhaps the *acknowledgement* of compromise is what matters. Making the compromise explicit in service learning classrooms especially (where real human interaction is part of the curriculum) is what provides a learning opportunity for students and teachers alike.

In writing and rhetoric courses that profess to prepare students for effective engagement with rhetorical situations in and out of the academy, we try to teach students to employ rhetorical awareness as they negotiate and intervene in these situations. While the academy's notions of

critical thinking as a learning outcome[2] often foreground consideration of diverse perspectives, less attention is paid specifically to empathy as a learning outcome or empathic perspective as a useful rhetorical device. Empathy and empathic perspective go beyond mere consideration or refutation of a *different* point-of-view. In its fullest conception, empathy represents an affective, intellectual, and critical engagement with a different point of view and an awareness of difference as both material reality and social construct.

A pedagogy of critical empathy gives students an ethical and practical advantage while negotiating situations that involve difference—an argument with racist family members, a business meeting in which acquaintances from various cultures have convened, a writing assignment that asks students to synthesize competing approaches to a problem unique to their academic discipline. Many rhetorical situations involving difference cause discomfort or anxiety, perhaps because the stakes are high, perhaps because the subject matter is taboo, perhaps both. Regardless, critical empathy is a worthy—essential, even—teaching subject for rhetoricians.

Conclusion

Empathy is a rhetoric that can promote critical understanding across difference. Not only difference in terms of familiar identity categories like race and class, but difference across a broader array of categories. To say that empathy is a rhetoric means that empathy is a discursive engagement with the world, encompassing both affective and rational ways of making sense of one's place in the public sphere. Employing empathy as a rhetoric involves using a potentially savvy and productive tool for negotiating the polyglot contexts our students negotiate. Popular conceptions paint the concept of empathy as merely a charitable feeling, an emotional or even goody-goody response to some stimulus. This type of charitable or sympathetic sentiment is often how empathy rears its head, particularly uncritical versions of empathic feeling. What is problematic, of course, is that the feeling doesn't necessarily lead anywhere productive. Our students may actually feel a closer affinity to an ethic of charity than to an ethic of action (Bickford and Reynolds; Morton). Uncritical empathy allows agents (including students) to continue fetishizing feelings and charitable inclinations.

Further, uncritical, under-developed empathy can lead to unproductive and equally problematic responses like the rehearsal of homogenizing and/or self-centered clichés. The person who gives the homeless a dollar and thinks s/he empathizes with their plight may make sense of his/her affective state with the rhetoric of homogengeity: *I feel for that poor person because underneath it all we are really all the same.* Recent scholarship in rhetoric and composition has theorized how such superficially empathic responses ultimately make the privileged rhetor feel better by avoiding the agonistic and disruptive implications of material reality (DeGenaro), commodifying compassion (Kulbaga), or feeling more personally enlightened and aware (Swiencicki). Uncritical empathy is

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2. See for instance Washington State University's Critical Thinking Rubric, which includes the following outcome: "Integrates issue using OTHER (disciplinary) perspectives and positions."

troubling precisely because the person who feels empathy becomes and remains the focal point.

Classroom strategies can help students couple empathic *feelings* with intellectual and analytic tools—tools that can not only be part of students' psychosocial and ethical development but also—closer to the concerns of our own field—fit in their rhetorical toolboxes. In other words, the affective dimension of our empathy can serve as a starting point for contextualized, critical, socially aware reflection and action, especially with regard to issues of difference. Empathic engagement with the world is ethical but also *savvy*, helping rhetors bear in mind issues of audience and, by extension, issues of difference. Empathic individuals can better negotiate the increasingly diverse spaces students occupy in our national context and our globalized world.

Providing writing students an opportunity to develop their empathic awareness answers calls to teach rhetoric as an engagement with the public sphere. Extending Peter Breggin's admonition of the damaging effects of antipathetic mindsets, I maintain that failure to foster empathy among writing students potentially weakens the quality of public discourse. Rhetorical utterances focused solely on the self become utterances that reject the potential that rhetoric has to build identifications and community. A crucial dimension of empathic awareness that builds a more vibrant public sphere is a critical awareness across difference and an as-if understanding of others that attempts to analyze, contextualize, and continually reflect on the implications of difference. Our pedagogical work maintains its humanistic objectives but also foregrounds democratic and social justice ends and pragmatic skills.

Specifically, teaching for empathy tries to help students become more compassionate and understanding when they encounter rhetorical situations like the "Where did all the white girls come from?" query. At the same time, students develop a practical rhetorical proficiency. Knowing what motivates others helps students understand potential audience members. Instilling students with the desire to ask critical questions about empathy helps students place rhetorical situations in a broader context and move beyond an ethic of charity into an ethic of action. Acknowledging that difference is already part of our open-access students' material lives, placing them in new contexts (think: service learning experiences) where difference is also part of the landscape, and contextualizing critically their experiences are strategies for fostering empathy. I don't mean to imply there are one size fits all approaches, and I shy away from a bulleted list of Monday-morning prescriptions; rather, I hope readers will forward other pedagogies consistent with your learning objectives and institutional dynamics. And I hope the vibrant scholarly conversations about affective dimensions of public and classroom discourses will make more and more room for critical examinations of empathy. In particular, more research needs to be done on the effectiveness of empathic classroom strategies—particularly in service learning classes. I look forward to the future conversations about this important matter.

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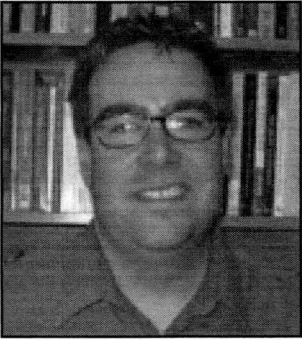
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Lisa Lebduska

Composing in the Wake of War:
The G.I. Bill and the Teaching of English

"During this period of convulsive dislocation teachers of the liberal arts will engage in
heart-searching, and, what is more important, researching of the fundamentals and functions
of these liberal arts."

Irwin Edman "The War and the Liberal Arts" 1942

"But September, 1945, will constitute a pronounced break with the past and herald the influx of
war veterans—mature and expectant—to American colleges. The floodgates will open."

Gaynor Pearson, Lieutenant, USNR

Introduction[1]

Although the U.S. Serviceman's Readjustment Act of 1944, better known as the GI Bill,[2] has
been well-documented in narratives of government caretaking and individual accomplishment,
the Bill has a more complex educational history than such narratives would allow (Daniel Clark;
Mettler; Olson, "The GI Bill and Higher Education"; Onkst). Those who initiated the Bill did so as
a means of helping the economy rather than the veteran. Indeed, as Keith Olson argues, there was
widespread concern that the veterans of World War II receive better treatment than the veterans
of World War I,[3] who had received sixty dollars and no benefits, ultimately marching on Washing-
ton in 1932 (*The G.I. Bill, the Veterans* 100). FDR's government had many choices in confronting the
potential economic decline in the aftermath of war but chose economic stimulus rather than social
or economic reform. The social ramifications of this approach were consequently more uneven
than popular representations suggest. Several historians have noted that while the G.I. Bill amelio-
rated some of the social class barriers to higher education on an individual level, it did not address
barriers related to race or gender. The same racist practices in the Deep South that prevented
black GIs from securing jobs and training for which proponents of the GI Bill linked to totalitarian-

2. In addition to providing for college education, the GI Bill included hospitalization, vocational training, home and business loans,
and unemployment benefits. Veterans on active duty between September 1940 and July 1947 were eligible, provided that they
began schooling by July 1951.

3. Olson provides a thorough analysis of the veteran protest following World War I, including a discussion of European veteran
unrest, which was linked to the growth of totalitarianism by proponents of the GI Bill (100).

ism (100).[4] And women were, in various ways, discouraged from pursuing higher education (Fox-Genovese; Hartmann; Miller-Solomon). Contrary to popular lore, Olson observes that one of the G.I. Bill's "surprises" was that it actually achieved very little overall education reform, even though it did provide higher education to many men and women who could not otherwise have afforded to attend college. To a certain extent, it can be argued that the GI Bill contributed to its own kind of literacy myth-making (Daniel Clark).[5] The Bill figured prominently in some tales of individual transformation, but it did not figure prominently in planned educational changes at the systemic level.[6] Nevertheless, the students the Bill placed in college classrooms impacted the teaching of English and composition in subtle but significant ways. Despite the Bill's role in paving the way for larger classes, it also laid the groundwork for student-centered changes in the teaching of composition and literature that are often attributed to process-movement advances of the 1960s.

The sheer magnitude of demographic change brought by the Bill invites an investigation of administrative and faculty response to that change. Under the Bill, large numbers of GIs entered college within a relatively short span of time: "[b]y 1947, veterans accounted for half of enrolled college students, doubling the number of males registered in prewar times, and increasing overall enrollment by 75 percent" (Mettler 67). This enrollment peaked in 1948, when "annual enrollment reach[ed] … nearly 900,000" (Mettler 62). Overall, 2,232,000 veterans attended college at a cost of $5.5 billion. The sudden expansion of the GI presence caused some colleges to compress the academic year (Mettler 67), to expand and diversify housing accommodations, and to offer special programming.[7] This cohort of students—older, more cosmopolitan and far more driven than their younger college classmates—influenced the shape and nature of the English classroom, impacting their professors and unknowingly influencing faculty to be more responsive to student learning. But it is an influence that has largely been muted, in part because the veterans wanted to be treated like other students (Willner),[8] and because these changes were not captured by textbooks of the day.

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4. Across the country, black men and women were still barred from attending many colleges; it was not until the Brown v. Topeka Board of Education decision of 1954 that black veterans could attend the colleges that had been accepting G.I.'s under the Bill for approximately ten years prior to the decision.

5. Mettler offers numerous rich narratives connecting the GI Bill to the formation of "citizen soldiers" who derived lessons about government based on their experiences with the Bill's benefits.

6. Daniel Clark notes that women's college attendance diminished during the height of the GI Bill. Although women veterans were entitled to the same benefits as men, men were given acceptance over women at some colleges as seats became increasingly scarce (186). For further discussion of the GI Bill's impact on women see Fox-Genovese, "Mixed Messages: Women and the Impact of World War II," *Southern Humanities Review 27* (1993): 235-245; Miller-Solomon, *In the Company of Educated Women: A History of Women in Higher Education in America;* and Susan M. Hartmann, *The Home Front and Beyond: American Women in the 1940s.*

7. The "Education Notes" of the March 19, 1944, *New York Times,* for example, included reports of Newark College opening a division of Veterans' Education and Placement.

8. One 23-year old veteran wrote to his Dean: "I am a civilian at heart and I don't want any special treatment. Treat me as an individual" (qtd. in McKnight 449).

Canonical composition history as constructed by Albert Kitzhaber and James Berlin has been relatively silent on the subject of the GI presence. But these histories, as Stephen North and Robin Varnum have observed, focused largely on textbooks and formalized programs. The college population surge caused by the Baby Boom, by contrast, has received more attention. Lester Faigley, for example, has argued that increased college enrollment resulting from the Baby Boom fueled the growth of composition at a later date: "Even by the end of the period that was the focus of the Watson conference—1963-1983—those teaching college writing in the United States recognized that the growth of their discipline was being propelled by the enormous expansion of college enrollment: from 2.7 million in 1949-1950, to 3.6 million in 1959-60, to over 8 million in 1969-1970, and over 11.5 million in 1979-80" (27).[9]

> Collectively, these faculty would "face" the challenges that war had brought to their profession.

Unlike the sudden college population explosion fueled by the GI Bill, however, this later expansion had been anticipated through demographic projections (Olson, *The G.I. Bill, the Veterans* 44). Although some increase in college enrollments was expected to result from the GI Bill, few involved in the planning of the Bill anticipated that so many veterans would use it to attend college.

As a result of this surprising surge, college administrators of the late 1940s did not have the same luxury of complete planning as those anticipating the Baby Boom impact would enjoy; nevertheless, the faculty involved did anticipate that their teaching practices would be affected by the GI presence. Many of the faculty preparing to teach the veterans acknowledged that this new population of students would challenge their pedagogical understanding. Henry A. Doak, of the University of North Dakota, emphasized the need for flexibility: "We should not assume that we know exactly what is or will be good, nor should we assume that the boys will know exactly what is good. Be prepared by all means, but also be prepared to change" (qtd. in "English for Ex-service Personnel" 206). Similarly, Merrill R. Patterson of Marietta College would offer, "Before we can set down specific remedies we must first acquaint ourselves thoroughly with what we have to face" (qtd. in "English for Ex-service Personnel" 207). These faculty were prepared to adapt their teaching as the needs of their students warranted, with a student-centered flexibility that is usually attributed to classrooms of the sixties rather than those of the forties. This flexibility was cast as a devotion to civic duty and an obligation to repay the soldiers who had served, rather than being constructed as a move toward expressive individualism. Recognizing the learning needs of veteran

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9. Faigley cites the National Center for Education Statistics, 1995

students constituted a kind of patriotic act, faculty could offer the same "preparedness" that their veteran students had demonstrated in the fight against the enemy. [10] Collectively, these faculty would "face" the challenges that war had brought to their profession.

The improvisation and on-the-spot adaptations inspired by the sudden GI presence in the classroom were not reflected in textbooks or codified in formalized programs. The subtlety of their influence was reflected in a comment concluding a 1945 *College English* survey of faculty about the impact of GIs on their classes: "Finally may the surveyor hazard the guess that the most successful provisions for these special students—they are and will be special, however much we and they try to overlook the fact—will be through changes in motivation and teaching procedure rather than through changes in names or descriptions of courses" ("English for Ex-service Personnel" 210). These changes became increasingly evident as the decade unfolded, and later, as the full impact of the GIs began to be realized. Only four years after the *College English* survey, in 1949, Edna Hays observed, "during the past few years the teaching of writing has undergone more study and experimentation than any other phase of the English program" (435). The GI presence, manifest in both the student and eventually the faculty population, extended this foray into study and experimentation, initiating some of what is traditionally represented as being rooted in 1960's process movement. These adaptations included the use of contemporary periodicals in the English classroom, classroom debates about current issues, a questioning of grammar drills and more individualized approaches to learning. Unfortunately, this same surge in college population promulgated large classes and inadequate staffing, which were also accepted in the name of civic duty. The Bill's effect on composition and English classrooms is, therefore, somewhat of a mixed legacy.

Significantly, the education component of the GI Bill had its detractors among those in higher education. The potentially democratizing effect on education—the same effect for which it was praised—struck fear in the hearts of at least some educators. In 1944, for example, Commander Francis J. Braceland declared at a meeting of the Eastern Association of College Deans and Advisers of Men that "[i]t would be a short-sighted policy to oversell our educational wares simply because the Government is paying the tuition. I would say that not everyone who knocks at our college doors prepared to pay his tuition and cries 'teach me!' will be able to learn" ("Caution Is Urged in G.I.'s Schooling" 51). Similarly, in 1947, the President of Harvard warned, "Unless high standards of performance can be maintained in spite of sentimental pressures and financial temptation, we may find the least capable among the war generation, instead of the most capable, flooding the facilities for advanced education in the United States" ("President's Report" 11). Though administrators declared their support for various war efforts, the idea of educational egalitarianism represented too radical a change, and concerns about the Bill's effect were expressed in terms of

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10. There was also a concern that the veterans would not complete their education. As one observer noted, "Veterans share a common fear that their careers have been dangerously, hopelessly delayed" (Murphy 21).

student ability. Additional apprehension about the Bill was fueled by the sudden increase in faculty workload, for which the colleges were relatively unprepared. During the planning phases of the Bill, neither politicians nor college administrators expected the large numbers of veterans who used the Bill to further their college education. Shortages of qualified staff, compounded by a lack of planning, intensified the impact of the veteran throng. One newspaper observed the change in ivy idyll: "Harvard, like all the other great universities, is bursting at the seams. A single course like Gov. 1—the course in modern government—is attended by nearly 500 students...Professors are overworked. An exchange professor from Cambridge, England, accustomed to the English habit of leisurely bird walks or bicycling trips with promising students in the afternoon, has found himself buried with paperwork 'like a business executive'" (Murphy 16). The democratizing effect of the Bill, combined with a failure to increase faculty staffing, raised concern among faculty and administrators but ultimately laid the foundation for an acceptance of large composition classrooms. One of the Bill's unfortunate legacies was, as Olson puts it, "[t]he uncritical acceptance of largeness" (*The G.I. Bill, the Veterans* 103). Largeness created a paradoxical bulwark against complaint: by producing a shortage of space, the large numbers of students applying to college made veterans and non-veterans alike so grateful to have won coveted places that they did not protest. Faculty, for the most part, shouldered the load as their own patriotic contribution.

Initially, and possibly out of a desire to put student veterans at ease, faculty downplayed the differences between veterans and non-veterans. A 1945 *College English* survey reported that "Fifteen of the 35 schools which have enrolled ten or more returned service men and replied to our questionnaire say that these men show no notable differences in need or ability from usual civilian students..." ("English for Ex-service Personnel" 208). The surveyor chose the following comment from a respondent as representing faculty sentiment toward teaching veterans:

> if the teachers are honest, tolerant, idealistic, sympathetic men and women, we don't need a lot of planning about what to present or how to present it...They will have seen sights that they never should have seen and will have gone through hell perhaps, but man can go through hell physically and mentally and still get back to fairly normal living. I don't think that fussing over the veterans will be appreciated or even welcomed... I hope courses will be changed, but not cheapened. The veterans will and ought to be more thoughtful, more intent on the meaning of life. I doubt whether they will be any more practical or in a hurry to get a means of making a living than they were before the war. (207)

It is possible that the speaker here is projecting his or her own desire to return to "fairly normal living" and that faculty comments reflect an interest on their part and the veterans' to conduct academic life within a peaceful, civilian context relatively unscathed by the experience of war.

But even in the early days of the Bill's enactment, despite and against this desire for "normalcy," there was an awareness that the GI was bringing something different to the class-

room. Despite the overwhelming desire on the part of respondents and the author of the survey to dismiss the symptoms of what we would now recognize as post-traumatic stress, there were some faculty who acknowledged that the GIs needed time to overcome "battle nerves" (Kraines 296) and "patience with their fidgeting and nervous ways" ("English for Ex-service Personnel" 208). Military personnel who had served in the war provided special insight into the GI mindset; one offered that "Many [veterans] will find the severe routine of scholarship both tedious and unbearable and will forsake the campus after a few weeks" (Pearson 131). So although there was an initial desire on the part of faculty and veteran alike to downplay the effects of war and the differentness of the veteran population, once significant numbers of veterans began enrolling, the impact of their differentness had to be acknowledged. In comparison to non-veteran students, the GIs were more mature, closer or older in age to those teaching them, had a clear sense of educational purpose, and a broader range of life experience and reflection—all of which worked together to lead faculty to create more democratic classrooms, but not without some trepidation over what such accommodation might indicate.

Even before GIs began impacting academia, humanities education was already experiencing considerable anxiety over its fate. Harrison Smith noted that the humanities would not survive if the educational trend was "to fit education into handmade careers" (20). Irwin Edman, writing in the *Nation* in 1943 reported that Wendell Wilkie had broadcast a radio program advocating the importance of liberal studies (337). Edman lamented the devastating effect World War II would have on liberal arts college populations: the war "will have removed for the duration practically the whole undergraduate male population of American colleges and universities" (337). He noted with suspicion a kind of readiness, in time of war, to give over the college curriculum to the necessities of life: "It would be calamitous if the colleges at their best...were committed to the robot education of purely technical studies" (338). This anxiety carried into fears that the GI presence would further contribute to the demise of liberal education. These concerns reflect a response to what Deborah Brandt characterizes as World War II's "production imperative" (497), which was driven by the military's escalating literacy needs in "technology, bureaucracy, and communication" (495). The GIs themselves embodied this imperative, tending to enroll in practical programs such as business administration and professional fields that would convert instantly into jobs (Mettler 71). But many veterans did not reject English as impractical and instead embraced its lessons in English literature and composition, which they deemed relevant to their future lives beyond the campus. Faculty teaching, in turn, shifted to emphasize the relevance that literature brought.

Within two years of the *College English* survey, more veterans had begun to fill classes, and more advice to and by the faculty who taught them acknowledged what "being more intent on the meaning of life" entailed in the classroom. The civic responsibility that faculty felt toward the GI manifested itself in an increased desire to meet student learning needs. While some professors might have dismissed non-veteran 18-year-olds for their "shallow sophistry" (Grinell 282), it was inconceivable that they would reject the concerns of those who had risked their lives for their

country and fought for the higher ideals espoused by the humanities. Edward C. McDonagh, an occupational counselor in the Separation Center at Fort Levenworth, Kansas, offered the following "sincere suggestions to some of the college teachers who will help teach the 600,000 veterans of [World War II] in… American universities" (643). McDonagh pointed out to faculty that "Veterans attending college are giving up much for the privilege of attending your classes. They are choosing your courses and the college over the lure of high wages in industries manufacturing products. The college professor of such students has the obligation to be well-prepared and up-to-date on the information imparted" (643). McDonagh's unusually direct address to a professional group unaccustomed to such candid advice was justified through the appeal to citizenship and patriotism. Rather than being a critique of the professoriate,[11] his was a call to civic duty; faculty had a moral obligation to focus on their teaching. Veterans in their classes were making an additional sacrifice of immediate material gain and faculty were expected to respond to the sacrifice by honing their pedagogy. Some of this patriotism may also have been rooted in a desire to right the past wrongs committed against the veterans of World War I, many of whom ended up on bread lines (Olson "The G.I. Bill and Higher" 599). Faculty had an opportunity to offer the World War II veteran a better homecoming.

The veterans' cosmopolitan outlook,[12] maturity[13] and enthusiasm for learning[14] encouraged the faculty's willingness to adapt to their students' needs. While some were cautious and in some cases outwardly skeptical, faculty teaching GIs ultimately were enthusiastic about them as students. At Harvard, one anonymous professor was quoted as saying, "You've got to be awfully careful. These kids have been everywhere; they have stored up an enormous amount of information" and another would offer, "Sure, there are plenty of radicals—but there's not much ideology. These men don't want to tear everything down; they want to make the existing system better" (Murphy 18). Indeed, the faculty publishing in *College English* rejected Braceland's view of the GI threat to pedagogical integrity. Sibyl Bishop asserted that "very few…are brilliant students; many have no better than average intelligence; some are downright slow mentally; but they are alert,

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11. Roger M. Shaw, for example, observed in 1947 that "The war has worked no startling revolution in collegiate lecture halls…. Slightly on the arid, verbalistic, cloistered, comfortable side—professors are still professors" (18).

12. One instructor's description of his class typifies the responses of faculty to their veteran students: "The group did not have to be prodded into composition work. It was unnecessary to set up artificial stimuli in the classroom. Each had a wealth of experience to draw on, and the reading of their compositions was, for me, constantly interesting and informative" (Dias 551).

13. One G.I. reflected, "Military service is a great tempering agent. I have a much better idea now of what college can do for a man. And I have also a much better idea of what it cannot do" (qtd. in McKnight 452).

14. Scholarly literature of the forties is filled with examples of student learning and the faculty's appreciative response. Weingarten quotes the following comment by a former Japanese prisoner of war: "A book was something to be hoarded, read many times, and finally it was traded for another of equal or better value…There was solace, relaxation, a closer feeling of home and folks, and forgetfulness to some degree in any kind of book" (299).

eager, responsive and for the most part broad minded and intelligent in their approach to their problems" (Bishop 429). Indeed, the veteran students' enthusiasm for learning is a recurring refrain throughout much of the college composition literature of the late 1940s (Grinnell; Pennington; Shuey; Young).[15] One teacher of veterans recalled asking his veteran students if they felt an assignment was too long, only to be met with the following: "'Just pour it on, sir,' said one of them with a smile. 'Just pour it on, and we'll take it'" (Dias 550). This kind of stoic devotion to their studies and to the professoriate in general caused no end of delight for their professors, who wrote about their experiences teaching veterans with enthusiasm. The veterans, for some faculty, made ideal students because they did not pose an ideological challenge. They were neither the "flaming youth" of the 1920s nor the "revolutionists" of the 1930s (Hilton 156). Though the GIs were only several years older than the students of traditional age, they had a far greater range of life experience, both in and out of war: one third of them were married and 10 percent had at least one child (Mettler 70). Their maturity, combined with their devout commitment to the underlying promise of a college education, reduced any sense of threat that faculty might have experienced when confronted with the idea that they would need to alter some of their teaching practices. Finally, veterans routinely outperformed non-veterans academically (Olson "The G.I. Bill and Higher" 604-605),[16] further strengthening their identities as students worthy of accommodation.

Within the English classroom, the production imperative, which emphasizes the acquisition of new learning over the maintenance of a stable body of knowledge (Brandt 498), took hold through a shift toward student-oriented teaching. In this context, then, English and composition had value, not for their own sake, but for how they would immediately assist the veteran with post-graduation employment. A 1949 assessment of trends in the teaching of English would acknowledge that "more departments show a conviction that 'English' has a variety of functions for actual people in the actual world" (Perrin 259). One instructor of veterans somewhat dramatically declared a resigned acceptance of this functionality: "I do not delude myself for a moment that [veterans] are in class because they are captivated by the charms of our mother tongue and are zealous to investigate in all their depth and ramifications the mysteries of the subjunctive mood or any of the moot questions of syntax or accidence" (Pennington 38). Instead, the veterans "do recognize that it will be helpful to them in their future work if they can write and speak and read more effectively than they do at present" (Pennington 38). This appeal to usefulness was propelled by a desire

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15. Pennington offers the following anecdote: the student, "who drives a bus in his off-hours, told me one morning that the assignment for the day was not easy and that the information was not generally known; for he had asked nearly a hundred of his passengers what a complex sentence was and none of them knew" (38).

16. For some English departments the increase in student GPA created a mystery; for an example of a department's attempt at discerning the cause, see the North Carolina State University English department minutes of November 7, 1946.

to be as veteran-oriented as possible, and it was often expressed as a respect and recognition for what veterans would bring to the classroom. As the *College English* survey authors observed, "Routine work in composition and study of great literature without relating it to present experiences and problems seem likely to be unprofitable and may even be rejected" ("Teaching English to Ex-service Personnel" 210). Significantly, faculty did not contend that students had to adapt and accept what faculty presented to them. There was an overriding concern that learning would not occur if it were not adapted to the interests and needs of the student. Included in McDonagh's advice to faculty was what would now be considered student-centered pedagogy: "Try as much as possible to connect your course with the life of the veteran as a living person…Make your courses expressions of effective living….This does not mean that your courses need become mundane statements of utilities, but it may mean something to the men out of uniform to know that there is a good reason for including your course in the curriculum" (645). John Grinnell would take such student-centered learning one step further, offering that veterans "want discussion and illustrations; they want to raise questions and have them answered…Not only do they want a chance to prove that they can think and express their thoughts, but they want to be recognized as individuals—not as a number of objects to be lectured to" (245-246). The production imperative, then, was legitimated by the idea that the students had earned their right to it. Constructed as adult men who brought respected life experiences to their learning, the veterans had their interest in the practical accommodated rather than challenged. Despite differences in social class, veterans and the faculty declared a shared ethos rooted in a belief in the American dream, which had been defended by one group and would be perpetuated by the other.

> **…an overriding concern that learning would not occur if it were not adapted to the interests and needs of the student.**

The production imperative manifested itself in the GI demand for writing instruction in form and thought that would help them with life after college. Contrary to their non-veteran peers, the GI students often seemed to regret gaps in their education prior to their military service. They embraced formal instruction with far more enthusiasm than their non-veteran peers, often citing past military experiences in which better English skills (often identified by the veterans as consisting of vocabulary, spelling, grammar and punctuation) would have enhanced their service performance (Walser). Life after graduation was therefore understood in some ways as making demands similar to those of the military. But veterans did not seek form at the expense of thought. Paradoxically, military training had also produced a desire for education that valorized individual thought. One veteran wrote this critique of his earlier education:

"Again harping back to student days, we got an awful lot of form thrust upon us and little

enough emphasis on ideas. Like a good many others I could throw together a 2,000-word theme that really said nothing from stem to stern and which would net me a 95 because I was careful to avoid split infinitives. On the other hand, I can remember fellows who put some real thought into their work and then failed the course because of the split infinitive. I don't know whether this kind of absurdity still prevails. I would like to see 'ideas' encouraged above every other factor." (qtd. in Harriet Clark 240)

This demand for ideas and meaning pervaded the GI approach to education in composition and literature, including those arrangements that would be considered remedial or basic. Many of the GIs had not completed high school before going to war and enrolled in "refresher" courses that focused on grammar ("English for Ex-service Personnel" 208). Yet even here the GI performance in class led teachers to begin questioning their approach. One faculty member teaching a ten-week college prepatory course focusing on grammar asked, "Why formal grammar in this enlightened age?...The reports trickle back from colleges that our boys are showing splendidly in their freshman English courses...[But] even now I am not convinced that so much formal grammar is desirable for less mature minds" (Bishop 429). For Sibyl Bishop, there was an acknowledgement that the writing success of the student depended at least in part on the psychological maturity of the student, and that explicit grammar instruction was not necessarily the key to writing instruction. Hers is an early suggestion that writing accomplishment was related in some way to student development, which complemented an ongoing acknowledgement of the veteran student as individual learner.

Although the veterans had been trained to function as a group and were treated collectively, there was nevertheless a continued emphasis on their individuality.[17] George Stoddard, the New York State Commissioner of Education, reflected in 1945 on the veteran student: "All men are created equal in civil rights and universal brotherhood, but they show incredible variation in physique, intelligence, emotional stability, and the promise of special achievement" (45). Faculty accommodated these differences by relying less on whole-class instruction (Pennington 39). Other adaptations included individual conferences and an increased individualizing of assignments ("English for Ex-service Personnel" 210). The desire to engage the veteran also included the use of periodicals like *The Atlantic Monthly* in the classroom (Anderson; Pennington; Weingarten) and scaffolding course work so that students could see and assess their individual progress (Dias 551). Whereas the younger, non-veteran students were considered an undifferentiated, collective tabula rasa, the veterans—recognized as grown adult males—were seen both as being more worthy of and more likely to benefit from an acknowledgement of their individuality.

The shift to more student-centered teaching was further reflected in changes to instruction in literature. Writing in 1949, W.L. Werner offered the following critique: "Now our students learn

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17. One veteran affirmed the individuality of the GI by comparing him to the non-veteran student: "Service men are pretty much like civilians—there's no more agreement among us on fundamental issues, such as religion, politics, postwar jobs, than there is among civilians" (qtd. in McKnight 449). See also "A Member of NCTE on Veteran Education."

primarily connections between authors and their environments, their immediate past and near future; what they should learn first is the connections between the authors and the students themselves" (Werner 213). Similarly, Samuel Weingarten would advocate that general education should include "a functional reading program related to their interests and needs" (338). In the aftermath of a world war whose repercussions were carried into the safe haven of the English classroom, the pressing need for meaning and relevance was made most apparent by the veteran student body. Those who taught literature were challenged explicitly and tacitly to make their worlds immediate and worthy of the tangible sacrifices made by individuals in defense of abstract ideals. The shift to connect literature to individual experience paralleled the move to increase student discussion and participation—classroom engagement that went beyond the chalk and talk lecture. Additionally, this move to recognize individual connections to literature helped foster the democratic classroom. The GI student classroom participants were yet another instance of what Mettler describes as "citizen soldiers"—a civic-minded generation of veterans committed to participatory democracy.

Despite the acceptance of large classes and efforts made to adapt to the veterans, there was nevertheless an awareness of what these accommodations might mean for the teaching of English: "Socially this arrangement is almost necessary, but intellectually (and perhaps emotionally) it may often be bad if the instructors for this supposedly temporary division of the college are inexperienced and overworked graduate students…Drill and more drill in mechanics by youngsters who do not know too much about the language, have not learned teaching techniques, and are impatient to get back to the courses they must pass and the theses they are writing does not give the servicemen much satisfaction or profit" ("English for Ex-service Personnel" 208). While the graduate students are recognized as being "overworked," there is little other recognition of diminished labor conditions and the resulting effect on those working under them. They are "youngsters," presumably with less legitimate claim to concern than the veterans they were teaching.

The emphasis of this moment was less concern for the teacher-worker and more concern for the students, who had risked life and sacrificed comfort for the sake of their country. The idea that the servicemen are owed "satisfaction or profit" is in some sense an expression of education as a transaction in which the student is consumer. In an effort to recognize and meet individualized student learning needs, the adaptations fueled by the G.I. presence were further contributing to the notion of higher education as a consumable good, something that would be adjusted to the needs and demands of the student, a part of the consumer ethos accelerated by the Bill (Daniel Clark 167). Justified initially as patriotic contribution, these adaptations left mixed legacies. On the one hand, they paved the way for a more democratic classroom through flexible, student-oriented teaching, and they reminded the humanities of the continuing need for social and philosophical relevance. On the other hand, they created a climate amenable to unquestioned and often unplanned growth that was justified simply by demand for the product that education was becoming.

The final paradoxical composition legacy created by the GI Bill came through its ability to fund a supply of teachers willing to meet the burgeoning populations of undergraduates. The Bill funded

the graduate education of individuals from both lower- and middle-class backgrounds who were eager to teach modern literature as well as composition (Connors 204). They arrived just in time to meet the demand for the increasing populism of English studies. The Bill had produced the ideal labor supply for the demand it generated: a large number of eager-to-work instructors who were sympathetic to the needs and interests of a burgeoning undergraduate population.

The Bill had, in effect, created a call and response between consumer students and the suppliers of education. These consumers' needs were met without question for a variety of reasons: first and foremost they constituted a kind of patriotic exchange between the veteran student who had devoted part of his youth and innocence for this country, and the faculty who either had served alongside him or who had remained stateside and wanted to make their own contribution. There also was likely an easy affinity in terms of race and gender between those who learned and those who taught.

Moreover, as a result of their service and their relative maturity, these students were quickly accorded the right to have their opinions heard and their needs met. The veteran student had sacrificed for his country, was explicitly committed to his own learning, and participated in classroom life. If education were to be thought of as a commodity, there would be no consumer considered more worthy than the ex-GI. Faculty could adapt to his needs without fear of reprisal for coddling, failure to maintain standards, or an inability to keep the barbarians from the gates. The shift generated by the sheer magnitude of these students would lay the groundwork for progressive, student-centered education, but it also paved the way for an undervaluing of teaching labor that continues today and is perhaps one of the Bill's unforeseen and most unfortunate legacies.

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