MAKING DIFFERENCES IN THE COMPOSITION CLASS: A PHILOSOPHY OF INVENTION

William A. Covino
University of Southern California

Richard Young's well-known bibliographic essay on Invention in 'Teaching Composition' demonstrates that "the gradual shift in attention from composed product to the composing process" pervades current theory, and Young also summarizes a number of arguments for self-actualization, problem-solving, and play as legitimate reasons for writing. The great number of teachers still seem insensitive to such arguments, and still seem intent upon prescribing the writing product rather than encouraging the writing process. John Warnock concludes as much in "New Rhetoric and the Grammar of Pedagogy," where he says that very few writing teachers "are past seeing good writing as something that may be achieved by following certain recipes." And a recent national survey that I conducted with Nan Johnson and Michael Feehan indicates that many teachers continue to identify literacy almost exclusively with matters of "high seriousness": grammatical correctness and the mastery of formal organization.

If we are to move literacy beyond its association with a closed system learned through grudging adherence to strict rules, we must show that the aversion to more playful, process-oriented attitudes toward composition is an aversion to the development of literacy itself. We must connect literacy, understood as the power to use language appropriately and effectively, with Invention, which must be understood as the unifying term for the whole process of composition. Jacques Derrida's post-structuralist stance commands our attention, because it signals a new appreciation for playful invention as the very center and circumference of all language. To move toward a consideration of Derrida, I will first survey invention in current theoretical terms, and suggest that all Invention requires the location of "differences" within a structure of freeplay imposed by the mind. Then I will compare the process of finding "differences" to Derrida's term for invention, difference. Finally, I will turn from Derrida to Kenneth Burke, and present some important links between invention, difference, and the Burkean idea of eloquence.

Invention and Difference

These days, invention has outgrown its classical identification as a discrete step in a series, i.e., Invention, Arrangement, Style. A process view of composing has allowed us to recognize invention as a heuristic procedure useful throughout the production of a text. Richard Young points out that invention is "useful throughout the [composing] process" because "problems of content are finally inescapable from problems of style and structure" (Teaching Composition, 34). And of course, the idea that invention motivates all stages of the composing process has profound pedagogical consequences, as W. Ross Winterowd observes when he questions the validity of teaching writing by slicing up the process into classroom "units." As we look at several techniques currently associated with invention, the all-inclusiveness proposed by Young and Winterowd should become more apparent. But more importantly, we will see that invention systems entail the discovery of differences.

The least systematic invention technique is freewriting. Advocated by Gordon Rohman, Ken MacCrorie, Peter Elbow and others, it involves "saturation writing." The student writes and writes and writes; her task is to get words on paper without deliberating too much about the clarity or correctness of her efforts. A structure of differences inevitably emerges; as Peter Elbow points out, the writer may begin with topic A, and end up with a topic B or C or D. Through a series of transformations the writer discovers what she "really wants to say." In the process, the form of her writing may continually change shape, moving from narration to description to stream-of-consciousness to argumentation to doodling to poetry. These changes often coincide with a medley of styles, from the machine-gun rapidity of short, simple statements to the turgid periodicity of ad hoc conceptualization. In short, the freewriter provides herself with an array of choices.

Kenneth Burke's pentad is a more structured but no less suitable means for discovering the differences that play against each other in any situation. The pentad's five perspectives — Act, Scene, Agent, Agency, Purpose — inform an elegant system of complex relationships rich in detail; this heuristic obviously identifies invention with differentiation. Young, Becker, and Pike also suggest a structure that leads writers to consider the rich array of choices from which they can create a text. This structure, the tagmeme, encourages the writer to consider a topic in its many possible manifestations: as a static entity, as a changing entity, as a system of related parts, as the member of a class, as the member of a larger system, and so forth. For Young, Becker, and Pike, and for Burke, these terms that multiply our perspectives comprise an "epistemological heuristic," one that allows us to discover how we know the world.

Earlier I associated invention with the location of differences within a structure of freeplay imposed by the mind. We have met suggestions that such freeplay may account for style and form as well as content. And we have glimpsed the notion that play with differences is itself an epistemology; this idea requires further development, specifically a consideration of the beliefs of Jacques Derrida. With his words in mind we may begin to see that the willingness to play with differences results from a certain, conditioned attitude that we teachers can influence for better or for worse.

Invention and Difference

Jacques Derrida recognizes that in order to make sense of our perceptions we must conceive some originary structure, and arrange our "real world" experiences within it:

Such would be the originary trace. Without a retention in the minimal unit of temporal experience, without a trace retaining the other as other in same, no difference would do its work and no meaning would appear.

Movement, play, within this or that superstructure allows us to create meaning. The superstructure, the originary trace, is a
kind of ideal memory that never really existed, but which allows
us to form oppositions which assume that it had. Let me begin
to illustrate this rather difficult idea with two invention tech-
niques: freewriting and the pentad.

The following piece of freewriting comes from a student
journal:

About my rock. It's remarkably warm — I mean it was
warm to the touch when you handed it to me. It is still
warm. I expected it to be cold, having been in a bag with
other rocks. I could go into the rock's composition, but for
some reason I don't like the idea or want to. Maybe later
when I get to know it better.

I can already see that just getting to know its appear-
ance is going to be tough. Pink, white, brown, and black
are its colors. It is small, 3 x 1 1/2 inches, about 1/4 to 1
inch thick and shaped somewhat like an egg. I used to pick
up a stone every now and then and carry it in my pocket,
just to feel with my fingers. I would get very attached to
each rock. It would become my lucky piece.

As he continues to write, the student creates several different
views of the rock: he interprets scratches on the rock as the scars
of suffering and experience; he considers himself as the rock's
"human" rather than its possessor; he writes a description of
himself from the rock's point of view.

The original trace in this piece of freewriting is, in one sense,
"rock" or "rockness." The writer's understanding of rockness
defines the parameters of his exploration. Although Derrida
argues primarily for the trace as a concept (i.e., God, Love,
Health) which motivates the meaning of our perceptions, we
may quite justifiably recognize that any term that motivates
a system of differences performs the function of a trace insofar
as it is the form of a formation. Burke's pentad generates a different
form of possibilities than does freewriting:

Act — holding a rock, carrying a rock, observing it, pos-
sessing it, freeing it, being it.

Scene — my hand, my pocket, the world of human
possessions.

Agent — me, the rock, "experience" scratching the rock.

Agency — carrying, feeling, seeing, fantasizing.

Purpose — description ("it is small, 3 1/2 inches");

narration ("I carried this rock home");

argumentation ("Man can't truly possess things; he
can only maintain them. . . . I could be the rock's
human").

Clearly, invention, the process of finding differences, involves
cutting up the "isness" of something. But for Derrida, that
"isness" remains always indeterminate. That is, the trace is
always an "instituted trace"; no "rockness" exists apart from the
definitions of "rock" which comprise a context within which we
can think, speak, and write about such objects. To write about
"rock," we must draw upon what is already written. To concep-
tualize, we must draw upon earlier conceptualizations, earlier
writings. Therefore, things or "essences" do not bring words into
being. Words bring words into being. "Rock" is the linguistic sign
of a linguistic sign of a linguistic sign.

Put another way, "rock" is the differentiation of a differentia-
tion of a differentiation. No "starting point" exists, only dif-
fences within differences within differences. When we write, we
call into being the difference between, for instance, "a" and "w,
"thing" and "idea," "John is easy to please" and "John is eager
to please." Writing always means locating graphemic, semantic
and syntactic distinctions. I have called that process invention.
Derrida calls it difference. Difference is neither "a word nor a con-
cept"; it is "the movement that structures every dissociation." What
I propose to do now is move through Derrida's essay on
difference to show just how closely his thought applies to my
assertions so far about invention.

Derrida writes about difference in order to question "the self-
assured certitude of consciousness" which marks the way we use
language. Irritated by the "incessant deciphering for the disclo-
sure of truth," he insists that all principles, postulates, axioms
and truths are really the products of strategy and risk within an
arbitrary set of assumptions; he reminds us that his own writing
about difference must be, along with all writing, a strategy with-
out finitude:

In marking our difference, everything is a matter of strat-
egy and risk. It is a question of strategy because no tran-
scendent truth present outside the sphere of writing can theo-
ologically command the totality of the field. It is haz-
azardous because this strategy is not simply one in the sense
that we say that strategy orients the tactics according to a
final aim, a telos or the theme of domination, a mastery of
an ultimate reappropriation of movement and field. In the
end, it is a strategy without finitude.

All writing takes place without finitude because finitude is located
in some sort of definition or purpose, and any such term, as we
have seen, is always the trace of a trace of a trace. We may sus-
pect that our insistence as teachers upon "writing with a pur-
pose" deserves questioning insofar as it subordinates "strategy
without finitude" to "the self-assured certitude of consciousness.
"Formalistic approaches to writing, such as the five-paragraph
essay, define a writer for whom strategy and risk are altogether
foreign, and encourage students to favor the sameness of rote
behavior over the energy of a creative play with possibilities.

Play is central to our alignment of difference with invention;
for Derrida play "designates the unity of chance and necessity in
an endless, calculi." In fact, play is synonymous with difference:

Every concept is necessarily and essentially inscribed in a
chain or system, within which it refers to another and to
other concepts, by the systematic play of differences. Such
a play, then — difference — is no longer simply a concept,
but the possibility of conceptuality, of the conceptual sys-
tem and process in general.

Play, perhaps the most misunderstood and maligned term in our
discipline, thus becomes the characteristic movement through
differences which effects conceptualization. And it cannot be
undervalued, as Derrida himself recognizes when he punctuates
his disdain for neat, symmetrical, logical, philosophical systems by saying, "The concept of play remains beyond [these systems]."

Derrida himself gathers some of his most important insights through some pretty crazy word play. For instance, in order to explore the problems of assigning a determinant "intention" to any author, Derrida deconstructs the work of John Searle in wacky fashion. He asks, "How can I be absolutely sure that John R. Searle himself (who is it?) is in fact the author? Perhaps it is a member of his family, his secretary, his lawyer, his financial advisor, the 'managing editor' of the journal, a joker or a namesake?" He recalls one of Searle's footnotes, which reads, "I am indebted to H. Dreyfus and D. Searle for discussion of these matters"; Derrida wonders, given this statement of collaboration, "to whom the 'true' copyright ought to belong." Who is this Searle, a man "divided, multiplied, conjugated, shared, what a complicated signature." Derrida's playfulness here reminds us of the kind made possible by the ragmeme or the pentad, while it demonstrates difference as the not too serious play with differences generated by an instituted trace; in this case the trace is John Searle.

I must emphasize that Derrida does not argue for wholesale rejection of conventional modes of thought. Indeed, it is the inevitable pervasiveness of institutionalized language that he would have us wake up to. Recognizing that we base all of our assumptions upon institutionally verified "essences," upon agreed-upon beliefs about "being," he insists that although an understanding of difference in some sense pushes us "beyond our own logos," passage through the terministic limitations of our own language should not be used to "criticize, contest, or fail to recognize the incessant necessity" for such limitations.

What matters is not whether terministic constraints exist; they do. What matters is whether our relationship to such constraints remains active or passive. The belief that difference accounts for the way ideas come about should revitalize our power to create new structures and suspect old ones. We should keep in mind that difference assembles questions, questions which evoke a particular content, form and style in answer. Consider Derrida's own melding of content, form, and style:

Differences are thus "produced" — differed — by difference. But what differs, or who differs? In other words, what is difference? With this question we attain another stage and another source of the problem.

What differs? Who differs? What is difference?

The passage occurs well into his essay, and well after he has already broached the questions he raises here at several other points. Derrida's own anti-taxonomic topic, difference, generates an anti-taxonomic essay structure that manifests itself in a recursive style; the author characteristically stops now and then to say, "Let us begin again." Reading such writing, I am reminded of W. Ross Winterowd's conclusion in an essay on invention: "Topics should not shackle the mind. They should liberate." What Derrida resents are the shackles of a lexicon left unliberated by those thinkers who would adhere to some great tradition of sameness.

Difference is not a system; it is an attitude. Such an attitude — playful, intense, confident — cannot be prescribed, only encouraged, and such encouragement only happens in a classroom where "strategy without finality" is preferred to "self-assured certitude," where students create rather than obey terministic constraints. The playing through of difference in the classroom mightily affects the development of literacy, as we must conclude if we overlay Derrida's work with that of Kenneth Burke. For Burke explicitly discusses the beneficial effects of invention as we have now come to see it.

**Difference, Difference, and Eloquence:**

Perspective by Incongruity

Discomfort with difference arises precisely because it is neither "a word nor a concept"; it is a process rather than a product. Derrida observes that "this is obviously what makes it threatening and necessarily dreaded by everything in us that desires a realm," everything in us that wants power over neatly packaged ideas and behaviors. Derrida warns against conceptualizing difference, and yet he realizes that we cannot do otherwise. Even he conceptualizes difference with his very style, as examples above have shown. And although his meticulous and clever resistance to any nominalism is relatively new to literary theory and language philosophy, ideas similar to his have been expressed by many respected thinkers in this century. As Richard Lanham points out in his description of the "new theory of reality," thinkers such as Polanyi, Cassirer, Langer, Whorf, Owen Barfield, and C. S. Lewis have recognized that "a scientific proposition makes true statements not about reality but about the symbolic universe in which it chooses to conduct its discourse."

As Lanham also realizes, the major literary proponent of "process rather than object, knower instead of known," is Kenneth Burke. As early as 1931, more than twenty-five years before Derrida begins his major work, Kenneth Burke argues against mistaking "a linguistic convenience for a metaphysical reality." He does not believe that language represents "certain archetypes, or pure ideas, existing in heaven." Burke, like Derrida, respects the rich possibilities that permeate any consideration of meaning, and his own writing demonstrates ongoing play with these possibilities. But unlike Derrida, Burke works to conceive what we might call a "methodology of difference." From Counterstatement through A Rhetoric of Motive and beyond, Burke says that if we are to participate together in mutual respect for the freplay of the mind, we must practice strategies for understanding and expressing the freplay of the world. One strategy, and not the only one, is the pentad. By surveying Burke's path toward his presentation of the pentad, we may discern an elaborate equation between invention and eloquence.

In his conclusion to Counterstatement, Burke begins to associate eloquence with the violation of conventional principles. He insists that eloquence "must overcome the resistance of 'categorical expectancy,' and must temporarily at least violate the principles of conventional forms, must risk seeming 'unnatural' until the present decrees as to the 'natural' are undone." If prose is both to reaffirm and refresh itself, the writer must "aim at effects," and in so doing need not confine himself to the mere reiteration of what has come before. Of course he cannot escape the use of conventional forms altogether, because he is confined to an institutionally sanctioned language system that is full of conventions that he can only eschew by eschewing language as his mode. But he may need to "pervert" conventions in order "to obtain a new stressing, to produce a kind of effect which the violated convention was not well able to produce, but which happens to be more appropriate to the contemporary scene." The writer is eloquent insofar as he invents something that creates new categories which complement and advance the old ones.

Still speaking quite generally in this early book, Burke nevertheless suggests that writing is a structure of differences without absolute terms. And creating a structure of differences makes the creator himself different — peculiar, in fact. Yet this peculiarity
is seductive; it invites attention and interest. In works following
soon after Counterstatement, Burke elaborates upon this initial
alignment of eloquence with the discovery of fresh and unusual
ideas. In this vein, the key term in Permanence and Change is "pers-
pective by incongruity." Burke's explanation of this perspective
clearly designates play with differences as its salient feature:

Basically, the concept of "perspective by incongruity"
embodies the assumption that certain clusters of terms
spontaneously exclude certain other clusters of terms; and
these clusters tend to be kept apart, as though in different
bins, unless a thinker who is in some respect "pervasive"
suddenly bridges the gap. For instance, we tend to think
of "training" and "incapacity" as mutually exclusive, until
we run across Veblen's ironic bridging of the gap with his
ironic expression, "trained incapacity," to designate a sit-
nuation where, in being fitted for one thing by the same
token a person is made unfit for something else.

Perspective by incongruity makes analogous those items which
seemed heretofore unconnected. The writer must forcibly link
separate, or incongruous, items. He must impose similarities
where there had been only differences. In sum, a perspective by
incongruity is, like difference, the manifestation of an attitude.
We discover new ways of pulling things together when we are
attitudinally biased toward doing so.

In Attitudes Toward History Burke conceives a world charged
with multiple perspectives, with statements and counterpart-
ements, a world where the norm is flux and matters are never set-
ted. Perspective by incongruity discovers and rediscovers this
state of affairs because it is, as Burke says, a "methodology of
invention . . . which bureaucratizes the 'mass production' of
perspectives . . . It makes perspectives cheap and easy." In Attitudes
Toward History Burke is yearning for a democratization of elo-
cence, a universally accessible system of planned incongruity,
a method that we can all use to mass-produce perspectives; that
very act of production affords us a sense of mastery over the com-
plexities and puzzles that life offers. In other words, Burke is
looking toward the pentad, that "perspectival machine" that he
will begin to detail in A Grammar of Motives.

His growing excitement about a rich methodology of incon-
gruity is clear in The Philosophy of Literary Form, which immedi-
ately precedes Grammar. When he says in this book that "the
main ideal of criticism, as I conceive it, is to use all there is to
use," we are aware that the rich description he celebrates is the
goal not just of criticism, but of all symbolic action. Symbolic
action is, after all, synonymous for Burke with both language
and being, and consists of the constant discovery and integration
of parts into a body. It is the "dancing of an attitude," in which
the whole body may finally become involved." The dance of
attitude is the invention, arrangement, and stylizing of the
world of the dancer, an individuated putting-together of things.
In A Grammar of Motives we are finally treated to some dance
lessons. The book attempts to answer the question, "What is
involved, when we say what people are doing, and why they are
doing it?" In answer, Burke creates his own perspective by
incongruity by explicating the interrelationships of Act, Scene,
Agent, Agency, and Purpose; they comprise that very method-
ology of eloquence which he had been tending toward since
Counterstatement.

The Pedagogy of Elocution

The pentad, as explicated in A Grammar of Motives and A Rhet-
oric of Motives, has been discussed extensively by many critics,
both as a philosophical system and a classroom heuristic.
Another discussion is not to the point here. Rather, let me
emphasize that our survey of Burke's gestures toward the pentad
establishes play with differences once again as the salient feature
of the composing process. Thus Burke allies himself with Der-
rida. For Derrida, difference is a structure of freestyle which
presses us beyond the tyranny of established systems of thought
by encouraging the consistent questioning and rearranging of
matters taken for granted. Burke's pentad encourages this same
attitude by providing a set of questions that allow the continual
examination and recombination of perspectives. Both thinkers
supply the philosophical substance for a pedagogy that generates
playful exploration and discovery under the aegis of mutual
respect for the "perversions"—or more euphemistically, innova-
tions—which result.

What does such a pedagogy "look like?" That question inevi-
tably emerges from what Derrida has called "everything in us
that desires a realm," our desire to define a pedagogy with some
set of lectures or assignments or activities, some more or less
"programmed text." And what we must realize is that any ped-
agogy is itself an attitude—nothing more or less. Activities that
manifest the attitude developed in this essay should be made,
not found; however, it should be clear that heuristic strategies
like those mentioned in the section above called "Invention and
Difference" produce the sort of creative behavior urged by Der-
rida and Burke. All activities appropriate to the attitude we have
examined here are student-centered and playful, calling upon
the teacher's willingness to tolerate what W. Ross Winterrowd
has called "happy anarchy."

The power of literacy entails making choices, devising strat-
tegies, taking risks. I have tried to show that one does not do
these things unless he is attitudinally biased toward playing
within a structure of differences with no absolute terms. Such
differences, hence such an attitude, even apply to presumably
"rigid" systems such as punctuation; as one student says,
I didn't regard punctuation as important at all before I
started writing down exactly what I think. . . . But now
that it's really me writing I want to be sure the reader gets
the point exactly, stops when I stop, pauses when I pause,
laughs when I laugh, and so forth . . . (McKown, 210, my
italics).

I suppose that this paper finally finds its representative in the
student who is "really me writing."

NOTES
1 Edited by Gary Tate (Fort Worth: Texas Christian Univ.
Press, 1976), pp. 1-44.
3 "Graduate Education in rhetoric: Attitudes and Implica-
4 Contemporary Rhetoric (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanov-
5 Gordon Rohman and Albert Wlecke, Pre-Writing: The Con-
struction and Application of Models for Concept Formation in Writing
(East Lansing, Michigan: Michigan State Univ., U.S. Office of
Education Cooperative Research Project No. 2174, 1964). Ken
Elbow, Writing Without Teachers (New York: Oxford Univ. Press,
1973).

Burke introduces the pentad in A Grammar of Motives (Berke-
ley: Univ. of Calif. Press, 1969), pp. xv-xxiii. The tagmeme is
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9 “Difference” is from Speech and Phenomena (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern Univ. Press, 1973), pp. 129-159. I am grateful to Professor Stanley Fish for his correspondence regarding this article, and especially for his helpful commentary on Derrida’s writings during a Summer 1979 seminar at the University of Southern California.


13 The Burke texts referred to throughout this section are as follows: Counterstatement (Berkeley: Univ. of Calif. Press, 1968); Permanence and Change (Los Altos, Calif.: Hermes Pub., 1954); Attitudes Toward History (Los Altos, Calif.: Hermes Pub., 1959); The Philosophy of Literary Form (Berkeley: Univ. of Calif. Press, 1973); A Rhetoric of Motives (Berkeley: Univ. of Calif. Press, 1969). For A Grammar of Motives, see n. 6. Burke’s explanation of the perspective of incongruity is from Dramatism and Development (Barre, Mass.: Clark Univ. Press with Barre Publishers, 1972), p. 18; this is a recent summary of the term he introduced in Permanence and Change.

**TEACHING ETHICAL WRITING**

David V. Harrington
Gustavus Adolphus College

In broaching this subject, my major concern is to plead for ethics as a dominant concern when teaching the informative writing process. But let me start by anticipating a few potentially adverse attitudes towards promoting the teaching of ethical writing. First, since ethical behavior is generally conceded to be desirable, one might be advocating that which is self-evident in urging ethical writing. Is there anything new that needs to be said beyond telling people not to cheat? Or, second, to anticipate an oppositely negative reaction to my title, one might say rather cynically that ethics, no matter how desirable, is impossible to teach. We are living in an age of relativism and constant change. What is truth? What is ethical? Or, third, still another plausible reaction is for English teachers to excuse themselves from this obligation. Don’t we have too many burdens already to say nothing of adding the teaching of morality?

For the first point, I do not believe that it is easy to teach ethical writing just as it is not easy to teach good writing. Ethical writing, as I conceive of it, involves more than just being honest and considerate in what one says to a reading audience; it means disciplined attention to a number of processes, such as the use of data to get to the heart of a problem and the rechecking of data, with which many beginning college students have had little previous experience. There is a process as well as a moral attitude in ethical writing. For the second problem, as readily as anyone, I can concede that far too much of what we read in everyday life is slanted, exaggerated, fragmentary, or downright dishonest. Cynicism is understandable. But there is a writing tradition that teachers do not draw from as much as they should which offers excellent guidelines for ethical writing. This tradition is scholarly writing. I will say more about that shortly. Third, the possible objection to the addition of ethics in teaching writing should not delay us for long if ethical writing is recognized as identical in purpose with informative writing — to communicate what one has learned. The major needs for this part of the process are basically to give more instructions on how to learn something worth communicating and how to present it more completely and thus honestly the reasoning processes that writers go through in arriving at their findings. The best lessons in ethical writing are to be found in the processes used in academic scholarship, in the processes used by researchers in all fields of inquiry, in their objective search for truth.

Productive scholars in all fields of academic study generally believe in and practice a rather lofty standard of ethics in their writing: in the sciences, in the social sciences, in literary scholarship, in linguistics, in all fields. This standard is tacitly understood to mean that every scholar should inquire into and strive to communicate as truthfully as possible whatever material this person is concerned with. If new evidence invalidates an old hypothesis (or a new hypothesis), that hypothesis must be either modified or discarded, no matter how attractive it previously was. The evidence determines the reliability of the hypothesis; and the investigator accepts the responsibility not only to sift through the evidence thoroughly, but also to look especially closely at evidence that detracts from the preliminary hypothesis, and to account for such variations as fully and candidly as possible. One should not pretend that this ideal in scholarship is always scrupulously and universally adhered to. Pressures to publish and emotional commitments to pet ideas cause numerous compromises. Yet, it is fair to say that most respected
scholars understand and believe in this ethical standard. This same standard of ethics should also be taught in composition classes, not tacitly but explicitly.

We cannot help but concede the difficulty in finding universally acceptable truths. There is also difficulty in describing objective ethical actions. It is a problem in scholarship on every level, and must be faced in our introductory writing classes, too. But we should communicate very forcefully to our classes as a primary ethical imperative the scholarly standard: every writer or speaker should inquire into and strive to communicate as truthfully as possible whatever material this person is concerned with. There are practical advantages for both the teacher and the student in keeping this ideal before them. If students understand that they are to strive for truthfulness (which is not always the same as "truth") and are more conscious of and admit the limits of their understanding, they should feel freer to express their ideas in terms of the expectedly limited knowledge they have of their subject. In most respects, striving for truthfulness is the same objective as Aristotle's advocacy of "probability" as a more reasonable goal than idealistic Platonic "Truth." Students should present openly not only their own hypotheses but plausible alternatives. We should train them to demonstrate to readers why they choose one position in preference to others and to concede weaknesses, if any exist, even in the hypotheses they end up with. Though it may seem like opportunistic compromising with principle to suggest the practical side of ethical behavior, it is true, nonetheless, that striving for truthfulness, when done knowledgeably, is easier as well as more productive writing.

It generally surprises students, but it should help them also, to recognize that for creative achievement the act of inquiry in relation to other stages in the writing process demands the greatest proportion of time. Advice given to students on invention needs extra emphasis because students are unaccustomed to thinking about that part of writing as involving actual techniques. We must combat the myth that some people innately discover good ideas, that most others lack such a gift. The teacher must work to encourage a positive attitude towards invention and a concern for completeness and honesty in the substance of their writing.

In giving a true picture of the writing process, the teacher should also draw from personal experience to communicate as honestly as possible the range of feelings that comes to the surface while trying to solve a difficult and frustrating problem. It probably does no harm to brag about the excitement of discovery, of finding a solution that up to that moment had eluded one's grasp in spite of weeks of struggling; but it is as good to admit the feeling of getting nowhere, of being appalled by the confused mass of material that defies organization or clear focusing. These experiences are part of the inventive process. It is also ethical, if we find it true in our experience, to point out that some apparent disadvantages, such as the anxiety built up by the overload of teaching, preparation, paper grading, committee work, and outside activities, in many cases contributes to more intelligent and productive writing. One need not be comfortable, rested, or clear-headed to write well. It often is precisely when writing seems most difficult because of the pressure of other commitments and impending deadlines that my own mind works most rapidly and efficiently and that I find my best ideas. For many writers, the need is not so much to find free time as to become intellectually aroused.

What all of this adds up to is that we should, on the one hand, encourage a disciplined concern for thoroughness and accuracy as important qualities in a finished composition, and yet at certain earlier stages in the writing process we must encourage adventurousness, a sense of excitement, and risk-taking as well. The combination of rather different personal qualities which we should be striving to draw out of our students might properly be conceived of as a positive and moral teaching of character. To use more traditional rhetorical language, we could say we are encouraging the ethos of a scholar. Thus, when urging ethical writing, we should be teaching the best ways of discovering knowledge, describing the writing process as honestly as we can, which to a considerable extent means as we have experienced it ourselves, and designing our assignments in the best way to encourage striving for truthfulness.

Increased understanding both of the writing process and of various possible aims or modes of discourse could help student writers to accept more readily the ethical idealism and creative challenge in informative writing. In all my classes, I tell students that in tests it is appropriate that they merely summarize what they have learned so far, or recite what they remember from reading and class notes. But, in papers prepared outside of class on their own time, students are expected to say something creative or original that grows out of their own distinctive approach to reading materials used in our course. They are encouraged to find an idea through the struggle of trying to solve a problem or answer a question that occurs to them in reading or in discussion of a particular book or poem or essay in their reading assignments. There is ethical value in their finding their own problem and solving it themselves. This obviously is better than summarizing a published study written by someone else or merely choosing among competing interpretations and justifying their choice. It may be hard for many students to adjust to the vast contrast in these two modes of writing.

It is possible, of course, that some students won't see the directive to find and solve their own problems as encouraging ethical behavior if, in fact, they can't find anything but obvious problems which they are certain they or any other reader can readily solve. Some of the papers resulting from this approach, then, coming from students afraid to venture into the uncharted area surrounding a previously unsolved problem, may need reassuring pressure valves (or releases) to encourage both the ethical attitude and the adventurous struggling with unorganized data. One technique used by many of the most productive scholars, especially in the sciences, is to formulate not just the hypothesis that one expects to prove but several alternative hypotheses covering as many plausible solutions as one can imagine. Then in the subsequent, more thorough investigation of data, one can test or eliminate the weaker hypotheses and promote the remaining one that stands up best in light of all evidence examined. Or, if the case isn't clear-cut, one might retain the two or three alternative hypotheses which continue to have some merit in relation to each other. In the final draft of the paper, the writer should still feel obliged to choose one over the others but might justifiably use some space in the essay to explain how she weighed their relative merits. This technique encourages very timid scholars to stay with a tough problem, not to give up on it in favor of an easier, more obvious, and less valuable idea.

There is still another technique not used often enough in composition classes, but which could also have favorable influence in shaping ethical attitudes towards academic writing: the exploratory essay. Here the objective is not so much to solve a problem as to clarify it. Exploratory discourse involves practice in use of very tentative hypotheses and checking them out with close examination of data. It enables the student writer to make fuller use of research experience without his worrying about whether all of it has to be discarded because the study doesn't lead to the predicted, positive solution. Though the writer of the exploratory essay is not obliged necessarily to solve the problem he is
presenting, if such an essay is to be of value it should show reasonably strenuous investigation or thoughtfulness so that the reader will have useful guidance and knowledge or promising directions for further study or new approaches. These are reasonable and valuable goals.

It must be said also that if the teacher expects ethical writing from students, she should deal fairly and thus ethically with them in the demands in their writing assignments. In literary studies, for example, we cannot expect the same comprehensive coverage of secondary materials from a student that we hope to find in articles in professional journals. Students do not have the time to read very many critical studies. It is impossible for them to digest and evaluate a wide range of competing critical interpretations and then fit them all in, in support of an original position that each student has constructed on his own. For example, it is unreasonable, one should say unethical, to expect that undergraduate students know and understand all important, competing interpretations of Shakespeare's Hamlet or of Dante's Inferno. Each is too vast an area to master within the time limits of a course. We can ask, however, for a brief suggestion of what portion of the terrain has been covered. Even in more limited assignments, where the student struggles to interrelate two rather new bodies of knowledge, in her experience — let us say the sociology of small towns, with works like Main Street, Spoon River Anthology, and Wineburg, Ohio — the teacher should not expect such a student to wear her new scholarship gracefully. Similarly, the teacher should concede student limitations in finding material for specialized topics. An assignment to write about "Color Symbolism in Sir Gawain and the Green Knight" is unfair unless students have reasonable instructions on how to find information about color symbolism. Thus, though we admire scholarly ideals of thoroughness and completeness in investigation of any problem, we must honestly acknowledge, perhaps reluctantly, personal and practical limitations of experience, available information, time, and energy.

At this point, for what will be a rather lengthy conclusion to my paper, I will explore a problem in teaching ethical writing which I believe has many sides to it and yet is a central problem in teaching on practically all levels of academic work. The problem is how well the generalizations students use are supported by illustrative details, evidence, and examples. I must admit that I have no convincing solution to this problem. In addition, it might be fair to say that the same problem comes to mind in reactions to writings by more sophisticated scholars in published books or articles; and editors note the same problem in responding to my writing. On every level, the relationship between generalizations and specific details demands intellectual and moral awareness. I wonder whether many college composition teachers would quarrel with my saying that the most consistent weakness among eighteen-and nineteen-year-olds is excessive reliance upon unsupported generalizations. It doesn’t matter whether the students graduated at the top of their high school classes or are among the least qualified of incoming students. They all have the same problem. It doesn’t matter whether students come from experimental or traditional educational backgrounds or whether their schools have placed great stress upon writing experience or neglected it outrageously. My observations from practical experience support the hypothesis of the old-time Russian psychologist, Lev S. Vygotsky, that students in their middle or late teens are in a stage of language development in which broad generalizations make up the bulk of their statements, either oral or in writing. There is an obvious pedagogical problem that all composition teachers have much experience in struggling with; but there are serious ethical implications also in how the struggle is conducted.

It is one thing to tell students that the papers they write will be marked with low grades if the generalizations in them are not supported with illustrative details, evidence, and examples. Many students, when they receive a low grade for omission of supporting details, learn reasonably fast to start including them, in some cases in the next paper they write; for others, the change comes much later in the term. The requirement and the threat of failure may influence the mechanical bringing in of details to satisfy the teacher’s demands; but there is danger if the student lacks full understanding of why such details are needed. The problem is confused somewhat because reasons for bringing in details vary with different writing problems, and the way the student sees the problem may strongly affect his manner of seeking out details. It might be said, for example, that inclusion of details is for the sake of style. A typical reader needs relief from the abstractness and relative vagueness of generalities. Concrete or specific details or even metaphors appeal to the imagination. Or these same stylistic techniques may contribute to clarity, as the visual or other sensual images illustrate the general idea and bring it across more understandably in the reader’s mind. Concrete images can also invite a more complete involvement by the reader, emotionally as well as intellectually.

These stylistic advantages are relevant in all kinds of writing, not just informative writing. I think it crucial, however, to emphasize that the generalization is basically the writer’s idea and the details used are evidence in support of the idea. The quality of evidence is more important than the quality of style. No matter how brilliantly written, a style is not beautiful if it is not truthful. The ethical problems for the writer are, first, that the generalization must be supportable by evidence in order to be valid and, second, that the writer must scrutinize the kinds of evidence thoroughly enough to see what kind of generalizations can truthfully be supported by them. But it isn’t always clear which problem is first and which is second. It is in this process of not very easily defined shifting of direction from inductive thinking to deductive thinking and back again that a person hammers out an idea worth communicating. The isolated examples of logic in handbooks disguise the complexity of ethical responsibility in this activity. In preparing a paper the student has to judge on his own how to combine and interrelate generalizations and details. One can easily pose questions for which there are no clear answers. For example, how many details or examples or how much evidence is necessary for the usual generalizations? Does every generalization need support? How can one judge whether the illustrative material is good enough for the generalizations? Every instance must be judged separately, and teachers and readers won’t agree in specific cases. Not only do problems always depend on context; in many cases they depend upon the background knowledge and sympathies of the reader. Besides that, it doesn’t take much illustrative material or many details to give the appearance of adequate support for a generalization. The academic opportunist soon learns this. And that presents a very troublesome ethical problem.

A much easier and more attractive student question, but one that isn’t asked often enough, is what if one can’t find suitable details, evidence, or examples for her generalizations? Or what if the available evidence is abundant but doesn’t quite fit? It is precisely at such a point, if the student notices either problem, that the teacher has the opportunity to show the student that she ought to change her mind about something, that the generalization she started out with, if unsupportable in fact, should be
discarded, or, perhaps more commonly, should be modified. Such hypothetical problems invite emphasis on the morality of academic writing.

The special advantage in teaching exploratory discourse is that it allows for the principle that the quality of struggling in many cases is as important as the quality of the solution. In fact, the former is preferable to the latter if the student hasn't really found his own solution after all. It would be better for him to record the attempts made as evidence of what doesn't work than merely giving up, or summarizing, or copying another person's paper.

We can advocate and plead for all the scrupulousness in struggling that the student has time and energy for in rechecking data and revising generalizations to assure a clean and lasting relationship. But, in academic assignments, we need to give students practical directions as well on how to concede the incompleteness of this struggle, if such is the case; we need to make them modestly aware of the relatively limited decisiveness in most problem-solving, so that words like “truthfulness” (instead of “truth”) and “probable” (instead of “absolute”) are practical ideals worthy of respect; we should encourage more frequent use of objective techniques for demonstrating the extent to which a partially resolved problem has been studied, especially with the use of alternative hypotheses and exploratory discourse.

The purposes in reviewing these scholarly techniques, most of which do not turn up very frequently in composition textbooks, are several: to help students enter into informative writing tasks more freely and confidently; to aid them in writing more intelligently and honestly; and to guide them in self-development as conscious, creative scholars who enjoy trying to discover and communicate newly examined knowledge and values. Ethical writing, as I have used the term, is that kind of discourse in which the writer combines the best qualities of moral, intellectual, emotional, and practical character.

NOTES

1For fuller attention to this point, see my “Encouraging Honest Inquiry in Student Writing,” CCC 30, (May, 1979), 182-186.


5The best study of exploratory discourse is by James L. Kinneavy, John Q. Cope, and J. W. Campbell in Aims and Audiences in Writing (Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt, 1976), pp. 53-100.


WRITING ABOUT ETHICS: AN ALTERNATIVE TO LEGAL WRITING

William J. McCleary
Geneseo Community College

If the journals for composition teachers are any guide, we are experiencing a considerable growth in the teaching of legal writing. Although most of this growth is occurring in upper-level expository writing courses or in special courses for law students, some of it surely must be seeping into freshman English. If so, it is a change that I welcome, as long as it supplements rather than replaces more basic types of writing. However, my purpose here is not to advocate legal writing for freshmen, for that would require another entire essay. What I want to suggest is that ethics be used in place of law as the subject matter of the writing when students are not prelaw majors.

In order to place this discussion in a rhetorical context, we should first note that legal writing is not, strictly speaking, persuasive discourse. Lawyers' addresses to juries may be persuasive, but what is taught under the rubric of legal writing is more akin to the writing of essay answers on law exams, legal briefs, and judge's decisions. Under Kinneavy's "aims of discourse" system, this is scientific discourse, in particular that branch of scientific discourse which relies on deductive logic. Writing assignments typically consist of the description of a case, along with the laws and legal definitions relevant to the case. Then the students are asked to draw a conclusion about the case and defend the decision in an objective, closely-reasoned argument. The conclusion is drawn deductively, and the argument is accordingly also deductive. It is also typical for assignments to be set up so as to avoid the necessity for drawing conclusions based on "the weight of the evidence" because that would require inductive logic.

If one's purpose is simply to give students experience in using deduction, then legal writing is a satisfactory vehicle. However, assignments in legal writing typically do not teach students the other skills related to deduction, such as the necessity for finding the evidence, laws, and definitions relevant to a particular topic. Since these other skills are as important as the reasoning process itself, and since it is not practical to have students learn them within the context of legal writing, some other subject matter must be found.

The answer, I think, is to use ethics as the subject matter for student writing, for ethics seems to be the only deductive field for which students already have, or should have, a reasonable amount of intuitive knowledge. In other words, it would not be likely that more than a handful of students in each class could handle the other deductive fields, such as economics, mathematics, theology, or political science; but for most common ethical cases students should already know the ethical rules and definitions to apply to the facts of cases. In addition, it is usually possible for students to find, in newspapers and newsmagazines, the facts behind some of the common ethical problems of today.

Take, for example, the cases of U.S. companies who made secret payments to officials of foreign countries in order to receive favorable consideration for products. The students could be assigned to look up the facts of one particular case and to decide whether the company's actions were ethical. Then, once they have the facts, they can dredge up, from their commonsense knowledge of right and wrong, the ethical rules and definitions which apply to the case. For
example, they will have to decide whether the secret payments constitute bribes (a matter of definition), and whether bribing foreign officials is wrong (a matter of ethical rules). The decision will not be easy to make, for each case is different and involves such considerations as whether the payments were made directly to a government official or an intermediary, whether paying gratuities ("bakshesh") is traditional in the country in question, and whether the payments were reported to stockholders as is required by U.S. law.

Such assignments are similar to legal writing except that students must get the rules and definitions from their own knowledge rather than from the teacher's assignment sheet. Additionally, students will encounter the very practical problem that some facts are unknown and that their "final" decisions can only be tentative — a situation which almost always occurs in real life but not on law exams.

On the surface this may sound very straightforward and easy to teach. However, having taught this for six years now, I can assure everyone that it is not easy. The teacher will, of course, run into the usual problems associated with teaching argumentation, such as students who don't want to choose sides (Hey, man, how can I tell someone else what's right?) and students who claim to dislike arguments in general. But while these problems are easily surmounted by pointing out that anyone who does not do the work will flunk, writing about ethics has other difficulties which are not so easy to solve.

The main difficulty is that students reach reasonable conclusions but cannot explain how they got there. For example, the typical student will say, "Well, of course Company X was unethical. They paid bribes to sell helicopters to Iran." This argument, while containing a defendable conclusion, does not defend the conclusion. It fails to explain why paying for favorable consideration is a bribe and why bribery of foreign officials is wrong. In other words, the student stated neither the evidence nor the definition nor the ethical rule. Many teachers would say that the student is being illogical, but that is probably not true. Besides, we would need to see the entire argument before we could check the logic.

Persuading students to give the entire argument is harder than getting them to quit speaking "a lot" as one word. I have written "missing rule" on their papers so many times that two students bought me a rubber stamp to speed up the grading. The trouble seems to be that most people reach their conclusions intuitively and therefore cannot write out in words the operations which must have been used. The intuitions must be brought to the surface, and learning to do this requires some time and practice. Some students never learn to do it, but it's still worthwhile to try. Understanding one's basic ethical principles is part of the process of "knowing thyself," which I take to be a fundamental purpose of education.

Almost as difficult as teaching students to state their premises is getting them to deal fairly with counterarguments. In legal assignments, the various conflicting laws are provided, so it's quite natural for students to explain why they accept Law X and not Laws Y or Z. But in ethical arguments the students must put themselves in the opponents' shoes and imagine the ethical rules opponents are using. Some students simply refuse, on the grounds that the opposing arguments are too flimsy to bother with (sometimes, but rarely, a true assumption). More commonly, students claim that they cannot see another side and therefore cannot think of any opposing arguments. Since I believe that these students are telling the truth, I conclude that this is the most convincing proof for Laurence Kohlberg's "stages of moral development" that we could ask for. According to Kohlberg's theory, students who cannot see another side to an argument would be at Stage 4, the law-and-order level. Writing assignments about ethical dilemmas require students to operate at least at Stage 5, the point where a person becomes able to see someone else's point of view, even though the Stage 5 person still tends to be rather legalistic.

Does this sound like an impossible situation? Well, it's difficult but not impossible, as long as the teacher's expectations are not too high. I take it as another of the primary purposes of education — if not the paramount purpose — to push students to higher levels of moral development, to get them to see that issues have more than one side. This cannot be accomplished in just a few weeks, of course, but a start can be made. For example, I have several ethical assignments upon which classes will invariably split down the middle, so I bring out one such case and have the students vote on it. "Now, then," I say to one of the Stage 4's, "here's Joe, who seems to be a moral and intelligent person, but he doesn't agree with you. What are you going to say to him?" If necessary, I get Joe to explain his argument and then let the Stage 4 respond. It's a halting response, generally, but it's a beginning.

These are not the only problems that come with substituting ethics for law when teaching scientific-deductive discourse, but they are the hardest to surmount. If I had to choose one reason why so many problems exist, I would pinpoint lack of experience as the reason: that is, most students have never read a closely-reasoned argument, have never heard one, and have certainly never tried to write one. But since it is one skill that is absolutely basic to becoming an educated person, and since it contains several subskills which are also basic, teaching it should begin at the freshman level. I can tell everyone from experience that most students can learn to turn out a passable paper — seldom great, you understand, but passable nevertheless. And I should also point out that I teach at a community college, where we don't exactly get the top students.

I will not try to tell anyone in detail how to teach the unit on scientific-deductive writing, for my methods are as far short of perfection as the students' essays. But I can give a few general cautions, based on experience: (1) This is not suitable material for a basic writing class nor the first semester of a regular class. (2) Students' skills will increase slowly at first and then very rapidly. But after about four weeks of a regular semester, learning will stop until the students have assimilated what they have acquired. The unit should be ended at this point. (3) The students' first attempt at this kind of writing will be terrible and should not be graded. Otherwise, they will become overly and unnecessarily discouraged. (4) The students cannot learn everything at once. Begin with assignments that have the facts and rules provided and work up to assignments that require the exercise of all the skills. (5) The teacher will need to pull every device out of his or her bag of tricks. Have the students read model essays, get into impromptu debates in class, watch you write sample essays on the board, write and revise, write and revise. All of the effort will be worthwhile, however. For once in their lives the students will be able to see themselves making rapid and observable progress in writing. And with all of the emphasis now being given to ethics in their professional courses, they can easily see their English assignments as directly related to something happening elsewhere in college.
ON THE TEACHING OF COLLEGE COMP:
WILL THERE EVER BE A ONCE
AND FOR ALL?

Alice Giarden Brand
University of Missouri-St. Louis

I think it was the department meeting about the final exam that started me. I was at the kitchen table going over some notes for a class when I heard some ideas (mostly violent ones) lobbing in my head. I was arguing with my department. I had the good sense to rush to my typewriter (I don't always have one close at hand). The evening wore on. My son was docked from recreation because of a C+ on a biology test. One daughter was rearranging her bedroom furniture for the third time. I got ready for bed and prepared to take a shower when I heard more of the same voice. I was still arguing with the department. This time in the bathroom. My husband keeps note paper in the shelf where he empties his pockets so I quickly wrote down my ideas. Then after my shower, I went upstairs and added them to the first pages. More came in the morning while I was still in pajamas.

It is easy to see what I was doing was composing as well as watching myself in the process. It was an impulsive process. It was a fragmented process. And very inefficient. Thoughts that nobody told me to think about came out on paper in no logical order. I knew enough to get them down. Over the years I have been learning how to listen to myself, how not to bypass thoughts, and what to do with them once I have them. Though not all, I think some of my very best writings start this way. But this slow, unpredictable swelling of an idea would never do in a typical composition course.

My students do not hear themselves think. They do not experience a double voice in their heads — one that says something and the other that says, "Write it down." No sooner do fertile ideas register even faintly than they are dismissed as unworthy. Perhaps the more introspective students hear themselves more clearly and call it poetry. But by the time most students arrive in freshman English, numbness is a way of academic life.

It seems to me that the whole point in writing about writing is to help unnumb students (and their teachers). By showing just how idiomatic the composing process really is, we give permission for truer processes to take over. So that apparent leaps from generalization to personal anecdote to passionate outpouring — the hot part of what used to be called a very cold act — is perfectly legitimate. Does it happen in the comp classroom? Is it possible? Is it necessary?

While the debate rages,\(^1\) texts continue to reflect this perspective\(^2\) and conferences highlight it. The theme of last year's CCCC was person and process. There were a minimum of four sessions and twenty-seven people involved in the subject of personal writing. We heard a major talk by James Britton. He was both good and bad. Good because he spoke of expressive writing — the writing close to self, relaxed, conversational, the language of human beings in their natural state — as the conduit to every other discursive form. He spoke of intention. Effective writers fulfill their intentions. Effective writing is a system of beliefs. It is fiduciary, based in trust, based on personal commitment. Wonderful words. But he was also bad because he failed to establish a clear connection between his work in the British primary schools and our needs at the college level. He read some writings of young children but failed to demonstrate just how they could become the germ of more formal, adult communication. He was not convincing because some of the wrong people were sitting there. Some came out of a whole other body of experience, trained in high-powered literature and in the doings of the New Critics. Others were sympathetic but not empowered to change policy or program.

The people around me enjoyed Britton. He is a splendid speaker and a perceptive human being. But they didn't believe him. When people who don't believe "expressive" hear "expressive," they get nervous. They remember the self-indulgent scene of a decade ago when vacuous sentimentality slopped all over the page. And some people in the audience were saying, "What does this have to do with us?" Well, what it has to do with us is that unless we truly understand Britton, we won't be able to reconcile his ideas with college writing.

Consider the obvious. It is an assumption that deep personal engagement in a subject is at the heart of meaningful writing. We accept as true that writers begin with themselves, their spouses, friends, family. After all, what else do writers know? Theory codifies it. Research confirms it. Writers do it. It must be okay. It's more than okay; it's terrific. Some instructors saturate comp with journal keeping, personal experience narratives, autobiographical accounts of one sort or another. Others use topics with strong emotional appeal like sex, the drug scene, the draft, or abortion. This is the way we mine for our opinions, the essence of our personal truth.

If we are intent on doing a good job, we then work with students on revising. We teach that revising is not mere recopying; but adding, subtracting, multiplying, dividing, a slow shaping and refining process that continues through several drafts. I bring in intermediary versions of my own writings, show the scribbles of Pablo Picasso and Charles Darwin, and read excerpts from the Parti Review. My students revise both at home and in class, complete with scissors and staplers.

I say the right things and I do the right things — along with a lot of others. It's not original nor radical, but it's cheating because it is bait and switch.

Within weeks of the first semester, I'm supposed to wean students away from themselves — move their thinking across the scribal bridge, to use Bruffee's term, toward topics of increasing abstraction. I ask them to work up a head of steam about the economy, gerontology, mobility, or anonymity. At the same time, I introduce rhetorical form: Compare and contrast Bertrand Russell's perspective on marriage with that of Rollo May's; or, Using definition and classification analysis, divide and conquer pollution, the nuclear holocaust, or alienation in domestic urban life. In between all this, some of us put our students through their paces with sector analysis, tagmics, Larson's topics, the journalistic credo of questions, sentence combining, or Christiansen's generative grammar.

By spring, students have supposedly mastered standard syntax and the basic rhetorical options. They then turn to short fiction, poetry, and perhaps some drama. Students acquire a limited critical vocabulary much like the one they learned in high school and write analytic responses to literature. They get a tour of the library and research something preferably related to literature. We give in-class and at-home writing assignments in equal numbers, a mid-term, and a three-hour final. All in eight breathless months — if students are lucky. Some departments on fast forward do it all in half that time.

I learn to live in this maelstrom as do many others who want to keep their jobs. But I am guilty. I say, Be specific but universal. Respond personally but not too much. Work from gut level but watch the use of I because it is implicit in any well-written argument — and hope they overlook the writings of Lincoln Stef-
fens, Loren Eiseley, Rachel Carson, or John Galbraith. Or I say, Shift the I to we, but limit the number of personal anecdotes. And under a double blind system for marking exams, I tell my weakest students to forget everything they’ve learned about declaring themselves on paper, or the power of the sentence fragment. “For three hours, don’t experiment. Concentrate on correctness. Just for the final.”

The final exam — the ultimate concoction. It is bad enough when we teach to the final and then give it. But the cruelest deception is trying to teach process but remain keyed into the conventional departmental exam. Even when students are fairly fluent and not unduly plagued by test anxiety, the final does not begin to correspond to that process. Students do not work from self-selected topics nor from root impulses. They lack opportunities to put their writing on ice, and they cannot make mid-course corrections based on audience feedback. No matter how hard we try to create verisimilitude, our exam is little more than a magnification of the infamous twenty-minute College Board composition test during which some of the best of us could not put together a coherent, let alone insightful thought. (I defy any English Department faculty member to pass me by current comp standards on the basis of the first, second, or even seventh draft of this essay. Testing simply does not reflect the writing process as I know it.) Some of my colleagues justify the final in terms of other courses. They claim that students might as well learn to write on demand because that is what they are expected to do in history, sociology, and philosophy. But that explanation only goes so far. Not once do they consider that perhaps something is amiss in those other departments, not with us; that we need not defer slavishly to instructional practices that are uninformed by current thinking in our field.

As it stands, it is a rare final that is more than a fumbling first draft or rigidly corseted game plan for passing a course — any course. So, if college comp tampers with the natural development of writing skills, the final exam puts the finishing touches on it. Is it any wonder that so many students are worse off than when they started with us?

Consider another obvious. Fewer and fewer students are prospective English or humanities majors. They are going in other directions and are not a far cry from high school versions of themselves. To say they have difficulty articulating fresh insights or passionate revelations of meaning does not begin to do justice to the problem. They draw a blank on what they can, should, and want to say about anything, no less high-order issues. They are just lucky to get down any old, worn thought whole.

Of my twenty-four second semester comp students, seventeen were still struggling with basic sentence constructions and manipulations. Many still did not know how to assemble a complex sentence. All labored over aptness and economy of language not to mention larger organizational concerns. So overwhelmed are students by our intellectual and scribal expectations that basic skills break down. Their writings are short; after all, the less they write, the less trouble they get into. Their exposition is blanketed with generalizations. Critical essays are freighted with plot summaries. Eleventh-hour ideas are tucked on after formal endings. Forms acceptable in public school resurface. No matter what we read, discuss, or write, students come up with the old standby, the book report. They learned it first and over and over again for twelve years.

Of course our students are telling us something. College writing is just about as bad as high school writing. Our assignments are equally uninspiring and end up going nowhere. We expect students to generate a universe of support on issues about life and literature that presuppose wide experience, ample reading in a variety of worldly subjects, and the language to convey those understandings. Though students do accumulate an enormous amount of cultural data over the years, they are not facile with it. They sense their inexperience. Writing also has no social context for them. It is a lonely process and adolescents are not prepared to be lonely. They are preoccupied with Pink Floyd and Bruce Springsteen and would rather work on their hormones than on their heads. Students are notoriously grade conscious but lazy. What is the payoff in describing an heirloom, a dead animal on the road, or a tall-order idea when they are moving toward careers in accounting, engineering, or computer science? Grades and graduation are real but not real enough. Have you ever noticed how many students continually drift in late for class — the very same students who wouldn’t dream of being late for work. Work counts. When I told Ed that he needed to repeat 102 because his writing was unsatisfactory, he pleaded, “Oh, come on. Just pass me. Gimme a C. What’s so hard about that?”

He is starting a mail-order business, and, like thousands of other Eds, he accepts none of the usual reasons for writing: success in a career, discovery of self, greater control over an increasingly verbal world, or survival in college. Students are not ready for nor interested in our kind of writing, and more and more may never be.

It is of little consequence what we think our students should be equipped with in composition; what is important is what they sense they need. But students cannot tell us exactly. I get useful feedback from some of my business students, some of my creative writing students, but mostly from my international students. Person for person, my second language students attend more classes more regularly, are more responsive to and more appreciative of comp than any other segment of my student population. Tomor began building his own idiom dictionary, Maria was obsessed over revising until I threatened to steal her pencils, and another foreign-born student confessed her abiding need for writing instruction after a year of comp and a second one of literature. These people want the American Way in every manner and form — especially the language. They want it to work for them. Correct functional prose. They want to be equipped to speak and write as do most of their native friends so that they can compete for jobs successfully. And certainly everyone needs the language of ordering, applying, and complaining. Put simply, winning with words. So the first thing we must learn is that writing courses be diligently attentive to the requisites of everyday life.

Hand in hand with this is quality of feeling; students want to care about what they write. The notion that the ideal starting place for writing is feeling rather than thinking is certainly not new. From Aristotle to Langer and Polanyi, and scores in between, we are reminded that before any meaningful human enterprise can occur, feelings must be stimulated to the extent that individuals are willing to make an emotional commitment to writing. That’s what keeps the Martin Luther Kings dreaming, the Elinor Gloms lobbying, the Arno Penzias researching, and the Maxine Hong Kingstons, the Eldridge Cleavers, and the Robert Coles writing. Even if we were to ignore the more subtle values of expressive writing for personal growth, we need only to track any good piece of informational writing to find its source in a complex of motivation and feelings. Whether the mode is descriptive, expository, persuasive, or argumentative or the aim is referential, literary, persuasive, or expressive, caring is what makes the difference between an adequate piece of writing and a moving piece. Moreover, it is emotional commitment that sus-
tains writers through the agonizing revising process; it keeps them from giving up. (And we have not even begun serious research into the potential of intuition, imagery, and feelings for developing writing of all sorts.) So the second thing we need to learn is that since writing, at bottom, is all about messages one cares to send, students will naturally seek to translate those impulses into a relatively enduring form when sufficiently motivated. What does “sufficiently” mean? Nothing more than the zeal to see it through.

What are the wildest implications for composition? Let us suppose for a moment that everybody entered a comp class on the first day and found it without overview, syllabus, text, or assignment. Students waiting around for someone else to make the first move. The instructor too. I wonder what would happen? Some students, I suppose, troubled by the organized emptiness or about losing time and credits, would switch to a straight section. Others, delighted with the seeming snags in the system, might doze off or finish snacking on their Fritos. The teacher would also hang around waiting, tapping a pencil, session after session without talking, without doing much of anything until, pow!, someone needed to write to someone about something. That very occasion would begin to map the territory of the course. Were it a complaint to the dean, students would bring in envelopes and stamps. Were it a lab report, students would present the data. Were it an on-the-job phase completion memo, students would supply the facts and figures. Were it an accident report, they would work from the actual form. Were it a social studies unit, student teachers would bring in the curriculum. Were it a poem, students would research the little magazines, draw up cover letters, enclose an SASE, and send it off. And so it would go.

Students would not learn all discursive forms, all rhetorical options, in the same order nor at the same rate. Some students, whose writing voices were barely audible, might need to go back to rudimentary list-making before they moved forward. Others might never get past the Dear John letter. There would be no guarantees and no cajoling. Sentence and paragraph constructions as well as the longer pieces would be guided strictly by intention and audience. Or there would be no writing. Sooner or later, given the need to make something happen from putting pencil to paper, students would develop some control over standard written English, some measure of focus, detail, and coherence. They would have to. Otherwise, what they set out to do simply wouldn’t work.

If we encourage writing tasks to arise naturally and realistically in students’ lives, then it makes sense to devise more realistic ways (admittedly more difficult) to measure how well the messages work apart from their academically groomed readers — instructors, peer tutors, and the like. Let us broaden the response base to reflect the diversity of those writing tasks. Does the poem stir an audience not under contract to read it? Does the recommendation energize management? Does the proposal shake loose university funding? Does the letter inspire sympathy, the article invite commendation, the report garner the promotion, or the essay smooth the way into graduate school?

Since it is possible to say nothing eloquently or say something meaningful badly, we might also want to track growth in writing independent of originality of idea or “absolute excellence” (whatever that is), but rather on quality of revision. Perhaps we should look more closely at students’ efforts to work past false starts, dead ends, or obstacles. What is the evidence of paragraph rearranging, the interplay of sentence patterns, or the search for precise words? We might also want to monitor (and this is tricky) the extent to which writing becomes increasingly unsolicited, that comes spontaneously like shooting baskets or banging a tune out on the piano. We are doing something right if students write more and more for the sheer agony/ ecstasy of trying to do something out.

These ideas become inseparable from the pedagogy we recommend. They speak to procedures that would bind comp courses inextricably to the highest levels of self-interest — not ours, but those of our students. Such a program would detect the underlying themes and concerns of students and exploit them as the source of all writing activities. It would replace the traditional permanency of class-size sections with fluid and flexibly grouped workshop arrangements. It would have the power for joining people with specific needs at the basic skills level and beyond. Interests and abilities would intersect at many junctures. This type of writing program would be staffed by generalists who could work comfortably with various composing styles, formats or genres, and diction levels, and specialists who would serve as resources for a discipline, intimate with its vocabulary, technology, and psychology. The point is to put the teaching of writing in the hands of people who write for all sorts of real reasons: professional, civic, personal, and academic; and of course, to put the writing in the hands of people who read it for all sorts of the same reasons. What then are real writers if not people who write something for real — so forcibly real that they hate it because it nags at them, makes them fidgety, forces them to carry around paper and pencil and strain to get something down at a movie or while driving. Think of the service we might render students if they learned to write with the urgency and authority that such personal interest inspires. Some departments are already on to this. Others are mystified and resistant. However, if it hasn’t already, the paradigm of writing as process will become a cliché before the profession has had a chance to catch up with it.

NOTES

1See, for example, articles in College English (February, 1976; September, 1978, April and September, 1980); College Education Association Forum (February, 1980); and Small Press Review (January and April, 1980).


USING FILM WITHIN THE COMPOSING PROCESS

Joseph Comprone
University of Louisville

What Is The Composing Process?

Quick scanning of the programs of recent conferences on the teaching of writing, such as the Conference on College Composition and Communication and the MLA's Division of Writing, and the tables of content in those professional journals that deal primarily with the theory and practice of teaching writing provides convincing evidence that developing concepts of the composing process have and will continue to be a if not the central issue in current rhetorical research. Those of us who are interested in using film to teach composing need to progress from our so-far essentially theoretical or practical approaches to film as rhetoric into a phase of research where the integration of theory and practice within the composing process becomes our primary objective.

Let me begin with what I hope will prove a useful, working definition of the composing process, drawn from several areas of research, whether the more practical and inductive research of those such as Janet Emig and Peter Elbow, who examine the cognitive-affective behavior of student-writers as they compose, or the more theoretical work in heuristics of those such as Janice Lauer, Richard Young, John Hayes, and Linda Flower, who have, aside from making other contributions, constructed cognitive models with sets of questions that they believe match the thought-processes of composers across many disciplines.

Above all, an understanding of writing as process has taught us what writing is not. It is not simply putting words on a page; it includes complex stages of perception, conception, and reconception within an expanding sense of rhetorical context. Words on a page are generated and appear to readers in linear patterns; ideas in the mind and, usually, in talk or discussion are not produced linearly. Rather, what most current researchers into the composing process are saying when they describe what composers do is that the process is recursive and cyclical, that basic or controlling concepts are refracted and revised through associations and contrasts of perceived experience and developing ideas, where language is used more as a probe or tool to remake ideas than as a transcribing instrument.

Problem-Solving, Composing, and Film

Problem-solving or task-analysis, one among many recently studied heuristic models, provides a simple yet clarifying metaphor for the composing process. A writer begins with a thought or idea, however general. He or she composes by using language as a means of passing that thought through experience, refracting, shaping, adding, deleting, finding illustrative details, always working toward the complete articulation of a problem. Work in heuristics indicates how an initial general response, in our case to a film or an element in a film, might be probed by systematic sequences of questions, sharpening and focusing the writer's grasp of the conflict at the center of the concept. This probing and shaping of a conceptualized response to a film might take the form of the following hypothetical prewriting sequence, based on the short film "The Shopping Bag Lady." An abstract of the film is included at the end of this essay.

Response to Film: The Shopping Bag Lady shows how young and old can turn potential conflict into understanding.

Essential Oppositions that Might Develop from a Probing of this Response:
1. the young/the old
2. conflict/understanding
3. the film/the writer's experience
4. change/stasis

At this point, the teacher might turn students back to patterns of perceived experience in the film, arranged according to the above-described general oppositions.

Pattern one: the young woman's attempt to create a meaningful life by using discarded artifacts (a doll that she makes into a child, discarded pieces of paper and toys that become her "household items"); the adolescent's sense of loneliness as displayed in her sterile school environment, her facial expressions in closeup as she moves from school to friends to home.

Pattern two: the initial conflict between old and young woman as portrayed in scenes in which the old woman's seemingly serene conversations with her doll are overheard by the young woman; the subsequent scenes in which old and young woman come to see each other's loneliness, as portrayed in the young woman's growing appreciation of what the doll means and how it represents both women's loneliness in a large city.

Pattern three: the images in the film, such as the signs of institutions and rituals in the lives of the women that reinforce the idea that people cannot change: the images in the film that reinforce change, such as signs of growth in Central Park and the final scene in which the old and young woman meet in a hospital room surrounded by other old people and express signs of hope in their facial expressions and gestures.

This working list, obviously not conclusive, summarizes a process in which the student's immediate perception of the film generates a controlling concept that, in turn, is probed with perceived details, resulting in a reformed and expanded controlling concept, expressed in this introductory paragraph:

The Shopping Bag Lady, with its careful contrast of images of rejection and acceptance, brings the viewer from a recognition of how old and young are often put in conflict with one another by the forced separation they experience in their daily lives. Both protagonists learn by the end of the film to see into each other's life and to identify with the other's isolation and loneliness.

Teachers would use the problem-solving heuristic as a means of eliciting an hypothesis about the experience of a film that was based on perceiving ideas, narrative elements, or images in opposition to one another. This expanded and elaborated hypothesis would then be broken down into "operators" or subordinate hypotheses — that, in turn, would be used to re-examine the experience of the film. During this re-examination the writer would first look for "cues" that he or she might then use to find patterns in the data drawn from the film.

If, for example, a writer were to find an example of one kind of imagery associated with a central character and a second with another character, he or she might use those initial recognitions
of imagery as cues to two, separate image-patterns, each associated with a different character. Teachers could then provide a sequence of questions that were directed toward completing the discovery of pattern, using cues to follow a line of related inquiry through the film's narrative structure.

Finally, the teacher would introduce the concept of analogy to help students make connections between oppositions and patterns of thought in the film and similar themes or patterns of ideas external to the film. In "The Shopping Bag Lady," for example, the old woman's attempts to surround herself with a family in the form of a discarded doll and its paraphernalia might be related by analogy to real-life situations in which other older people are seen in isolated and lonely circumstances.

Coinciding with these methods for developing the problem in the minds of individual students would be the uses of the concepts of scenario and nutshelling to enable students to help each other as they posed and resolved a problem. Scenarios occur when a student writes down the oral response of another student to his tentative proposition or hypothesis, thereby assuring that another observer's perceptions of cues and patterns of opposition would become a part of a more complete statement of a problem. Usually scenarios function most effectively during the middle stages of composing when writers have already developed hypotheses, found cues to probe the experience of the subject for patterns of support, and have made detailed notes on these patterns.

Nutshelling occurs later in the writing process when the writer takes what he or she has hypothesized, supported, and revised and gives a summarized verbal account of the hypothesis and support to another student. Making scenarios and nutshelling are verbal activities that can be interspersed in the composing process in order to make certain that the writer's sense of subject is gradually and systematically exposed to a specific audience. These earlier experiments in front of a specific audience can then become a basis for experimenting with more general audiences in formal revising.

**Using Film to Generate Form in the Writing Stage of Composing**

Because a good deal has been done on using film to control the perceptual, inventive processes of students during prewriting stages, I shall not elaborate any further on problem-solving as it encourages the formalizing of ideas before writing, except to remark that the ideas and details described above might have been elaborated upon over several classes, with students recalling specific perceptions and discussing them in ways that would develop the controlling concept. In process, the film would be viewed once, discussed, and viewed a second time and discussed, with the writing of general propositions and descriptive or illustrative sentences.

If, however, we accept the current recursive cyclical definition of the composing process, we know that invention and perceptual redefinition do not end with prewriting. Rather, actual writing begins when the writer starts to develop the controlling concept and the patterns of observed details into longer pieces of discourse, using heuristic questions such as the following to control writing behavior:

**Heuristics for the Directing of the Middle or Writing Stages of Composing, Using Film**

1. What particular personal experiences can the writer relate to the controlling concept and patterns of supporting ideas that were developed during prewriting?

2. Will the writer emphasize the shared perception of the controlling idea, or will the emphasis be placed on developing a solution to a perceived problem?

3. What are the formal implications of the previous question for the writer?

4. Are there still inherent potentials for change in the controlling concept and perceived patterns of detail?

5. In relation to the previous question, what in the writer's own experience has the potential to alter the controlling concept?

6. In relation to question four, what additional perceptions of the film have the potential of altering the controlling concept?

These general questions, refined and specified to develop particular topics, would then initiate what I shall call the middle or actual writing stage of composing. Following Kenneth Burke's dictum that form is best defined as the writer's creating and fulfilling of expectations in readers, this middle stage would include a series of small-group workshops and sequenced, short writings in which each writer's controlling concept and patterns of supporting details would interact with those of other students. Related personal experience, selected outside readings on the film's general subject, and in-class discoveries made as students compared perceived details and controlling concepts would provide the focus of earlier writing-stage activities; later, students would build on these activities to accomplish the transition from general notes on controlling concept and refined patterns of observed details to longer pieces of discourse, most likely paragraphs, through the first completed draft of an essay.

Between the earlier oral and short-writing stages of actual writing and the later, longer-discourse stage of drafting, the film would be shown a third time, allowing students to relate their ideas and observations back to specific shots, scenes, and techniques in the film. A writing course in which film was consistently used as a metaphor for composing would provide students with a limited and basic technical vocabulary (shot, scene, sequence, close, medium, and long shots, establishing shots, and some terms that the class itself might evolve for describing lighting effects and angles) and a carefully-specified but limited group of general, rhetorical-critical terms (image, symbol, tone, attitude and purpose, context, repetition and pattern, composition and denotation, style as choice) that would be used to accomplish the following writing-stage objectives:

1. Rework the controlling concept so that it makes a proposition about the film or a part of it.

2. Examine the proposition so that the writer discovers within it a potential form for his or her writing.

3. Write groups of paragraphs that divide the proposition into subordinate propositions with patterns of observed details used as support.

4. Develop a clear sense of general purpose (still leaving specific purpose to the revising stage of composing), particularly a sense of whether the writer will emphasize the sharing of an aspect of his or her own experience of the film or will argue a proposition based on the film. The former would result in more emphasis on detailed description and controlled point of view; the latter would condense descriptive and narrative material into packages of support for argumentative propositions.

What advantages does film give us as writing teachers as we bring the students through the middle or writing stage of the composing process? First, the film itself is a controlled, com-
posed slice of human experience. It occurs before us, teachers and students, in the classroom. It allows, even encourages, students to see language (visual signs and symbols, narrative voices and dialogue) as manipulated and controlled by a composer (the filmmaker), and, when teachers carefully place the showing of short films to allow for various kinds of response by students, films also show the would-be composer, perhaps better than any other medium, how finished product and the audience's experience of the composition can develop from the rhetorical choices made by a composer. The immediate, total experience of sharing in a film's world, in other words, becomes the writer's metaphor for his or her readers, especially when a short film, viewed a second and third time during the process of composing an essay, is examined in detail after being experienced as a whole.

But the advantages of using short film in a writing class go far beyond those advantages that accrue from the film medium itself. Returning to recent research on the composing process, we can say as writing teachers who use film that our contrivance and comparative uses of the media encourages the kind of complex treatment of the cyclical stages of writing that I outlined earlier.

1. It encourages the student to move back and forth between perceived experience and tentatively-written product.
2. It encourages a sequential staging of written products, with brief one-sentence responses interspersed with rough paragraphs in prewriting and early-writing stages and more polished, edited and lengthy versions during the later stages of composing. All composing occurs with the film available for showing and analysis and with the benefit of oral as well as practice-written composing.
3. It encourages the integrating of oral and written composing, as James Moffett encouraged several years ago, by suggesting the constant interaction of talking and writing.
4. Finally and most importantly, film as part of the composing process helps us as teachers to treat composing as an extended act of perception and invention, through every stage in the writing process.

THE SHOPPING BAG LADY
(Brief Abstract)

An old woman (Mildred Dunnock) and a high-school girl serve as co-protagonists in this film in which a woman whose life is symbolized by the discarded toys and household remnants in her shopping bag at first struggles with and then is able to reconcile her life with a younger woman. Set in Central Park, the film uses a series of episodic scenes, each of which is carefully juxtaposed and includes contrast with visual background (school, park, hospital) to make a brief parable about aging, loneliness, and occasional but saving reconciliation. At first, the young woman shares with her high school peers an attitude that ridicules the older woman's attempts to confront loneliness with discarded artifacts of other people's lives. Gradually, however, the less-obvious loneliness of the younger woman becomes explicit, and the basis for a common understanding between the two is established. The film closes with a hospital scene in which the younger woman returns the lost artifacts (a doll and its bottle) and the shopping bag to the older woman.

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Ordering Information on "The Shopping Bag Lady";

Mass Media Ministries
2116 North Charles St.
Baltimore, Maryland 21218
(Rental Fee is $25.00; Time of Film is 21 minutes)

NOTES

1. Janet Emig, The Composing Processes of Twelfth-Graders (Urbana, Ill.: NCTE, 1971), where the case-study and composing-aloud models were used to study the writing habits of eight above-average and average twelfth-grade students in the Chicago area; Peter Elbow, Writing Without Teachers (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), where freewriting, growing, and cooking are seen as integrated stages within the composing process. Theoretical research in heuristics as a method of controlling the composing process appears in Janice Lauer, "Heuristics and Composition," College Composition and Communication (May 1972); in W. Ross Winterrowd, ed., Contemporary Rhetoric (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Jovanovich, 1975), particularly the first section on invention as a rhetorical category; in Frank D'Angelo's A Conceptual Theory of Rhetoric (Cambridge, Mass.: Winthrop Publishing Company, 1975), especially his chapters on invention and memory, and syntagmatic and paradigmatic structure; James Kinnealy's A Theory of Discourse (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1971), especially the chapters on the nature and logic of reference discourse. These articles, monographs, and books also provide excellent interdisciplinary bibliographies on heuristics.

2. Problem-solving as an appropriate heuristic for the teaching of writing is best represented in the research of Richard Young in his "Problems and the Process of Writing," submitted to the Office of Education by the Center for Research on Language and Language Behavior at the University of Michigan as Studies in Language and Language Behavior (Progress Report VIII, February 1, 1969, pp. 494-503) and in the rhetoric text he has co-authored with Alton Becker and Kenneth Pike, Rhetoric: Discovery and Change (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1970), particularly chapters Four through Seven. Richard Larson's "Discovery through Questioning: A Plan for Teaching Rhetorical Invention," College English (November 1968), 126-134 and his "Problem-Solving, Composing, and Liberal Education," College English (March 1972), 628-635 both at least partially present methods of inquiry that are suitable to writing and are problem-solving; as is Linda Flower and John Hayes's "Problem-Solving Strategies and the Writing Process," which posits the idea that although "We frequently talk of writing as if it were a series of independent temporally bounded actions (e.g. prewriting, writing, rewriting) . . . it is more accurate to see it [writing] as a hierarchical set of subproblems arranged under a goal or set of goals." These seminal articles also provide more complete references to seminal works in other disciplines on problem-solving.

3. The terms "operators," "scenarios," "cues," and "nutshells" are introduced and defined in Flower and Hayes, pp. 453-456.

4. See, in particular, "Lexicon Rhetorice" in Counter-Statement, 2nd Edition (Los Altos, California: Hermes Press, 1953), pp. 132-128, where Burke argues that "Form, having to do with the creation and gratification of needs is 'correct' in so far as it gratifies the needs which it creates. The appeal of the form in this sense is obvious: form is the appeal" (p. 138).
5. *Teaching the Universe of Discourse* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1968), particularly Chapters Two, which describes and categorizes the kinds of discourse, and Three, which suggests teaching methods that are based upon a variety of dramatic fields of discourse — improvisation, discussion, performing scripts, monologuing, recording, writing scripts and dialogues, and reading.

The editor reserves the right to edit essays so that their usage conforms with the *Guidelines for Non-sexist Use of Language* in NCTE Publications.

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**THIRD CLASS**