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BOOK REVIEWS

Creative Writing in America: Theory and Pedagogy—ed. Joseph M. Moxley; NCTE; 1989; 272 pp. ISBN 0-8141-0926-8.

Joseph M. Moxley's book reminds us of the third community in our English Departments (after Literature and Composition/Rhetoric), often regarded as the "not so serious" teachers and writers of Creative Writing. But the twenty-three essays in this book, revealing an awareness of current composition theory, a willingness to be critical of pedagogical goals and methods currently practiced, a pragmatic knowledge of publishing, and a belief in critical standards, effectively undermine this stereotype.

The first of the four sections in the book explores some of the history of, current practices in, and possible future of creative writing programs on the nation's campuses. The second provides practical and innovative pedagogical exercises for generating material in the classroom, while the third focuses on the final stages in the writing process including publishing possibilities afforded by small presses. The book is concluded by a short summarizing section and an appendix covering the course requirements of MFA programs throughout the country.

While many teachers (composition teachers among them) may first turn to the writing and editing exercises in the second and third sections as the most immediate way of benefiting the activities in their classes, a more important contribution comes in the preface and first section with the anticipation of a possible paradigm shift in the field: "At present, no debate rages in professional journals as to whether creative writing programs are providing students with the necessary writing skills, knowledge of the composing process, or background in literature needed to write well" (xi). This debate is not far off if these essays are any indication.

The twenty-six writers collected include the professional (Marion Zimmer Bradley and Donald M. Murray) and the teacher (Alan Ziegler of Columbia and Valerie Miner of UC, Berkeley), and their essays have much to recommend them. Obviously the work of writers and teachers dedicated to their craft, this book reminds us that the members of this third community are also "serious" about what they teach.

— Donald G. Lloyd

Rhetorical Thought in John Henry Newman—Walter Jost; University of South Carolina Press; 1989; 325 pp. ISBN 0-87249-620-1.

Jost's intensive study of Newman's rhetoric is of interest not only to students of Newman and Victorian literature but also to those concerned with rhetoric, literary theory, education, and theology. Examining Newman's work in a number of areas, Jost provides a comprehensive view of Newman's characteristic way of thinking. Maintaining that assent involves more than merely logical certainty, Newman sought to account for the whole man in his exploration of the ways in which assent is granted to a series of antecedent and converging probabilities. In the course of his study, Jost identifies several salient features of Newman's approach: a recognition that the apprehension of meaning is an interpretative act and that interpretation itself is inextricably bound up in language; and the recognition that associative, metaphorical, analogical, inductive forms of reasoning are more apt for this sort of apprehension.

As this description suggests, Newman set aside the more facile approaches of his contemporaries and incorporated the heritage of ancient Greece and Rome into his own forward-looking rhetoric. Identifying Newman as one of the first epistemic rhetoricians, Jost not only places Newman's work in its nineteenth-century context but goes on to illustrate Newman's points of kinship to such diverse twentieth-century figures as Kenneth Burke, Richard McKeon, Stephen Toulmin, Michael Polanyi, Karl Popper, Hans-Georg Gadamer, and Thomas Kuhn. Of particular interest is the final chapter, in which Newman's work is used to illuminate and criticize the work of Burke and Toulmin. In this and many other ways, *Rhetorical Thought in John Henry Newman* makes an important contribution to the study of rhetoric in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

— Joe Law

Descartes and the Resilience of Rhetoric: Varieties of Cartesian Rhetorical Theory—Thomas M. Carr, Jr.; Southern Illinois University Press; 1990, 218 pp. ISBN 0-8093-1557-2.

Carr's book is an attempt at synthesis—essentially an argument that Descartes' theories and philosophical world view are not incompatible with rhetoric. Clarity of mind and of purpose (attention) underlie both disciplines, and Carr's concern is to delineate the interrelationships.

Carr analyzes Descartes' rhetorical thought and investigates the work of several post-Cartesian philosophers, including Bernard Lamy, Nicolas Malebranche, Antoine Arnauld, and Pierre Nicole.

This volume contributes a new perspective of Descartes and of the Augustinians to the history of rhetoric. By elaborating upon concepts of eloquence and of ideation, Carr manages to present rhetorical and cultural history in a fashion that makes this work highly readable and engaging.

Work in Progress: A Guide to Writing and Revising—Lisa Ede; St. Martin's; 1989; 249 pp. ISBN 0-312-00091-X.

Ede's purposes in this text are to focus the student's attention upon the writing process, the rhetorical situation, the requirements and expectations of academic writing, and upon a range of collaborative learning and workshop activities. She states of her goals for *Work in Progress*: "I wanted to write a theoretically sophisticated but commonsensical and relatively brief textbook, one that would enrich but not dominate the life of the classroom, one that would support but not impose a process-oriented, collaborative approach to the teaching of writing." A further objective for the text is to encourage "students and teacher *together* to investigate what it means to write," since "learning and teaching are, after all, both works in progress."

The great strengths of Ede's text are its lucid and "user friendly" style together with its well-reasoned and well-structured approach to the teaching of the composing process. Ede manages to simplify complex rhetorical terms and concepts by demystifying them and getting them down to fundamental elements that a student can learn by putting them into practice. The text is obviously highly sophisticated in its theoretical knowledge of how we write and what we seek to express in the process, but its "commonsensical" structure will enable the serious and motivated student to understand strategies for undertaking written communication and for evaluating the clarity and effectiveness of his or her work.

In an era when many textbooks seem needlessly overwritten, stifflingly academic, and as generic and unimaginative as the basic business suit, it is a pleasure to see a text that can address its audience of student writers so effectively. Ede is to be commended for producing one of the more innovative and clear-sighted texts available for freshman and sophomore composition classes.

Symbolic Inducement and Knowing: A Study in the Foundations of Rhetoric—Richard B. Gregg; University of South Carolina Press; 1989; 164 pp. ISBN 0-87249-434-9.

Gregg's purpose in this volume is to assess the implications of symbolizing in human communication. Drawing from the fields of anthropology, neurophysiology, psycholinguistics, psychology, literature, speech communications, and rhetorical theory, Gregg explores the issue of whether symbol-making is an inherent property of human intelligence or a largely a personal and cultural response to the influences of the external environment.

Within this exercise in epistemology and analytical reasoning, Gregg does much to illuminate the origins and significance of rhetoric by placing rhetorical invention within the line of debate from the Idealists through the Cartesians. At issue is what model of the mind shall underlie our perceptions of how rhetoric works within a culture and within individual schemas of valuing and ideation.

Gregg's style is clear and academic in being carefully researched and balanced in investigating various sides of an issue. This unique work offers much to those interested in considering rhetorical analysis from within a socio-cultural and socio-political framework.

Two Patterns of Rationality in Freud's Writings—Steven E. Goldberg; University of Alabama Press; 1988; 207 pp. ISBN 0-8173-0366-9.

Goldberg's book, in a similar vein to Charles Anderson's book on Richard Selzer, *The Rhetoric of Surgery*, uses techniques of rhetorical analysis applied to a subject generally not regarded from a rhetorical perspective—in Anderson's case, surgery; in this case, the writings of Sigmund Freud. Interestingly, both works provide opportunities to view both their subjects and the fruits of rhetorical analysis in a new light.

Goldberg begins his study by analyzing Freud's model of the mind—a largely nineteenth-century, mechanistic model based upon energy exchanges among conflicting internal systems. From this perspective, Freud hoped to extend the methods and criteria of the natural sciences to a science of the human being. This emphasis upon the scientific method and upon deductive reasoning represents one line of rationality within Freud's writings. The other is represented by Freud's emphasis upon storytelling—or case histories—to dramatize the causes of neuroses and the application of clinical techniques. The interweaving of these two approaches represents the uniqueness of Freud's thought and of his writing style. It also generates questions for rhetorical analysis that center upon the criteria for historical explanation in relation to scientific and fictional narrative.

Goldberg raises many interesting questions about the ways in which Freud established a system of inquiry. These questions are particularly relevant to studies in rhetoric and composition, which often draw upon both scientific methodology and case study approaches to make and prove their points. To this extent, Goldberg's book becomes more than an interesting rhetorical analysis of Freud's writings; it becomes a thought-provoking assessment of the ways in which we generate and evaluate meanings in a range of disciplines—especially in the area of rhetorical studies.

Structuralism: The Art of the Intelligible—Peter Caws; Humanities Press International; 1988; 276 pp. ISBN 0-391-02740-9.

The promise (perhaps even premise) of Caws' book seems optimistic, if not Utopian—not only to define structuralism, but to place structuralism within the poles of phenomenology and of materialism in order to provide "a world-view that reconciles age-old conflicts between nature and society, objective and subjective, individual and group." Further, as if this were not enough, Caws seeks to argue that structuralism has not been, and should not be, replaced by post-structuralism, since structuralism represents "an enduring contribution to the legacy of philosophy."

Caws does endeavor to place structuralism within the framework of recent American and French intellectual history and to analyze its implications in terms of its contributing disciplines of linguistics and anthropology. In the second half of the book, when Caws approaches structuralism indirectly through philosophical work on language, meaning, mind, and society, he does manage to create an incisive theory of structuralism philosophical relevance. Language theorists will find his work intriguing and of value in formulating models of communication and epistemology.

Doublespeak: From "Revenue Enhancement" to "Terminal Living"—William Lutz; Harper & Row; 1989; 290 pp. ISBN 0-06-016134.

Lutz identifies four kinds of doublespeak—euphemism, jargon, gobbledegook, and inflated language—and draws upon numerous examples from advertising, medicine, law, government, education, business, and the military to emphasize his point that the deliberate misuse of language not only deceives but also destroys communication and trust, the very foundation of our democratic culture.

While the bulk of Lutz' examples are humorous (such as "television with nonmulticolor capability" for black-and-white TV, or "pavement deficiencies" for potholes), they serve to illustrate Lutz' point that most doublespeak is the product of clear thinking and is carefully designed and constructed to obfuscate meanings and to appear to communicate when in fact it doesn't. Lutz writes, "I have tried to show that doublespeak is not a slip of the tongue, nor language used out of ignorance, but is instead a very conscious use of language as a weapon or tool by those in power to achieve their ends at our expense."

Essentially, Lutz argues that we are hearing doublespeak that attempts to avoid responsibility and make the bad seem good, the negative appear positive, something unpleasant appear attractive, and something that is designed not to communicate appear to communicate. His point is well-made, and his timely examples would prove of interest to those concerned with the uses of language and of semiotics in contemporary culture.

A Theory of Argumentation—Charles Arthur Willard; University of Alabama Press; 1989; 324 pp. ISBN 0-8173-0427-4.

One of Willard's premises is that argumentation involves more than an internal logic but exists as a kind of communication based on disagreement. Another of his premises is that argumentation has essentially been reduced by the academy to the study of a series of interesting symbolic and logical transactions divorced from the influence of real-world considerations and influences. His purpose is to place the concept of argumentation within the epistemic and political climate of society and culture.

Willard articulates a theory of message design drawn from elements of symbolic interactionism, personal construct theory, constructivism, and Barbara O'Keefe's innovative and provocative views of semiotics. While the scope of his research is impressive, Willard still chooses to adopt only one model of argumentation and argue for its cultural origins and effects, rather than investigating with equal balance other perspectives. He largely bases his concept of argumentation on oppositional politics, rather than investigating rhetorical models of compromise, networking, and other non-hierarchical (and some might add non-patriarchal) paradigms of the argumentation process.

Willard's volume is impressively researched and interestingly argued—though, of course, within the framework for a theory of argumentation that he himself is establishing. Even overlooking this irony (and possible impediment), those interested in considering how theories of argument are developed might find this work thought-provoking, particularly for what it suggests about the oppositional politics that underlie various discourse fields.

The Macmillan Guide to Writing Research Papers—William Coyle; Macmillan; 1990; 276 pp. ISBN 0-02-325291-X.

While the primary focus of this text is on the process of documenting one's sources, it is also a useful text in providing guidance on the composing process itself, as well as sample student essays that illustrate aspects of writing papers from sources. As a result, this text fulfills its promise of being "adaptable to whatever degree of supervision" the instructor considers "appropriate for a class." In essence, the text is designed to function as a "self-pacing" reference work to be supplemented by classroom instruction.

The author has an extremely valuable point in recognizing the significance of self-pacing in instruction on the research paper, for students have different levels of preparedness based upon the type of high school or freshman composition training they have received. Combining instruction in a research design with a rhetoric is a nice touch in this text, and one that distinguishes it from other texts on the market.

One other aspect of this text instructors will appreciate is that it presents its examples of MLA and APA citations correctly. You'd be amazed at how many handbooks, rhetorics, and guides to writing research papers present their sections on MLA and APA documentation incorrectly. In fact, this lack of quality and attention to detail is so pervasive in textbooks on the market, that one is more surprised to find a text that is *correct* than to find a text with errors. A sad comment on the state of our textbook publishing practices in contemporary America. The author, editors, and publisher of *The Macmillan Guide to Writing Research Papers* are to be applauded for presenting the documentation sections correctly, especially since the documentation sections and sample research papers form the heart of any guide to writing research papers.

Contemporary Literary Theory—ed. G. Douglas Atkins and Laura Morrow; University of Massachusetts Press; 1989; 249 pp. ISBN 0-87023-642-3.

This collection of twelve essays on contemporary literary theory offers a concise and informed consideration of the major schools of critical thought since World War II, including New Criticism, archetypal criticism, structuralism/semiotics, reader response, phenomenology, hermeneutics, deconstruction, psychoanalysis, feminism, Marxism, dialogical criticism, and Foucauldian analysis. Each essay on the various schools concludes with an annotated bibliography.

The major strength of this collection is that it provides a good, basic overview of the theories most discussed at the present time, together with an overview that contains valuable bibliographical information to serve as a resource for further scholarly investigation of each topic. Since the essays were commissioned specifically for the book, they possess a freshness and cohesiveness that make this volume an attractive one. The reader need not worry about being presented with a collection of reworked and rehashed essays, or ones that might be found in numerous similar collections. Instead, there is the opportunity to read new essays that contribute much to the theory and the pedagogy of contemporary literary criticism.