

⁵Richard M. Weaver, "To Write the Truth," *College English*, X, 1 (October, 1948), 26. The flap that followed the appearance of Weaver's article provides a convenient index to the wrangles that were being conducted over Freshman English at midcentury. See especially the responses by James McCrimmon and Porter Perrin in *College English*, X, 4 (January, 1949), 222-23.

⁶In the early history of the course, Freshman English teachers in some schools were expected to read and grade weekly themes from as many as two hundred or more students. See Robert J. Connors, "Mechanical Correctness as a Focus in Composition Instruction," *College Composition and Communication*, XXXVI, 1 (February, 1985), 72, n15.

⁷Alexander Bain, *English Composition and Rhetoric: A Manual*, 4th Am. Ed. (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1877), v.

⁸Herbert L. Creek, "Forty Years of Composition Teaching," *College Composition and Communication*, VI, 1 (February, 1955), 4.

⁹Henry F. Thoma, "Freshman Texts, 1931-1956," *College Composition and Communication*, VIII, 1 (February, 1957), 36.

¹⁰George C. Gates, "We Who are Afraid to Teach," *College Composition and Communication*, XII, 1 (February, 1959), 18.

¹¹William E. Coles, Jr., "Freshman Composition: The Circle of Unbelief," *College English* XXXI, 2 (November, 1969), 136.

¹²Dudley Bailey, "The Obvious Content of Freshman English," *College Composition and Communication*, IX, 4 (December, 1958), 231.

¹³William Templeman, "Thirty-Seven Departments on Freshman English," *College Composition and Communication*, XIII, 2 (May, 1962), 35-40.

¹⁴Oscar Campbell, "The Failure of Freshman English," *The English Journal*, XXVIII, 3 (March, 1939), 178. Campbell remembers that Wendell "used to exclaim that he had exerted a more baleful influence upon college education in America than any other man in his profession" (177). Campbell's article engendered a series of responses that were printed in *EJ* throughout 1939 and 1940.

¹⁵Warner G. Rice, "A Proposal for the Abolition of Freshman English, as It Is Now Commonly Taught, from the English Curriculum," *College English*, XXI, 7 (April, 1960), 361-73.

¹⁶Albert Kitzhaber, "Death — or Transfiguration?" *College English*, XXI, 7 (April, 1960), 372. Kitzhaber continually complained in print and at professional meetings about the effects on Freshman English brought about by the "service" concept that the course has always had to bear. He wrote in 1962 that the "course has been deprived, from the first, of satisfactory status; it has been regarded as, and indeed usually made into, a narrowly practical how-to-do-it course, not a course that could be regarded as humane, liberal." Because of its "service" status, Kitzhaber continues, "the best minds in the profession have rarely concerned themselves" with it, and "few first-rate men have taken to trouble to write textbooks" for the course. And, because of its low status, nobody outside of colleges of education had done any research on it. These remarks are from Kitzhaber's "Freshman English: A Prognosis," *College English*, XXIII, 6 (March, 1962), 481.

¹⁷Thomas S. Kane, "Rhetoric and the 'Problem' of Composition," *College English*, XXII, 7 (April, 1961), 504.

¹⁸George Stade, "Hydrants into Elephants: The Theory and Practice of College Composition," *College English*, XXXI, 2 (November, 1969), 145.

¹⁹Donald J. Tighe, "The Shame of Freshman English," *College Composition and Communication*, XIV, 1 (February, 1963), 34.

²⁰Brief histories of the importation of "subject matters" into Freshman English are available. See, for example, Kitzhaber's *Themes, Theory, and Therapy: The Teaching of Writing in College* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1963); Edward P. J. Corbett, "Rhetoric and Teachers of English," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, LI 4 (December, 1965); and A. M. Tibbetts, "A Short History of Dogma and Nonsense in the Composition Course," *College Composition and Communication*, XVI, 2 (May, 1965).

²¹Carl Klaus, "Public Opinion and Professional Belief," *College Composition and Communication*, XVII, 4 (December, 1976), 377.

²²Patrick Hartwell, "Grammar, Grammars, and the Teaching of Grammar," *College English*, XLVII, 2 (February, 1985), 105-27.

The New Orthodoxy: Rethinking the Process Approach

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Some years ago I attended a meeting of Suzuki Method parents and teachers, a meeting at which (being new to this particular method of music instruction) I felt like the only Presbyterian at a convention of Southern Baptists. Every speaker affirmed Suzuki's "mother tongue" approach to the teaching of music as the only possible pedagogy. Before Dr. Suzuki and his wonderful method, no one had ever learned how to play the violin or the piano properly. I tried to stay with the emotional drift of the group out of politeness, but I kept thinking that it was a shame about Paganini and Liszt.

This same irreverent notion surfaced at the last Conference on College Composition and Communication, even though at this particular meeting I was myself one of the true believers. At session after session I heard praise for the process approach to teaching writing and nodded my head with the rest in agreement. I was in absolute harmony with all who said this is a much more sensible pedagogy for writing teachers than the old product-oriented approach I used to take. And yet, I was uncomfortable in the midst of all the yea-saying; were there no dissenters? Was the process approach going to solve all the problems of the writing classroom? Or was it possible that all of us were caught up in the fervor of the newly converted, embracing a new orthodoxy for its virtues without considering that it might have weaknesses as well?

These heretical ideas were intensified when I read George Hillocks's "What Works in Teaching Composition: A Meta-Analysis of Experimental Treatment Studies." In this provocative article Hillocks analyzes 60 experimental research studies in the teaching of writing from 1963-1982. Among these studies he identifies three modes of instruction, which he terms presentational, natural process, and environmental. His conclusions are interesting enough to quote almost in full:

In the most common and widespread mode (presentational) the instructor dominates all activity with students acting as the passive recipients of rules, advice, and examples of good writing. This is the least effective mode examined.

...

In the natural process mode, the instructor encourages students to write for other students, to receive comments from them, and to revise their drafts in light of comments

from both students and the instructor. But the instructor does not plan activities to help develop specific strategies of composing. This instructional mode . . . is about 25 percent less effective than the average experimental treatment, but about 50 percent more effective than the presentational mode. . . .

I have labeled the most effective mode of instruction environmental, because it brings teacher, student, and materials more nearly into balance and, in effect, takes advantage of all resources of the classroom. In this mode, the instructor plans and uses activities which result in high levels of student interaction concerning particular problems parallel to those they encounter in certain kinds of writing. . . . In contrast to the presentational, this mode places priority on high levels of student involvement. In contrast to natural process, the environmental mode places priority on structured problem solving activities, with clear objectives, planned to enable students to deal with similar problems in composing. On pre-to-post measures, the environmental mode is over four times more effective than the traditional presentational mode and three times more effective than the natural process mode. (159-160)

Many of us are inclined to shudder at meta-analyses of studies that might or might not be really comparable; but for me, at least, it is difficult to dismiss Hillocks's conclusion that the process approach, while more effective than the old lecture-presentation mode, is not in fact the most effective approach studied. This conclusion squares with certain reservations I have begun to develop about the process approach, reservations that I should like to detail here.

But before I begin, let me first define carefully what I mean by the term "process approach;" my definition is drawn primarily from Maxine Hairston's "The Winds of Change," and is also influenced by the work of Donald Murray and Peter Elbow. The process approach

1. teaches that the writing process is recursive rather than linear; the various dimensions of the process (prewriting, writing, revising) do not occur in discrete stages but overlap;
2. focuses on the writing process rather than the final written product; teachers intervene in the process as students write, rather than correcting the final written products;
3. stresses strategies for prewriting and discovery; teachers ask students to generate content and to discover their purposes as they write;
4. assumes a rhetorical context; teachers and texts specify audience and purpose in writing assignments;
5. makes use of peer response; students share their writing in groups;
6. is based on research in other disciplines, especially developmental and cognitive psychology;

There is much that is valuable in this paradigm for the teaching of writing, and much that I use in my own classrooms. In spite of the criticisms that follow, I believe wholeheartedly and enthusiastically in helping students learn the dimensions of their writing processes as opposed to simply "correcting" their finished products. But I believe that we also must examine this paradigm more critically. Let me offer a "yes, but" list to append to the list above.

1. It is misleading for us to talk about "the" writing process, since most of us have not just one writing process but a repertoire of processes that we call upon, depending on task and situation. In his valuable article "Exploring Options in

Composing," Jack Seltzer details these various composing processes as he has observed them in researching professional writing tasks. We process people are fond of quoting the opening sentence of William Stafford's "A Way of Writing:" "A writer is not so much someone who has something to say as he is someone who has found a process that will bring about new things he would not have thought of if he had not started to say them" (371). I recognize the truth in this statement — indeed, Stafford's words describe the way I wrote this paper, which began as a very general exploration of how I learned to write and which changed before my eyes as I wrote. But I do not use this process of writing to discover what I have to say for all the writing I do. Most of my day-to-day writing tasks require little generating of content and only minor revision; I know what I am going to say ahead of time in these memos, reports, agendas, minutes of meetings, and assignments for classes, and my process for this sort of writing really is linear rather than recursive.

Maxine Hairston, in a paper given at the 1984 meeting of the National Council of Teachers of English, proposed a "levels of writing" taxonomy that I find useful when thinking about the different kinds of writing processes I use. It is her hypothesis that we can classify the writing we do into at least three categories. Level 1 is routine maintenance writing — notes and memos about uncomplicated matters, tasks that most literate writers can handle with no difficulty. Level 2 is longer, more complicated writing that must be well-organized and clear. The writer at this level already knows what he or she will say beforehand: lab reports, essay exams, technical papers, and other kinds of formula writing comprise this category. Most writers of moderate skill can handle this sort of writing well. Level 3 writing is the most complex. The writer is writing to discover, searching for form and content as he or she writes, going through multiple drafts. Original articles and reports, William Stafford's poetry, and some academic writing fall into this category. We process people have been proceeding, it seems to me, as if the universe of discourse included only one level — the last — because this is the sort of writing we value most highly. But as James Moffett has been reminding us for some time, the universe of discourse is wide indeed; if each of the levels requires a different sort of writing process, as each does for me, we need to help our students develop not one but several writing processes, and help them understand which one is appropriate for the task at hand.

Another thing I find disturbing about the focus on the writing process as recursive is that some of my students and colleagues tell me they write in a linear fashion all the time, no matter what the level of writing task. I have watched these people when they write (one of them, who happens to be my spouse, I have observed for some twenty years), and my observations tell me that what they say is correct. They think through their ideas for a long time before they begin to write. Many of them then make careful and detailed outlines, write from those outlines, and rarely make global revisions once they have started to write. Their writing seems much more like transcription than like writing to discover. These writers are predominantly the scientific, left-brained sort — physicists, mathematicians, biologists, engineers. The research suggests that there are differences in cognitive style between scientists and humanists; given the connection between writing and cognition, it seems likely that there are also differences in the writing processes of these two groups of folk. We know a great deal about how Donald Murray, William Stafford and other talented right-brained folk write, but we know all too little about how our equally talented science colleagues go about their writing tasks. Until we do, we should be

careful not to impose our own recursive approach on students, especially budding scientists and engineers, who might be using a linear process that serves them well already. We might find ourselves in the position of trying to fix something that for them was never broken.

2. With regard to the second item in my description of the process approach, I suspect that in our zeal to get away from teaching writing as grammar rules and editing, many of us have left editing skills by the wayside. A recent article in *College English* stated that "research has . . . been telling us to concentrate on the process of writing rather than the product" (McPherson 701). The move to "teach process, not product" seems to lead many converts of my acquaintance to believe that we should not teach product at all, the assumption being that if we teach process, the products will take care of themselves. Many process-oriented teachers I know tell me they have thrown their grammar books away, since the research shows that teaching grammar does not help students compose better papers. But I believe that we should teach process *as well as* (not *rather than*) product, since in my experience the products most certainly do not take care of themselves; students need quite a bit of help with editing skills, as they always have. Old-fashioned grammar drills may not help students learn to edit their papers, but this fact should not lead us to banish all study of grammar and mechanics. Certainly, a basic knowledge of descriptive grammar — the names of the parts in the system we call language — is a prerequisite for any useful discussion of editing a paper. Otherwise, students and teachers lack a common vocabulary for such a discussion.

Editing skills and mechanics may come last on our list of what we want to teach students, but they must remain on that list. The unhappy fact is that while we may value content above surface features in a piece of writing, the rest of the world — especially the business world, where most of our graduates will be employed — does not. A recent study in Wisconsin, for example, showed that business people valued correct spelling above the organization of ideas (Suhor 98). Our colleagues in other departments, even those sympathetic to a process orientation, have similar views; many of us who lead Writing Across the Curriculum programs have found those views exceedingly difficult to change. And even those of us who profess to ignore surface errors entirely would not dream of sending out an important letter or memo ourselves without proofreading it very carefully. My point is that we do our students a disservice if we teach them only how to compose. We need to teach them also how to control the surface features of their writing, the features that will help to mark them as accomplished writers in the eyes of the world.

3 and 4. I am bothered both by the emphasis on prewriting in the process approach and by the use of "rhetorical contexts" for assignments. This concern centers not, however, on these practices in and of themselves, but rather on our having tied the shiny new process cart in front of that tired old warhorse, the personal essay in one of four modes (description, narration, exposition, or argumentation). Writing such an essay is a task peculiar to the composition class, a task students will never have to face again once they leave us, since it is a task wholly unlike any sort of professional writing endeavor. Frank D'Angelo has argued convincingly that the old "rhetorical modes" ought to be discarded in teaching composition, because they "confuse forms of discourse with modes of discourse, they present aims that are not equal in status, and they are based on an outworn faculty and associationist psychology" (32). And yet even the newest process-oriented textbooks still have such writing topics as

"describe a place that has some special meaning for you." Naturally, we must then emphasize pre-writing techniques in the classroom, since students have to struggle to find something to say about such inert topics. Some of these process texts then go on to tell students to choose an audience and a purpose for their writing — something that almost never happens in writing tasks outside academe, where audience and aim are the first considerations. Sometimes textbooks recognize this fact and give "case" situations that specify audience and purpose. But this sort of approach may actually make the task more difficult, since it forces students to pretend to write for one audience and purpose while in fact writing through that fiction to quite another audience (the teacher) for another purpose (evaluation of the student's writing).

If we are to use the process approach wisely and well, we need to ask ourselves what sorts of writing assignments we should give, why we should give them, and how they would fit in philosophically with a process approach. These are difficult questions because they involve asking ourselves about the purpose of the composition class itself. Are we running a service course to teach students the forms and formats they will need to know about in their professional fields, and about the writing processes that go with those forms and formats? Or do we believe in more student-centered writing, aimed at helping students in their growth toward self-knowledge and understanding? Or do we want to emphasize writing primarily as communication, and therefore design assignments that get students writing to real audiences for real purposes? Clearly, we need to give more attention to the fact that rethinking our approach to the teaching of writing also involves rethinking the writing tasks we assign.

I am also bothered by the emphasis on prewriting insofar as it leads to the slighting of revision in the process-oriented classroom. I have been to workshop after workshop on designing writing assignments and have brought home sheaves of handouts. Recently, I tallied these up and discovered that the ratio of handouts on prewriting strategies to handouts on revision strategies was eight to one. A large body of research on revision and revision strategies is available in our professional journals at all levels. I do not see evidence, however, that this information has made much of a difference in the classrooms of the process-oriented teachers I observe, where days are spent on invention and, once the paper is written, students go on to brainstorm ideas for yet another paper. The assumption seems to be that fluency is the most important thing to teach. But if we are to move students from fluency to form and finally to correctness (as the National Writing Project phrases it), we need to help them try out various revision strategies so that they can see which might work for them.

5. The use of peer response groups raises a number of questions in my mind. I would be the first to defend the use of peer groups in writing; I got quite a bit of help thinking through my ideas for this paper from a group of colleagues who meet regularly to share their writing. But I question the way student groups are used by many process-oriented teachers. The assumption is that students can respond to each other's writing in ways that will help the writer. But as several researchers (Newkirk; George) have pointed out, students don't always get useful information from their peers. Students will respond in personal ways ("I understand what Sally is saying because my mother never listens to me, either"), or they respond with vague evaluative words ("good paper, Mike") that may bolster the writer's confidence, but do little to help the writer think through and revise the paper. If students are to give the kind of criteria-based feed-

back that we ourselves give (the sort that will help students revise for focus and organization), then we need to teach students those criteria and how to apply them in a group situation. Students must learn how to be critics of as well as responders to each other's prose, to help one another learn to revise for an audience outside the classroom that will do them no favors in interpreting and evaluating their prose. Teaching revision strategies and teaching students to look critically at each other's papers go hand in hand. Too often, however, I see teachers using groups but giving students no instructions for their task in those groups other than to read their papers aloud. The result is that students have no clear idea of how to revise.

6. Finally, I have no quarrel with the cognitive psychologists and what they have taught us about writing. Their contributions have been invaluable. But writing and learning to write involve more than cognition. I think we need now to go beyond the developmental and cognitive aspects of writing to study what the psychologists like to call the affective realm (as Michael Smith has recently done in his work on writing apprehension). All of us are aware of how important student attitudes toward writing are. Stephen Witte and Lester Faigley say that for some composition students, a change in attitude toward writing may be as important as a change in the writing itself (62). What shapes the attitudes students bring to us, how do those attitudes help or hinder students, and how can we go about changing the attitudes that need changing? What motivates students to write? Why do some students have a high task persistence while others give up before they have even begun? One thing that affects student attitudes toward writing, as well as the writing itself, seems to be the perception of teacher as mentor. In researching various professional writing tasks I have had occasion to ask a number of graduates from this institution how they think they learned to write. Almost all of them mentioned one teacher (usually in their discipline) who "cared" about how they wrote. My colleagues mention this same phenomenon when talking about how they learned to write; I myself had a particular teacher I admired very much, one I perceived as a demanding but trusted audience. I still ask myself, some twenty-five years later, what he would say about a piece as I write it. Jerome Bruner speaks in general terms of this phenomenon:

It is not so much that the teacher provides a model to imitate. Rather, it is that the teacher can become part of a student's inner dialogue — somebody whose standards he wishes to make his own. It is like becoming a speaker of a language one shares with somebody. The language of that interaction becomes a part of oneself, and the standards of style and clarity that one adopts for that interaction become a part of one's own standards. (124)

What makes this phenomenon occur? How can we help it happen in our writing classes? There will soon be a new NIE-funded center for the study of writing. I hope that the issues having to do with the affective domain, untidy and recalcitrant as they are, will be studied and analyzed there.

I think we also need to research the role of rote learning and imitation in learning how to write. Linguistics has taught us that repetition and copying play a large role in the acquisition of spoken language. We also know that students need to practice low-level writing tasks such as handwriting and spelling so that those tasks become automatic, allowing the writers to attend to higher-level composing tasks. But how much rote learning and imitation is involved in the process of composing itself? The Elizabethan schoolboy translated Cicero into English, then

translated the English text back into Latin, imitating as closely as he could the style of the original. Today we react to such an assignment with distress, even repugnance. But we should not dismiss entirely the approach that was used in the classrooms where Shakespeare and Milton were taught. A colleague and I have proposed only half jokingly that we should run one section of Freshman Composition in which students do nothing but copy various specimens of great prose, just to see if such an exercise would have a positive effect on their writing.

I am well aware that my criticism of the process approach will distress many people. Let me anticipate some of their responses by saying that the approach I have criticized is the extreme, and that not all teachers who think of themselves as process-oriented use the method as I have described it. Let me add further that my purpose here is not to spark controversy, but to call for a close, critical examination of this our new paradigm for teaching writing, and for the questioning of all assumptions, even those we hold most dear. But instead of constructive responses, I predict a spate of angry defenses, precisely because of the fervor surrounding the process approach that made me so uneasy to begin with. What informs all my reservations about the process approach is serious concern about an attitude I find among its converts, an attitude that I held myself for a time: that getting process is something like getting saved, and that after the conversion you have all the answers about the teaching of writing. In point of fact we don't yet know all the questions about the teaching of writing, and until we have done much more research and reflection we need to maintain a healthy skepticism about any approach we might use. When we take one approach as sacred and above criticism, that approach becomes formulaic and ritualized rather than questioned and analyzed. The ritual itself becomes the end, rather than the means to an end.

There should be no orthodoxy in the teaching of writing. We should treat our approach in the classroom not as gospel but as a rough draft, something to be continually criticized and revised. We as yet know far too little about the teaching of writing to do otherwise.

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Romance and Rhythm in the Teaching of Writing

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Some years ago, in an essay entitled "Paradigms and Problems: Needed Research in Rhetorical Invention," Richard Young argued that the discipline—composition studies—had reached a stage of crisis. While the discipline "shared a remarkably stable system of beliefs, a system that Daniel Fogarty has called 'current traditional rhetoric,'" the paradigm had been repeatedly attacked for its failure to provide effective instruction in the art of invention.¹ Elbert Harrington, for example, notes in "A Modern Approach to Invention" that "Most teachers know that rhetoric has always lost life and respect to the degree that invention has not had a significant and meaningful role."² From another perspective, Wayne Booth pointed out at the Dartmouth Conference the "prevailing tendency to minimize the need for systematic knowledge, the value of techniques of analysis . . . or in general the importance of thinking."³

As Young has argued, the overt features of current traditional rhetoric are familiar enough: emphasis "on the composed product, instead of on the composing process," an emphasis that grew out of the assumption that "There is essentially one process of writing that serves all writers"⁴ in all situations, despite differences that may inhere in their aims, intents, audiences, genre, voice, and the like. Leveling the complexity of language and denying the dialectical process between writer, audience, reality, and language that produces meaning, current traditionalists perceive composing as essentially linear. Planning precedes composing. What is more, Young notes the emphasis upon an analysis of "discourse into words, sentences, and paragraphs; the classification of discourse into description, narration, exposition, and argument; the strong concern with usage (syntax, spelling, punctuation) and with style (economy, clarity, emphasis) . . ."⁵

With its stress on the natural powers of the mind, the current traditionalists adopted the vitalist principles of the Romantics, thus suggesting the uniqueness of the creative act and, in a sense, repudiating the possibility of teaching writing. "What is involved in being A Writer is 'talent' or 'genius,'" Roger Sale tells us in his book *On Writing*. Perhaps, he continues, it's "just having 'a way' with words . . . it cannot be taught as a skill by

English teachers."⁶ Adopting instead the formalist principles of the new critics, teachers operating in the current traditional paradigm reduce the teaching of writing to a critical study of the composed product. Finally, though recognizing the importance of invention, adherents to current traditional rhetoric argue that the subject of rhetoric is the presentation of ideas, hence the emphasis upon arrangement and style, and that "original inquiry, the development of new knowledge," belongs to the domain of other disciplines.⁷

The discipline's response to crisis—in the form of both research and teaching—has been to strengthen the connection between thinking and writing, to provide systematic procedures for discovering new knowledge and making analyses. We have learned that there is no "monolithic process of writing,"⁸ that audience, purpose, genre all shape the way we approach a particular writing task. While there may be shared features in the ways that we write, the issue of difference is crucial in our understanding of process. Composing style is like any other rhetorical choice we make, constrained by the variables of a rhetorical situation. We have learned that the "rhythms of writing are uneven," as Janet Emig puts it, that we not only "plan, draft, and revise, but also revise, plan, and then write."⁹ We have come to see that knowledge results from a "transaction between people, in language, restricted to and limited by" what John Gage describes as the "assent of the participants and the conventions of language."¹⁰ The process of writing, then, can be "enhanced by working in, and with, a group of writers . . . who give vital response."¹¹ The movement toward collaborative learning, where reciprocity is an integral part of a group setting, and furnishes a driving force to learn, re-defines the way we teach writing, if only to enable us to show how writing works in context, as opposed to talking about writing out of context.

The "dynamics of conceptualizing" and "creative discovery" is for many a distinctive feature of what we term the new rhetoric.¹² Together, the movement toward collaborative learning with the understanding that writing is a process of discovery forces teachers to take a step back and allow students to take responsibility for their own writing. In turn, teachers become partners in the composing process, sharing their own attempts to produce a piece of writing, offering ways to invent, plan, draft, or revise, or simply listening to another writer work through a problem in writing. We can aid writers by helping them to imagine an audience, form intentions, and realize those intentions. By offering choices, instead of "demanding writing formulated according to the [teacher's] authority," we can enable writers to take an active role in learning, empowering them to teach themselves to write.¹³ In this way, students develop what Jerome Bruner describes as a competence, an ability to make learning one's own, to see that the "value of information is not simply in getting it,"¹⁴ but in being able to use that information to effect change. To make learning the student's own enables that student to go beyond the given, to generate ideas that can be measured against experience and used to develop "reasonable hypotheses"¹⁵ independent of instruction. The result is a rhetoric of action, of performance, not merely a mechanistic skill concerned with the presentation of ideas.

Yet, our search no longer appears to concentrate on determining how to respond to an older rhetoric—though we must still unravel the mystery of whether writing can be taught and how—but upon finding some coherent images of the writing classroom. Knoblauch and Brannon, for example, implore teachers of writing to develop a theory of teaching in a philosophical context. It's important, they tell us, that we become "conscious of