NEW RHETORIC AND
THE GRAMMAR OF PEDAGOGY

John Warnock
University of Wyoming

In 1962, according to Professor Thomas Wilcox, the "sudden vogue" began. Eight years later, some of its proponents described it as still "a need in search of a discipline." As of 1973 its influence on classroom teaching had been, as Wilcox saw it, "superficial and slight," and he could almost predict that it was headed for the same "embarrassment that overtook the partisans of linguistics" who had discovered that "greater understanding" does not necessarily lead to "better practice."

I predict embarrassment for Professor Wilcox's prediction. Not content to let history take its course, I will attempt in this essay to fulfill my prophecy by showing how the new rhetoric does not (or might not) partake of the error that deceived the linguists (and others) who tried to use their subject to teach writing, and how it comprehends its own grammar of pedagogy.

I do not claim that the new rhetoric is a "discipline." I do claim, however, that we now have access to a set of conceptions that take us significantly beyond classical-to-19th century rhetorical theory, that carry with them important implications for students of composition, implications of which all serious students of discourse ought to be aware.

But there's the problem again: There are students of composition and then there are students of composition. Rhetorical theory has always been interesting to readers of texts who were (non-new) literary critics, historians, propaganda analysts—readers in search of one or another kind of interpretation. Does it also have now something to say to writers and those who are trying to teach them?

We must acknowledge that Professor Wilcox's major premise is valid. There is no evidence that any set of conceptions taught as such—not traditional grammar, not transformational grammar, not learning theory, not rhetoric—has any tendency to improve what he calls a writer's "practice." The fact that the new rhetoric is a subject that is in some respects, at least, "new," and of intense interest to a growing number of students of discourse, carries no guarantee that as a subject it will help students to learn or teachers to teach writing.

And yet, as a subject the new rhetoric urges us beyond itself as a subject. It would also be an art. In this aspiration and in the impulse to establish a larger domain of study than is given by this or that particular kind of discourse—by belles lettres, say, or political oratory—new rhetoric only appears to be new, however. Aristotle's rhetoric was intended to be not a theoretical treatise so much as a guide for practicing public speakers. He denied that Rhetoric was a "science," calling it instead a "faculty." Further, he conceived his rhetoric as applicable to a special set of circumstances, namely, those where an audience is "unable to take a general view of many stages, or to follow a lengthy chain of argument." (Rhetoric, I, ii.) Quintilian's definition of the rhetorician as the "good man speaking" extends the domain of the subject, as does the definition of the 18th century rhetorician, George Campbell, who saw rhetoric as "the art or talent by which the discourse is adapted to its end." Until rhetoric, in name at least, dropped from sight at the end of the 19th century, to be replaced by composition programs that had the goal of teaching students "how to communicate effectively in writing," it seems clear that rhetoric, as a subject, aspired to be an art, and aspired also, in its latter days at least, to pertain to very nearly the whole range of purposeful human utterance.

What was rhetoric's name when it was in hiding? Speech was one, composition another. The speech classes might address the principles of classical rhetoric from time to time. Where the composition teachers got their 'principles of good writing,' it would not be easy to say, though we may trace many of them to the notions of the 19th century rhetorician and psychologist Alexander Bain (See e.g., English Composition and Rhetoric, American Edition, Revised, New York: D, Appleton and Co., 1890). Richard Ohmann argues that we get our principles from the Establishment, and that the Establishment gets them by consulting its interests, not always enlightened (English in America: A Radical View of the Profession, Oxford University Press, 1975). Whatever the case, it is clear that for the last 70 years teachers have got their principles neither from empirical research nor from the best that has been known and thought in the world.

Why should we be recovering rhetoric just now I shall not try to answer here, though the question is interesting. I say "we" are recovering it, and of course that speaks far too broadly. Some are recovering it. There seemed to be a lot of interest in it at the 1976 CCCC Convention. But most working teachers, I dare say, are not participating in this revival. Nevertheless, I think most writing teachers are at least questioning the conventional wisdom that has done for a rhetoric in their lifetimes. Most writing teachers (though not, perhaps, most English teachers) are past seeing the English Theme, expository or literary critical, as the pattern (and crown?) of all discourse. Most of this most is past seeing "good writing" in naive Platonic terms, as something good for all rhetorical occasions. Fewer, perhaps, are past seeing good writing as something that may be achieved by following certain recipes. Fewer still are past seeing the basic goal of writing simply as effective communication, with the concomitant valuation of clarity, informative organization and the plain style. Even fewer, I suppose, see the new rhetoric as offering significant
help in our search for adequate conceptions of the matter. And fewest of all see that what is new in the new rhetoric is not the aspiration to make rhetoric relevant to the arts in practice, nor the recovery of audience and of a wider conception of the domain of rhetoric, but the way this recovered audience is imagined, the way the speaker is imagined, and the way these are imagined to relate to each other and to what is being talked about.

I want to follow this new rhetorical line here in an investigation of writing pedagogy. That is, I want to see whether a re-conceiving of our audience— the students— in their particular rhetorical scene — the writing classroom (though one might also consider here the larger contexts: the educational system, the political and economic systems) — would call for a pedagogy different from what is now conventional, and if so, what that pedagogy would be.

I am not here for presuming to define the new rhetoric. Nor to define the grammar of pedagogy. Nor to present the teaching program that we should now begin to press upon our school boards, our Trustees and Regents, and our colleagues. Rather, I am for ascertaining a place from which we may begin to see what it is that the new rhetoric (and all its disciplinary cousins) may offer, now and in the future, to writers and writing teachers. In this respect I am after, in James Moffett’s excellent phrase, “a strategic gain in concept.”

A STRUCTURE FOR INQUIRY

Because it provides something like a theater for this inquiry—not a rigid framework, more like an energy field—I want to set out Kenneth Burke’s pentad from his A Grammar of Motives.

In a rounded statement about motives, you must have some word that names the act (names what took place, in thought or deed), and another that names the scene (the background of the act, the situation in which it occurred); also, you must indicate what person or kind of person (agent) performed the act, what means or instruments he used (agency), and the purpose.

Statements about what one ought to do are generated, as Burke sees it, from ratios among these elements. An example is the speaker who urged that Franklin Roosevelt be granted “unusual” powers because the country was in an “unusual international situation.”

Acts of teaching are rhetorical acts, addressed to students, who constitute part of the teacher’s scene for action and thus control, in some fashion, that action. For teachers, the action is also controlled, or ought to be, by the thing to be taught, the subject. Thus, for a teacher of writing, the question becomes: What acts should teachers (given their resources, their temperaments, etc.) perform by what means in their classrooms (though here, as before, we might expand the context to include the department, the university, the political system, etc.) for the purpose of teaching their students writing?

This may seem a tortuous way of arriving at an obvious question. But it gives us a stable set, and a way of discerning the joints at which we may divide the matter, the sub-problems we must come to terms with, e.g., What is this writing that is to be taught? What are one’s resources? Who are these students? We have seen all these questions broached at our conventions and in the literature. Now we may see that a “rounded” statement about motives in pedagogy involves coming to terms with all these matters. We may also see (and I hope my readers will always remember as they read this essay) that conclusions reached with respect to any of these matters will affect the ratios and thus the conclusions about what ought to be done, in the last analysis. The arch-metaphor here is perhaps grammar-of-pedagogy-as-web. The spider who made the web is not Kenneth Burke, and not anyone’s Director of Freshman English. It is us, or should I say we?

Finally, Aristotle said that one reason we ought to learn rhetoric was so that we would be able to protect ourselves against rhetoricians. I offer Burke’s structure to my readers so that they may protect themselves against my arguments where I have been unable to protect myself against stupidity and error.

WHAT IS TO BE TAUGHT

The subject is one of those things that controls, or ought to control, pedagogical choices. But before we try to get hold of what the subject of writing is, we must debunk a certain breed of pedagogical, or anti-pedagogical argument: that which argues that pedagogy is wholly derivative from the subject matter being taught, and thus, that the way to find the good teacher is to find the qualified specialist. We have here one of those pernicious half-truths, usable (and used) to justify decisions to retain this scholar— translate; prolific publisher—and to let go that dedicated teacher. Yes, teaching can fail through deficient knowledge of the subject matter (though I have never seen a student evaluation that has faulted a teacher on that ground). It can also fail because the teaching is deficient. A teaching deficiency may be extrinsic, a tendency, say, to mumble. A deficiency may also be intrinsic, caused by an inadequately motivated conception of how the students learn what it is that one purports to teach. The cognitive psychologist and learning theorist then sees the problem by a different route and in a different form. Essential to any pedagogy, he says, is a “psychology of the subject matter.”

The hypothetical specialist acknowledges that his purpose is to teach, but he is likely to characterize this act as “presenting the subject,” not “teaching the students.” He derives comfort from the "truth” that you can lead a horse to water but you can’t make him drink. To “lead” he must only “present” his subject in terms of its own internal logic and organization. Teaching is his job, he says; learning is the student’s job. And when the horses don’t drink, we know whose fault it is. Or do we?

If one has decided that a horse needs to take a drink, one can, of course, with time, do a great deal to increase the probabilities that he will do so, and if one values the horse, he will probably do those things. One would not want him to drink at any cost, of course, which one could, by God, make him do by withholding the water long enough. One would want him to drink for his own reasons and for his own benefit, naturally. One may be helped here by a knowledge of how and why horses come to want to drink and do drink. One does not teach the horse those reasons, of course; one uses them to develop a curriculum, as it were, likely to result in the horse’s drinking as a contribution to his fulfillment. In that word—fulfillment — the metaphor begins to show strain. A horse’s fulfillment is likely not to be taken to be the entire of horse, but rather the maximization of the owner’s profit and pleasure. We may, however, speak without strain, (though perhaps also without precision or vividness) of a student’s fulfillment, and we may hope that the student’s fulfillment is not seen in the same terms as the horse’s.

The specialist’s rationale results from a particular valuation of the student and of the need (or lack of it) to create what Burke would call an identity between them. We cannot call his behavior un-rhetorical, though we can say that he has not recognized that it ought to be rhetorical in the sense that it ought to include a recognition that teaching requires, not just an adequate knowledge of the subject, but also of the student, and how the student may be expected to proceed in his or her encounter with the subject.

THE "SUBJECT" OF WRITING

We’ve sometimes spoken here of writing as a subject. I want to change that. From here on, I will speak of it as an
action. It makes no sense to treat it as what Burke would call a "motion." Unless we like our people as machines, we have it when it reads as if it were only that. The difference in that action entails purpose. We read writing to gather, not simply the movement of the words, but the purpose of the movement. We write to give our words purpose. Even the canvass theme has a purpose, though it is an ironic one.

Viewing writing as an action helps us get past the sometimes misleading dichotomy of product and process. There is a dialectic here, not a dichotomy. Writing is a process that begins with a product (thought or word) and ends with one (the written text), though, as many have said, in pedagogy we must confuse the product with the process that produced it. Calling writing an action helps us not to lose sight of either element. It also helps us see something about the kind of knowing that is involved in knowing how to write. It is just that: a knowing-how, not a knowing-what.

The know-that/know-how distinction is developed by Gilbert Ryle in *The Concept of Mind*. A point that does not emerge clearly from Ryle's analysis, however, is that knowledge that must be, if not conscious, at least explainable, while knowledge-how, though it must of course be in some sense known or understood, does not carry the condition that the possessor will be able to explain that knowledge or that he will at any point have done so to himself or others in the course of performing the action that he knows how to perform. The oracle told Socrates that there was no one wiser than he. Since Socrates knew he had no wisdom "small or great," he went about trying to prove the oracle wrong by examining people thought wise by others or themselves. He never found anyone better at explaining things than he.

After the politicians, I went to the poets; tragic, dirythrambic, and all sorts. And there, I said to myself, you will be instantly detected; now you will find out that you are more ignorant than they are. Accordingly I took them some of the most elaborate passages in their own writings, and asked what was the meaning of them—thinking that they would teach me something. Will you believe me? I am almost ashamed to confess the truth, but I must say that there is hardly a person present who would not have talked better about their poetry than they did themselves. Then I knew that not by wisdom do poets write poetry, but by a sort of genius and inspiration; they are like diviners or soothsayers who also say many fine things, but do not understand the meaning of them.  

What Plato did not grasp, perhaps, is the fact that in the matter of know-how, understanding does not necessarily entail the capacity to explain how. Is such know-how wisdom? An occidental philosopher is not likely to think so. That there can be know-how that remains beyond explaining, he might not deny. And even Plato might have agreed that it was Socrates' special know-how that kept anyone from showing greater wisdom than he, in spite of the fact that as he said so often he had no wisdom, small or great.

A child knows the rules of syntax—in that he knows how to make sentences using them—long before he knows that such rules exist, long before he would be able to formulate them to anyone. The knowledge of those of us who know the rules and can explain them is in some sense higher, it is not any more complete. Explanatory knowledge gives us, not new rules, but the capacity, sometimes, intentionally to ignore the rules, or to juxtapose them with other sets of rules in search of fertile correspondences—making us freer, and thus, perhaps, wiser.

At any rate, perfect knowledge of the structures controlling our actions would seem to be beyond anyone's, even Chomsky's, grasp. As writers and as teachers of writing we are all familiar with the experience of knowing that sentence X is better than sentence Y and not quite knowing how. If, in desperation, we argue that it is better because it is syntactically more mature (longer, on the average, in its T-units), we will know in our heart of hearts that we have falsified the matter. Perhaps we will talk about the way X fulfills expectations better than Y—a little better but not much; some sentences are better than others because of the way they disappoint expectations. And so on.

To look at the issue another way, a knowledge that the process of inquiry may be segmented for analysis into the stages of preparation, incubation, illumination and verification, gives us little know-how in solving any particular problem. Perhaps it tells us that if we have been working at solving a problem for a while and have come up against it, we should disregard the proverbial wisdom about trying, trying again, and quit. For a while. Then again, maybe we ought to try this other angle...

We do have coaches, and game-plans, and rules of thumb: theorists and theories that have some tendency, it seems, to help performers do what they want to do, or to get the job done. These theories exist because performers can get to a place where something is not working: the batter in a slump, the teacher whose efforts to lead the children are showing no results. The performer knows that he has deliberately to try something. Born of the experience of difficulty or failure, these theories can give him a little something, maybe a big something, to try. At the right time, advice born of theory can have a marvelous effect. More often than not, however, the performer in trouble has to "play through" the trouble, and once through it, he or she will no more be able to explain what got him through than Sophocles could explain how he got through *Oedipus Tyrannus*.

John Ciardi, in an interview, has pointed out the difficulty, in fact the impossibility, of giving an adequate explanation of the process of writing any of his poems, since in choosing any given word, he was considering simultaneously a number of issues all of which were suspended hierarchically—vertically and horizontally—in a kind of colloid. The point is one that gives of advice on how to write must keep ever in mind. One needs to exercise a special tact here, to remain aware of how much can be in the game. The best advice is not: Never give advice. Perhaps the gods have no need of it, but we do. It can be human and humane to give it. Only when the advice becomes prescription or when it sets limits to thought is the pedagogy pernicious.

The TOTE model (test-operate-test-exit) of the cognitive psychologists gives us an economical expression of another of the characteristics of know-how. In non-reflective behavior, know-how implies first of all an organism's ability to know that it has encountered an unsatisfactory state of affairs (the first T) and, after operation, that it has achieved a satisfactory one (the second T).

The two Ts suggest two very different kinds of tests, however (the tests themselves being operations). The first involves reaching a conclusion about the desirability of action, the second about the desirability of ceasing action. Assuming now that we are dealing with non-reflective writing, the first test will in many cases involve an act of imagining the state of affairs that would satisfy the second test. The writer says to himself, "What I need to say here is not this but something like..." and he tries a word or phrase. To begin to write, then, a person must recognize a problem which a particular writing will be likely to solve. To continue writing—composing, editing, revising—a person must see his product so far as unlikely to meet the criteria he has imagined perhaps only cloudily—for satisfactory performance. Some of these criteria may arise out of a conscious knowledge of cultural conventions and rules—grammatical, orthographical, others, however, can arise only out of the imagined, wished-for state of affairs in respect of which the first test revealed the writer's situation to be unsatisfactory. If a student's initial testing of his situation in fact reveals no state of
affairs that it would be desirable to change ("I don’t have to write; I’m going to be a computer programmer.") or if the student cannot imagine any state of affairs toward which it would be desirable to change ("My daddy got rich, and he can’t write!") or if writing doesn’t seem to be a very good way to get what he wants ("Why don’t I just call him?") and if he is nonetheless required to write, the model predicts what Burke calls motion, not action. The result will be a simple, though devious, getting-from-here-to-there, of which the average freshman theme might be a good example. A freshman-in-motion may learn to do what one wants, but he won’t learn to write.

The first testing operation may be faulty in failing to reveal a problem, or failing to reveal it in such a way that some helpful operation is suggested. The second testing operation may be faulty in suggesting that conditions for removal of the problem have been met, when they have not, or in suggesting that they have not when they have. In teaching know-how, one is teaching how to run certain kinds of tests. If we saw our teaching of spelling, say, in these terms, rather than in terms of “teaching correct usage,” I suspect we could quickly design a better pedagogy than is revealed in the listing of misspelled words at the back of the handbook.

Knowledge—that looks to the past. It implies assent to established principles, laws: to the deed, to Fact. It binds time, even in the proposition, say, that Constant Change, Here to Stay. Know-how, on the other hand, places the actual projection into an uncertain future. It is consummated by action. Because it projects the wishes of the actor upon the objective world and other people, know-how is never able to guarantee results. An automobile repairman is more know-how in respect of repairing automobiles than most of us; he may nevertheless fail in the attempt. Yet without the attempt, he cannot manifest his knowledge. He cannot simply display it. He must take action. Then. Writing is action at risk. For Hemingway this insight became an obsession.

SPEECH AND WRITING

As an action, writing falls within the domain of speech. Many of my students pick up somewhere the notion that writing is simply a transcription of oral speech, nothing more than a narrower way of talking. But that isn’t so. To help ascertain the qualitative differences between oral and written speech I would like to quote at length from an important and provocative work: L. V. Vygotsky’s Thought and Language. The “inner speech” Vygotsky alludes to here is, he argues, a product of the child’s differentiation at about school age of egocentric speech into inner speech and social speech. We will return to this notion later. Vygotsky writes:

Written speech is a separate linguistic function, differing from oral speech in both structure and mode of functioning. Even its minimal development requires a high level of abstraction. It is speech in thought and image only, lacking the musical, expressive, intonational qualities of oral speech. In learning to write, the child must disengage himself from the sensory aspect of speech and replace words by images of words.

Writing is also speech without an interlocutor, addressed to an absent or an imaginary person or to no one in particular— a situation new and strange to the child. Our studies show that he has little motivation to learn writing when we begin to teach it. He feels no need for it and has only a vague idea of its usefulness. In conversation, every sentence is prompted by a motive. Desire often leads to requests, question to answer, bewilderment to explanation. The changing motives of the interlocutors determine at every moment the turn oral speech will take. It does not have to be consciously directed— the dynamic situation will take care of that. The motives for writing are more abstract, more intellectualized, further removed from immediate needs. In written speech, we are obliged to create the situation, to represent it to ourselves. This demands detachment from the actual situation.

Writing also requires deliberate analytical action on the part of the child. In speaking, he is hardly conscious of the sounds he pronounces and quite unconscious of the mental operations he performs. In writing, he must take cognizance of the sound structure of each word, dissect it, and reproduce it in alphabetical symbols, which he must have studied and memorized before. In the same deliberate way, he must put words in a certain sequence to form a sentence. Written language demands conscious work because its relationship to inner speech is different from that of oral speech. The latter precedes inner speech in the course of development, while written speech follows inner speech and presupposes its existence (the act of writing implying a translation from inner speech). But the grammar of thought is not the same in the two cases. One might even say that the syntax of inner speech is the exact opposite of the syntax of written speech, with oral speech standing in the middle.

Inner speech is condensed, abbreviated speech. Written speech is deployed to its fullest extent, more complete than oral speech. Inner speech is almost entirely predicative because the situation, the subject of thought, is always known to the thinker. Written speech, on the contrary, must explain the situation fully in order to be intelligible. The change from maximally compact inner speech to maximally detailed written speech requires what might be called deliberate semantics— deliberate structuring of the web of meaning.

Vygotsky’s statement of the distinction between oral and written speech, which we may find echoed in many respects throughout the subsequent literature, makes some obvious points, and some not so obvious ones. The privation of audience entailed in writing is a commonplace; the need for special powers of abstraction to cope with this privation is not. Nor is the corollary — that writing must be speech “deployed to its fullest extent,” “plenitary speech,” as Monroe Beardsley puts it. That writing is necessarily deliberate in a way that oral speech is not is a commonplace; that the conscious work required is importantly a matter of supplying subjects for the predicates of inner speech is not. Vygotsky’s observations give us a way of talking about what writing is for that oral speech cannot be. Writing is not simply a mode of interchange from oral speech except for certain formal differences. Writing requires, and its accomplishment leads to, a special order of understanding and competence. Because it is deliberate and conscious, and because it requires abstraction, and because it entails doing without actual audience, written speech normally is more difficult than talking to someone, but we need to point out what success in this difficult venture makes possible: a new and meaningful freedom from immediate social context, a freedom to imagine, to project, and at the same time, to put something down that will, as Lord Buckley had it, stay there.

DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING

One may learn the names of capitals of states; one must develop the capacity to see those names as symbols and not the thing itself, or to see a map as an abstract representation of a stretch of territory. The distinction, usually associated with the work of Piaget on the development of intelligence chez l’enfant, has become familiar.

But let me recapitulate some of the relevant points. A child does not grow in the capacity for intelligent action in regular increments, along a spectrum. There are stages— concrete operations, simple realism, and so on. In the stage of simple
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realism, the child understands the names of things as intrinsic to the things, and feels that knowing the name gives power over the thing, magically. One may "teach" such a child that the name is symbolic, arbitrary, a sign of a designation of class or set, but the child will not yet grasp the notion of class or type until he enters the developmental stage that permits this understanding. Entry into that next stage is observed, not as "a brighter shade of blue," but as a sudden insight, a quantum leap in ability, a catastrophe, to use the term of René Thom. This new insight permits the child to re-order his previous understandings. That is to say, development implies new structural insights, new paradigms—not just new syntactic arrangements of information. Structural insights do not simply add to one's knowledge of a particular domain; they permit a complete re-ordering of that domain according to the principles of the newly perceived structure.

Each stage lays the foundation for the next one; it is not possible to skip one as one might skip a grade. It is clear that one can retard the process by depriving the child of certain kinds of experience—it is not yet clear whether one can hasten the process by setting children tasks designed to hasten it. One cannot force the process, any more than one can force the grass to grow.

What causes development? It seems impossible to account for it without positing inherent, genetically transmitted tendencies toward what finally and normally takes place: instincts for development, as it were. With those instincts, pedagogues can have little to do. Assuming their existence, however, has profound pedagogical consequences. In such a case, the controlling metaphor cannot be "imprinting the tabula rasa," or "filling the empty vessel." It must be something more like "removing obstacles" or perhaps "nurturing."

Removing obstacles is a negative action: teachers will also want to know if they may act in positive ways to assist developmental growth. Piaget does not have much directly to say about such positive action, only that development depends upon the child's having "social and inter-individual experience." "Social" here is to be taken in both its neutral and its value-laden sense, meaning both that a child should interact with other people, and that these interactions should be characterized by a recognition of cooperation (cohesion, identification, mutual acknowledgement) as the ultimate goal of interaction. This does not mean that anything goes, anymore than it does in "real" society. The search for sound bases for cooperation entails the development of standards of factual accuracy, logical reasoning, a shared sense of rights, duties and privileges—all those qualities that emerge out of and characterize "real" social interaction. Teachers who worry about their students losing a sense of the need for objectivity if they "open up" their classrooms to "social and inter-individual experience" have got it backwards. A sense of the need for objectivity is not born in us. It develops, as through social interaction we begin to appreciate the need for a shared sense of things and the difficulty of achieving that sense.

Behaviorist psychology, with its notion of behavior as a function solely of the history of reinforcement, might seem to hold promise of much more specific recommendations for positive action. Robert Zolnier has attempted to articulate the practical implications of behaviorist psychology for writing teachers. If we strip away the jargon and discard the theory, as Zolnier invites us to do, his behaviorist program becomes in most respects indistinguishable from the kind of thing that might emerge out of a developmental psychology. Detractors of theory should not take comfort in this fact, however, since despite this coincidence, there are, as we shall show later, important differences in what the two theories recommend for pedagogy, and, in any case, either theory presents a substantial challenge to conventional pedagogy, particularly in this postulation of the centrality of "social and inter-individual experience," an emphasis frequently to be found also among the speculations of the new rhetoricians.

Piaget also says (unhelpfully, it may seem) that we develop intelligence by behaving intelligently. Extrapolating to writing, we may conjecture that we develop the ability to write well by writing well. We have a kind of performative circle here. We do not go directly to intelligence, or to good writing, by innate perception of inherent values. We go by essaying action in a social context. The consequences of that action help us ascertain the context which we assumed in the first place in order to act. We recognize intelligent action from its consequences (and good writing from its opposite) by its consequences in a social (rhetorical) context. Until we have a sense of that context, we cannot act well within it. And yet we must ascertain the scene before we can know what would comprise intelligent action within it. So the question—What positive action should I take in the writing classroom—entails a larger one: What do I think human society is, does, should, do? Of this, more later.

The relation of instruction to development is no easy matter to unravel. Vygotsky saw what he called "instruction" as necessarily prior to certain kinds of conceptual development. Spontaneous development of everyday concepts will not, he felt, inevitably lead a student to an awareness of the class struggle, for instance. Though he will not truly understand it at first, the notion must be presented to a student so that he may grow into it. Here we see the influence of Vygotsky's ideological context in the Russia of the 1930's. The problem of developing ideology (or as we might put it in this country, of the transmission of cultural values) is foregrounded when we are concerned, as Vygotsky was, with the development of concepts. When our concern is with development of intelligence, as it is for Piaget and, in a different way for Burke, and as it ought to be, I think, in the writing class, we will focus not upon content but upon what we may see as generalizable potencies applicable regardless of the conceptual framework in which they are applied.

Learning to spell is acquiring a skill. Learning to write is developing a competence. We should be careful to maintain this distinction. One may learn a skill—how to drive a car—without developing in the kind of know-how that is intelligence (though learning that skill can perhaps contribute to development). When we call writing a skill, we obscure the fact that the abilities to evaluate writing performance—abilities to abstract from concrete situations, and to be one's own interlocutor, for example—are attained through development, and not through simple learning.

Teachers who treat writing as a skill may "teach" writing coherence as a matter of inserting appropriately the transitional words and phrases—the in Additions, the Thereforees, the Neverthelesses. Students can be taught to include these words in their essays; if that is all they learn, the result is not coherence. The result is, more often than not, the unnecessary or inappropriate use of these words and phrases, which simply are not needed unless the discourse is incoherent without them. This paragraph uses none of these conventional transitional words—except as examples—and it does, I think, cohere without them.

Learning to make transitions is first of all learning to understand certain kinds of relationships. Nor are all these kinds of relationships equal developmentally. The causal relation reflected in the word because appears earlier in the child's thinking than the adversative relation reflected in although. An awareness of the higher developmental status of certain relations should not make us reflect on the transition words; we must find a way to promote an understanding of the kinds of relations that sometimes make it useful to use such words.

A teacher who teaches primarily by lecture and readings probably assumes that his students have highly developed...
capacities for symbolic manipulation, a strong (in Bruner's terms) "analytic competence." He may think he ought to be able to assume such a competence in a college student. Clearly we cannot do so today with many of them. If a teacher argues that such students ought not to be in college, well, that's one kind of teacher.

Piaget has worked primarily with children 12 years old and under. As a result, he has dealt not at all with the development of writing abilities. Vygotsky suggests that such development is impossible before adolescence. Before adolescence what one notices most about verbal tasks is, Piaget says, that they interfere with the development of intelligence. James Britton's (et al.) research has extended our purview. In The Development of Writing Abilities (11-18) Britton shows that there is, not surprisingly, every indication of developmental change in that period. It would seem absurd to assume that development ceases at graduation from high school. Too many teachers act as if they think it does stop there. If they know not phylogeny, one might expect them at least to retain a better sense of their own ontogeny, though I guess none of us does that very well.

The notion that it is the business of writing teachers to teach writing and not to "do therapy" has also done some harm, I think. Doing that which would enhance development (or at least not retard it) is in some respects a lot more like therapy than it is like instruction. It involves as I shall argue later, setting tasks, providing for certain kinds of experience. It does not involve "providing knowledge" nearly so much as providing the opportunity for a kind of action that we may well call play. It involves work, of course, but work in the context of play.

In development, and not in learning per se, lies educational progress. The proposition is embodied in the logic of the language: An important new theory or work of art is a development, which we wish to distinguish from the normal run of things that, if they are sound, amount only to contributions. A development gives us a new, more inclusive, more fertile structure within which to manage experience; to the extent that it does so, it frees us from the past, and we may claim progress.

PEDAGOGUES OF STRAW

With the notions of writing as a special kind of speech, and of the need to develop writing abilities (not just learn them), we may begin to examine what I refer to darkly as the conventional pedagogues. Since our actions as teachers entail assumptions about what writing is and how an ability to write is accomplished, it is of first importance that we attempt to elicit these assumptions to see whether they have a tendency to create rather than to remove obstacles to development or to withhold nurture where they purport to provide it. Though my descriptions will reflect my sense of actual practice in some quarters, they are of course presented to create straw men for this argument. If any proponents of these pedagogues feel that their actual practice is more complex than I portray it here, and that this practice obviates the criticism I advance, so much the better for pedagogy.

READERS, RHETORICS, AND HANDBOOKS

We may infer the first conventional pedagogy from, among other things, the book market. Readers, containing essays and/or literature, thematically or rhetorically organized, new and revised, continue to pour out. The pedagogical operation implied is that the students shall read some of this material, then discuss it, probably in terms of what the author says or how he says it, then write a paper about it. The papers are then graded, with comments, and returned, and the process is repeated with respect to a new reading.

We have many excellent discussions of the pedagogical failings of the readers, the rhetorics, and the handbooks, none of which has had much effect. The fate of these excellent discussions supports Richard Ohmann's argument that our problems in composition are most important political, not conceptual. I add this discussion to the heap, not because I expect it to have any great effect on pedagogical practice, but because I want to add a little something different to the general inefficacy. My little thing arises primarily out of a consideration of the developmental implications of "the books."

Some of us look, and the publishers try to help us look, for "anything that turns them on." That metaphor has done us some harm. It suggests that we look for switches, for erogenous zones in the mind. It prevents us from looking at the questions of whether to use readings at all in the writing class, and if so, how.

Using readers - thematic, rhetorical, or literary - obviously assumes that there is an important connection between the ability to read and an ability to write. True, but it is important to get right the logic of that relation. If a person can't read (or read well), he can't write. But it does not therefore follow that if he can read, he can write. Vygotsky implies as much when he writes: "The greatest difficulty of all is the application of a concept, finally grasped and formulated on the abstract level, to new concrete situations that must be viewed in these abstract terms - a kind of transfer usually mastered only at the end of the adolescent period. The transition from the abstract to the concrete proves just as arduous for the youth as the earlier transition from the concrete to the abstract." A student who is a good reader (i.e., a reader for concepts) is only half a good writer. If the use of readings in a writing class proceeds on the assumption that learning to read carefully entails learning to write well, the progress that students make as writers can only be considered accidental.

READING READERS THE WRONG WAY: MODELS?

Whatever their subjects, the form of the readings in the anthologies tends to suggest an especially unintelligent use of their contents, for one whose purpose is to teach writing. The pages of these books are not just shiny; they are opaque. The words on the pages are oracular; they were produced by experts living in tall buildings in New York City. As a reader one is invited to respond, not as one might, but with a simple objective acceptance.

The Established quality of such readings can be appealing. Charles Lamb pretended to be horrorified after seeing the manuscript of Milton's "Lycidas."

How it staggered me to see the fine things in their ore! interlined, corrected! as if their words were mortal, alterable, displacable at pleasure! as if they might have been otherwise, and just as good! as if inspiration were made up of parts, and these fluctuating, successive, indifferent! I will never go into the workshop of any great artist again.

For a writer, the appeal of the shiny surface is pernicious. We could call it an appeal to sugger-ego functions. Freud saw the achievement of moral maturity as a matter of the progressive supplantation of uncontrollable super-ego functions with consciously controlled ego functions. We may see the achievement of writerly maturity in something like these terms. Any writer who sees in any particular dialect, or in any particular writer's work, the idea of the Good, has not yet achieved maturity. It seems clear that to achieve maturity, one must visit the writer's workshop, view the mess there, and accept, not just the "perfection" of the final product, but the mess of its making. Using the shiny readers on the terms they invite cannot assist the development. There is Harold Bloom's interesting argument that the history of literature is a history of writers intentionally misrepresenting the writing of their predecessors so as to clear imaginative space for them-
selves. If any writer sets out intentionally to imitate writing that he takes as a model, he will imitate what is imitable: the dictum, not the thought; the surface transformations, not the deep structure. A sounder procedure in terms of clearing imaginative space would be to write, not imitation; but parody, to represent this as nothing like the original model, but rather as instances of human and rhetorical limitation; not as a Final Word, but as an option. If we are concerned to help students perceive the greatness of the writing, we may, I think, leave that to the writing. Students who play with a great work for a long time, and discover that it still gives and gives, as a great work will, have been brought to appreciate greatness in a way no exhortation, no museum tour of cultural monuments, could do. And it may be that before that greatness can become apparent, the reader will have to reject the work, or at least doubt its value, oedipally, as it were.

One way of legitimizing readings in the writing class is to change the focus of discussion from fidelity to what the author says and/or an accurate understanding of how he says it to the actual responses of the students and what accounts for those responses. Contemplating such a change of focus may make some teachers exceedingly nervous. If you de-emphasize the teacher's (or critic's) position as authoritative interpreter, will you not see reasoned discourse replaced by the barbaric yawp, objective judgment by solipsism, order by chaos?

We must begin with the proposition that if the chaos is there in the actual responses of the students, then it is there. So the question is: Do we ignore it and suppress it, or do we elicit it and try to work with it? The former course seems to me ethically and pedagogically indefensible. Nor do I fear (nor have my classes given me any reason to fear) that the result of taking student response as our matter will be madness and dissolution. Indeed, my classes (and, I think, history) give me more reason to fear the chaos of habit, the habit of obedience. How to work well with the chaos is the question we must deal with later. For now it is important to remember that the approach I propose here does not focus only on response; it focuses on response and the reasons for response, or perhaps it is better to say, responses in a rhetorical context. The right everyone has to his own opinion must not be held to entail the proposition that all opinions are equally sensible, or that there is no such thing as error. Students will sometimes imply that it does. They do so, I think, not because they are post-Japarian but because they have not yet had the kind of social experience that would permit them to see themselves as social creatures, and to understand that the obligation to make sense is a social, not just a personal, obligation. Furthermore, if, as we have said, a writer must find ways to perform for himself as his own interlocutor, an experience of the actualities of response to writing and of the efforts to achieve a sharable basis of understanding a writing would seem to be especially valuable in assisting development of this sense of audience.

Do readings at least give the students something to write about? Perhaps, but we must be clear concerning what it is "to have something to write about."

People write because they want or feel the need to do so. That means not only that there is a particular audience they want to reach by means of writing, but they find writing (as opposed to painting, oral speech, etc.) a particularly appropriate or economic way of accomplishing their ends. The reader who is positioned as a teacher, a friend, an examiner, a colleague, a universal reasonableness, oneself. But a writer has something to write about only when writing seems to be a particularly suitable way of reaching the desired readership.

From a reader's point of view, a writer shows that he has "something to write about" when the writing proves to be something the reader wants to read. There is no sure thing. A reader may find it a trial to read a discussion of his favorite book, a joy to read an encomium on the writer's Scottish Terrier, recently run over by a Buick, all previous indications to the contrary notwithstanding. This is a difficult point to get across to students. Having something to write about depends, from the reader's point of view, on the mystery of the text in this analysis, and nothing in common sense, to suggest that readings on the Urban Crisis or the Sexual Revolution will have a special tendency to give students something to write about. Subjects are not what give the students something to write about; wants and needs are. Purposes are.

Purposes form, not with respect to a particular subject alone, but with respect to a subject as a part of a rhetorical scene. The quest for "relevant" readings is misguided unless it is part also of a search for rhetorical situations that permit rational writerly response.

Finally, the shiny books present ideological questions which we should not ignore, even when the ideology, by omission, supports the status quo. Paulo Freire would say that we cannot escape indoctrination when we use such materials. For this reason, when he was teaching the illiterate peasants of northern Brazil to read, he eschewed all readings not produced by those students. Some of Freire's followers, feeling that certain crucial concepts like "exploitation"—some one else might say "free enterprise"—could not be trusted to develop in the absence of what Vygotsky would call "instruction," used readings which they saw as having a tendency to bring that concept to understanding. 17

Readings do have ideological implications; these implications are carried even in the form in which the readings are presented (shiny books to be understood not to be tampered with). We may ignore these implications, but they will not go away, and they will not be without effect. This much, at least, should be acknowledged.

CONCEPTS WITH RHETORICAL POWER

If it is clear, as I think it is, that learning to read assists the process of concept development we have yet to answer the question of what concepts ought to be developed. It seems clear that concepts developed out of the Urban Crisis or the Environmental Crisis or the Sexual Revolution will not help our students in their writerly development to anything like the extent of the concepts embodied in, say, Maxim Three of Rhetoric: Discovery and Change—"A unit, at any level of focus, can be adequately understood only if three aspects of the unit are known (1) its contrastive features, (2) its range of variation, and (3) its distribution in larger contexts." Or the concepts embodied in Ross Wintercomb's discussion in The Contemporary Writer of generating subject matter. Or the concepts embodied in J. L Kinneavy's classification of discourse according to aim in his prodigious A Theory of Discourse. 18

Of course one may embed texts dealing with the Sexual Revolution in conceptual contexts which have, as I would put it, rhetorical power. Thus such texts can become, as they should in a writing class, not specimens of Truth but examples of rhetorical work (or play).

But we must beware a great danger here, one I have adverted to already. We must not assume that a simple learning of rhetorical concepts (or linguistic concepts or concepts of developmental psychology) will entail the development of rhetorical (or linguistic or general intellectual) mastery. We develop intelligence by behaving intelligently, not by learning Piaget's or anyone else's scheme of the developmental stages or of the characteristics of a mature intelligence. Perhaps if we do not behave intelligently, we will not be able to "learn" the scheme in a finally meaningful way. But we will not become intelligent by attempting to learn it in any but an intelligent way. There is nothing in a student's memorization of our rhetorical advice about audience to help him or her perform according to it as a writer. Memorization results
most often in what Vygotsky calls a pseudo-concept, and only true concepts — concepts, furthermore, with rhetorical power — will help someone write. What develops these is not rote memorization of grammatical and rhetorical rules, nor the "apprehension" of some essayist's idea, but purposeful and consequential rhetorical action in a rhetorically meaningful scene.

The student who has learned (from teacher or handbook) to insert his transitional words and phrases but has not learned when they are not needed is in the position of the student who has achieved a pseudo-concept. He has not yet quite grasped the notion of coherence; he is still tied to the concrete words which, he has been told, achieve coherence.

When the teacher who earlier told him to consider using such words now tells him to leave them out whenever possible, the student will have been issued an invitation to arrive at a true understanding of the matter, though he may see it only as a reflection of pedagogical incompetence.

In a time of re-awakening interest in theory, and this is such a time, there is a special danger that the theory will preempt the world of feeling and writing, of chaos and creation, out of which it has emerged. Any promising theory can quickly become, not a conception with the real possibility of ordering heretofore inchoate experience, but a totem, a ritual, a self-justifying performance that seeks truth, not outside self, but in itself. The practical people who suspect all theory of ritualism, and who reject anything that even smells like it, err; action implies theory, as I have argued elsewhere.21 Theory can become a code, however, taking shape like the beliefs of the child who sees the word and the thing as indistinguishable. Theory has a tendency to create lotus-lands, where a sometime adventurous crew lies along the grassy banks, smiling at the clanging fights, the sinking ships, the praying hands. Put any theory in a classroom and, unless the students have already become the docile servants of the reigning Order, or the teacher is the reigning Order, the theorist will have to stop watching and start participating. An honest pedagogical setting will help keep the theory honest. The better the theory, the greater the need for such honesty.

I am talking here about the good theory, of the kind exemplified by Young, Winterrowd, Kinneavy, and not about the conventional rhetoric-handbook theory. Ohmann characterizes the dogma of such theory as follows:

> There are forms of discourse — exposition, argument, narration, description, and sometimes others. Each has its methods of development — time, space, definition, reasoning, illustration, comparison, analysis, use of detail, and so on. Moreover, the writer must calculate his style, figurative language, and diction to suit his purpose. And he must see that his sentences are clear, that his paragraphs are coherent, that his entire theme is structured and unified. It is as if the student begins with a subject, assembles a quantity of stuff or a random array of particles — the content of his paper — then arranges what he has by using the prescribed methods, each where appropriate, and finally selects the right language to express his thoughts. But do not know much about how thought works, but surely it is not the sort of thing that can be put through paces in this manner, jumped over hurdles, poured into molds, or whatever the right metaphor is. And can a student ever do a piece of "decent writing" (or for that matter, finish any piece of writing at all) by segmenting the process consciously into word choice, sentence analysis, etc., or by running through rhetorical contingencies as a computer runs the items in its memory one at a time? The authors of the rhetoric cannot believe this, yet such a view is what their schemes imply.22

Leaving aside the deceptive claims these rhetorics make to be useful in "training the mind," we may discern their true, and by no means trivial, purpose. They are concerned, not with written development, but with verbal hygiene. There is no crime in that. The crime is to represent such concerns as the only ones, or the primary ones, for a writer. I cannot tell whether the crime rate is up or down, but I fear that an unintelligent response to the demand that we go back to the basics may cause it to rise.

**GRADES AND COMMENTS**

We turn now from the readings to the second half of the conventional pedagogy: the written comments and the grades. Since the comments are so often seen by students as serving only to justify the grades, and since one hears it said of students that "They don't care about the comments, just the grades," let us begin at the end.

I can only think that grades have almost no redeeming pedagogical value, though I think our sense of the harm they necessarily do is sometimes exaggerated. I suppose the positive pedagogical value most often claimed for bad grades is their potential as attention-getting devices. One sees the students as like the buzzers who would do anything you told him to, after you get his attention by hitting him between the eyes with a two-by-four. You can sometimes get a student's attention with a rotten grade, but if that is the way you do it, the attention you get is often of the dazed "Just-tell-me-what-you-want" kind. This kind of motivation is extrinsic. It may produce obedience, but it is not likely to produce development.

If a student wants us to talk to him with such language, we usually should. Though some students, particularly the "good" ones, will use grades to stop thought, other students will be so worried they can't think unless they know "where they stand." We should honor such a student's request for grades, at least to the extent that they serve the purpose of permitting thought.

When they are good, grades are often characterized as reinforcement, i.e., as extrinsic motivators. Give the good grade and expect to see the behavior repeated. Different systems say somewhat different things — A, B, C, D, F — would say something different from A, B, C, D, F — but words like Excellent, Good, Needs More Work, when applied in a standardized way say, and do, the same kind of thing that the letters do. They sum up and judge. That is something that people frequently, necessarily, do. It is not an inhuman activity, in spite of the fact that people often judge prematurely, and, in pathological states, judge so incessantly that they cannot do (feel, express, risk) anything. Grades given (or taken) in the wrong spirit, i.e., punifically, can produce that pathology. So can the advice to Avoid Errors. Developing writers, who must take risks and accept error, must find some way of putting the little critic in their heads in his place. If they write "only for the grade" (to "give the teacher what she wants") they have not succeeded in doing so. The question, then, is not what grading system do we need, but how do we make it possible for our students to get beyond the extrinsic motivators to the intrinsic ones. Bruner, following Robert White and Vygotsky, suggests that an extremely important development for a learner is the advent of what he calls competence motivation.

The brilliant Russian psychologist Vygotsky characterizes the growth of thought processes as starting with a dialogue of speech and gesture between child and parent; autonomous thinking begins at the stage when the child is first able to internalize these conversations and run them off himself. This is a typical sequence in the development of competence. So, too, in instruction. The narrative of teaching is of the order of the conversation. The next move in the development of competence is the internalization of the narrative and its rules of generation so that the child is now capable of
running off the narrative on his own. The hypothetical mode in teaching by encouraging the child to participate in speaker’s decisions speeds this process along. Once internalization has occurred, the child is in a vastly improved position from several obvious points of view—notably that he is able to go beyond the information he has been given to generate additional ideas that can either be checked immediately from experience or can, at least, be used as a basis for formulating reasonable hypotheses. But over and beyond that, the child is now in a position to experience success and failure not as reward and punishment, but as information. For when the task is his own rather than a matter of matching environmental demands, he becomes his own paymaster in a certain measure. Seeking to gain control over his environment, he can now treat success as indicating that he is on the right track, failure as indicating he is on the wrong one.¹¹

The student who wants to write, not just for food pellet or the gold star, but for the sake of writing well is well on the way to maturity. He must be able to see, however, that writing does give competence, and that he is capable of achieving that competence. In this statement there is, of course, an extremely powerful motive (in Burke’s sense) for change in the educational climate, though there is not, necessarily, a motive for the abolition of grades. Evaluation is looking backward, writing a looking forward. When the writing is going well, the two operations complement each other.

As evaluative statements; grades are, it is true, crude. And yet there is inevitably something, if not crude, then awfully simple about evaluation. A 100 point scale might appear to be less crude than a letter scale. But both are quantification: both permit rank ordering, averaging, and the rest of it—a final statement that this is better than that. John Ciardi once did a television interview that showed him, then poetry editor for the Saturday Review, doing his job. It showed him, that is to say, taking sheets from a stack in the In tray, reading the first one or two lines, then putting the sheet in either the Out or the Hold tray. The ratio of Out to Hold was, as I recall, about 50 to 1. The time per sheet was a few seconds. The viewing audience, Ciardi reports, was appalled. But, he explains, the final line reads “I Sing of Nature’s Beauty” and Nature’s Beauty need not go on. The odds against such a line being rescued by irony or anything else are too great.

The harsh realities can be paralyzing. Developing writers may need to be spared them. There is no point at all in beating the unambitious over the head with such visions. A writer with poetic aspiration, however, probably ought to know what he or she is up against; this is part of the rhetorical facts of the matter.

Of course, we must give grades at the end of the course if we want to keep our jobs, and we probably ought to give grades somewhere in the middle, simply to keep students from excessive mortification at the end. If we can validly rationalize grades, however, I think we need not fear their pernicious effects on developing writers as much as we may do. That is, if we can present these “final evaluations” not as faultless indicators of absolute performance (Oh, God! Am I just a “C” writer?) but as interruptions of the learning continuum for the purpose of taking stock, we can, to some extent at least, defuse them. If we can also broaden the base of evaluation by finding ways to involve students in the process, we can perhaps reveal evaluation for what it is: an important personal and social act that helps us plan for the future.

We tend to think of “the comments” having a much wider rhetorical scope than the grades. Insofar as they comment only upon mispellings, deviation from the conventions of standard English, and other matters involving lack of “correctness” they do not; they are simply measuring the writing against the conventions of correctness. The middle is excluded. Even questions of organization can be represented in these terms: Does it have an introduction, body, conclusion? The abbreviations intended to send students to the handbook (Frag, PV, etc.) imply the same thing: the right answer is in the book. The question is simply: Is it correct, or isn’t it? Insofar as the comments deal only with this question, they represent good writing to be a matter of nothing more than correctness.

Such observations are commonplace. And of course the comments can do more than this. They can exhort, cajole, promise, threaten, affirm, question—anything, in fact, that can be done in written speech. To the question, What should they do, we may answer, somewhat unhelpfully, that they should do whatever is called for in the rhetorical scene within which the student’s writing is presented as an act of written speech. Perhaps there are more specific clues for us in what we know about how a student learns to write.

Teachers will sometimes say to their students, “I want to see you taking account of the comments in subsequent papers; your showing in this respect will count importantly in the determination of your final grade.” This pains both teachers and students into a corner. The student who dutifully takes account of the comments and who improves insignificantly thereby has the good grade coming. Bad taste in the mouth.

The post hoc statement of how a writing would have come out better presumes that the commentator has apprehended completely the purpose of the writer, not only as the paper reflects it, but as another paper might have reflected it had the writer been able to perform differently. That is a large order. A writer’s response to larger options might result, not in a revision, but in a complete re-do, a new concept. It would seem much better, instead of telling the writer how he should have done it, to try to expand his sense of how such a thing might have been done. Comments will of course advise correction (if correctness is important), but they should also involve a presentation of options. Of course, if the paper is “finished,” graded without possibility of a re-do, students are likely to see this presentation of options as empty. A presentation of options needs to be followed by an invitation to try out whichever of them looks likely, or whatever else looks that way.

The hope that the comments might be given more effectiveness by shortening the interval between writing and written response is, I think, largely misguided. It is no doubt true that too long an interval between submission and response can create a circumstance where one’s work appears to have been written by somebody else. But we are now talking, I think, about months and years, and not about weeks and days. In my freshman composition course at Amherst College the interval was shortened about as much as can be. We wrote a paper for each class, and each paper was returned the following class, almost always. But the interval still wasn’t short enough, or rather it had become almost too short. The reduced interval did not render the audience any less remote; it simply made him more intrusive.

I trust there is no one of us who imagines that it would be desirable to have a teacher peering over the writer’s shoulder scrutinizing and criticizing each word, each sentence and paragraph. There is a part-whole relation in writing that makes such an arrangement worse than useless except in dealing with, once again, such matters as the correctness of the utterance. A writer’s intention is manifested, even to himself, only through the words actually uttered. Writing is not like, say, pitching a baseball, where a batter can benefit from analysis and criticism of each act of pitching. Since in pitching, each delivery to the plate is nearly a complete act, one can expect to improve one’s performance on the basis of immediate analysis and criticism. In writing, the complete act is the whole text. Immediate critical response to each
word would be as unwieldy as immediate critical response to each distinguishable movement by the pitcher.

Furthermore, writing is, as Vygotsky argued, deliberately abstract. The pitcher knows in advance who he’s pitching to and what he wants to throw him. Not only does a writer usually find out what he wants to say as he says it but, as Walter Ong has demonstrated, the writer also makes up her audience. That is to say, the writer creates, to some extent, both his subject and his audience. There is much that he cannot know about this presentation until it is complete. In such circumstances the most useful and most immediate response is that which he provides himself.

As teachers, we must search then, not for ways to shorten the interval between the student’s submission of his paper and our return of it, with comments (in behavioristic terms, this would be the student’s behavior and our reinforcement of whatever portion of the behavior we wished to “teach”), but for ways to advance the process of rhetorical abstraction, to permit and promote the internalization of well-developed representations of himself, his context, his language and his audience.

A good source of means by which we as audiences may provide direct, if not immediate, feedback (there, I said it) to writers is Peter Elbow’s Writing Without Teachers. Elbow’s book proceeds on the assumption that writers do need feedback from audiences, and that the feedback needs to be based on response as much as on critical assessment. The audience is teacher-less: Elbow does here not address the problems that may arise by virtue of the special intellectual and cultural limitations of freshmen (any more than does Freire’s work concern itself with such problems in the teaching of illiterate Brazilian peasants). Perhaps such problems are, if not illusory, then far less significant than the benefits of the arrangement, and less worrisome than the problems created by the conventional teacherly scene.

SATURATION WRITING

There is another pedagogy that embodies the implications of Elbow’s title in a much more thoroughgoing way: the pedagogy of saturation writing. Here the response model is dropped in favor of a model of what we might call pure production. The assumption is that students do not need grades or comments: they need only to write, in great quantity, and continuously. If one has 75 writing students and each of them is writing, say, five pages a day, obviously one cannot read and respond to all, or even a significant portion of the writing produced. But the notion here is that one need not respond. One may trust to the intrinsic developmental processes to take care of things.

Except for the fact that these are programs that require saturation, we have here (when such a theory is taken to its logical extreme) a de-schooling pedagogy for writing. We may set against it the following conclusions of J. S. Bruner.

(S)ome environments push cognitive growth better, earlier, and longer than others. What does not seem to happen is that different cultures produce completely divergent and unrelated modes of thought. The reason for this must be the constraint of our biological heritage. That heritage makes it possible for man to reach a form of intellectual maturity that is capable of elaborating a highly technical society. Less demanding societies — less demanding intellectually — do not produce so much symbolic building and elaboration of first ways of looking and thinking. Whether one wishes to judge these differences on some universal human scale as favoring an intellectually more evolved man is a matter of one’s values. But however one judges, let it be clear that a decision not to aid the intellectual maturation of those who live in less technically developed societies can not be premised on the careless claim that it makes little difference; it makes a huge difference to the intellectual life of a child simply that he was in school. 16

Unless we can assume that the writer will get this needed “schooling” from some source other than his teacher (Would properly drafted assignments do? Conversation” with a computer? Are there hierarchical tendencies in the language itself?), it seems most unlikely that required saturation in writing will produce anything more than what Elbow and Macrorie anticipate from their automatic writing exercises: a freeing-up of developmental potential that may have become frozen by the wintry blasts of teachers-and-parents—sim-superego.

PROGRAMMED TEXTS: THE WIDE WAY OR THE FATAL TEMPTATION

The pedagogy of the programmed text raises very different problems. The programmed text requires that the process of learning to write be broken down into separate, or separable functions, that the desired end-product be clearly specified in advance, and that the steps toward mastery of that function be presented linearly, preserving of course the option that a student might return to an earlier stage if he or she felt that mastery of that stage had not been achieved. Too often, the necessary compartmentalization of the writing process has been achieved, not according to verified, or even plausible, hypotheses as to the actual differentiation of function that is entailed in learning to write, but according to the conventional wisdom, or even personal preference, as to what are the “basics” of writing. If such texts are clear, they are also false. Moffett expresses his concern about this kind of format as follows:

First of all, when it is the stipulation of the text or the teacher and not the natural limit of an utterance, a sentence or a paragraph is too small a focus for learning. How can you teach style, rhetoric, logic, and organization in a unit stripped of those authentic relationships to subject and audience that govern the decisions about word choice, sentence structure, paragraph structure, and total continuity? Judgment and decision-making are the heart of composition. With exercises the learner has no basis for choosing one word or sentence structure over another, and rhetoric becomes an irony once again. It is a crime to make students think that words, sentences, paragraphs are “building blocks” like bricks that have independent existence and can be learned and manipulated separately pending the occasion when something is to be constructed out of them.

And when students make up a sentence or paragraph demonstrating such and such kind of structure, they are not learning what the teacher thinks they are: they are learning that there is such a thing as writing sentences and paragraphs for their own sake, that discourse need not be motivated or directed at anyone, that it is good to write even if you have nothing to say and no one to say it to just so long as what you put down illustrates a linguistic codification. Thus in an a-rhetorical learning situation, he learns to discourse a-rhetorically. 18

It is next to impossible in any pre-packaged program to present the multi-dimensional self-defining hierarchy of purpose and value that is the essence of any full-fledged act of writing. Bruner observes:

What is most extraordinary of all (about language) is that it commands as it refers, describes as it makes poetry, adjudicates as it expresses, creates beauty as it gets things clear, serves all other needs as it maintains contact. 17
It is not easy to convey this "extraordinariness" in a programmed text. It is not easy to convey it in a non-programmed text, for that matter, or a class with no text at all.

At their worst, programmed texts simply ignore these problems. But they can be very much better than their worst. Computers present some intriguing possibilities especially, it would seem, in heuristic training, as I recently learned from Ms. Ellen Nold of the Learning Assistance Center at Stanford. Nevertheless, the temptations toward oversimplification and deformation of the temporal and spatial scene of real rhetorical action are very great when programmed formats are used. That students like the results is not necessarily a recommendation of the method. They may like the results only because they have been helped to meet the standard irrational demands of their teachers. In such a case we ought not simply to cool the students for their encounter with academic madness. We ought also to try to real-ize the academy, make it sane, a task in which rhetorically sane students could help us.

DEPARTING THE BURNING HOUSE

The Buddha was asked to describe this heaven that everyone was supposed to strive to attain. When the questioners left, he told his remaining disciples the parable of the people in the burning house who wouldn't leave it until they knew what was outside.

The promise of a grammar of pedagogy is not a promise of a blueprint for the millenium, any more than a transactional grammar of the sentence is a promise to produce the infinite number of sentences that might be produced from the rules discovered. Nevertheless, I will now try to say something about what lies "outside" the conventional pedagogies that have just been found wanting.

First, a summary of some of the major points about the nature of writing, and how one "learns" to write. Writing is not thought, thought is not writing, though each informs the other. Like thought, writing is not simply learned, nor does it just happen; it develops and is developed by intelligent writerly action. This action is more than "practice of the basics" unless by basics we mean those special capacities for rhetorical abstraction that distinguish writing from other speech. Writing competence is not equivalent to and not developed by learning to expound any explanatory theory. For writerly action to be intelligent, in the sense of the word intended above, it must be understood by the writer to take place in a rhetorical context. The development of writerly intelligence entails the internalization (development, deep understanding) of a large number of abstract structures, among which are such consciously learned conventions as the spelling system, but the most important of which is the rhetorical structure in which the speaker is differentiated from the audience, in which speaker and audience are seen as both subject to a language code and in control of it, and in which all of the above are held to inhabit a world and to account to a better self.

This is what I would wish to say generally about the theater of the writing class. The catalogue is not, of course, exhaustive of what is significant in any specific pedagogical situation, but these particular factors are, I think, especially worth taking note of, both because they often go unrecognized and because they are highly generalizable to the teaching of writing at many levels and for many purposes.

As a characterization of *Jane*, this summary carries with it a number of *oughts* for pedagogy to which I will not try to give more concrete embodiment.

The fact that there is a reciprocal relation between any kind of speech and thought makes nonsense, as more and more teachers recognize, of the advice to Plan What You Want to Say Before You Write, Then Put It Into Words — what Zoellner called the pedagogy of think/write. A more sensible statement is: As You Write Let The Words Tell You What You Want to Say.

The fact that intellectual development of any kind, including the development of writing competence, seems to take place most readily in a setting where one must perform social tasks, engaging in efforts to share perception and understanding with other people, makes understandable any pedagogical scene or act that strives to eliminate either the task or the society. It argues for efforts to expand the student's editorial audience beyond himself and the composition teacher. It argues further for an expansion of our notion of the legitimacy of non-conceptual non-evaluative response in the classroom, in the sort of way recommended in Peter Elbow's *Writing Without Teachers*.

The fact that development, in contrast to learning, involves function in steps toward a quantum jump in competence and understanding, makes suspect any program that proceeds linearly, without redundancy, without acceptance of what used to be called learning plateaus. It suggests programs designed not, as it might be, in successive sections but in units, each unit entailing the performance of full-fledged rhetorical tasks positing one level of development and — and this is of special importance — carrying invitations to and the possibility of function at higher levels of development. Our program here is scantly knowledge of what these levels are and how they relate to each other developmentally. Kenny's *The Theory of Discourse* represents the kind of inquiry that could help us in the first matter. Moffett's *Teaching the Universe of Discourse* and Britton's *The Development of Writing Abilities* (11-18) offer help with respect to the second.

What we know about what tends to retard development also needs notice. Without society ("social and individual interaction" — Piaget; "concurrent dialogue by agents of the culture" — Bruner), development is retarded, but even with society, development tends not to happen when necessity has one by the throat. Children forced to solve problems according to the dictates of a higher intellectual function than they have at that time attained will often find ways of producing the right answer without developing the higher function, with the result that they tend to become fixed at the lower level. A setting which represents errors as consequences to be avoided at any cost will preclude the possibility of errors being regarded as information that can contribute to the continuing search for competence.

Bruner reports the problem with the early overachievers in elementary school who are shown to be inferior in analytic competence to those students performing at normal levels. Most writing teachers are familiar with the "good" high school writers who do not budge from a low attainment while their "poor" cohorts are suddenly going places. The phenomenon suggests that these "good" students have not only been misled, but that they have somehow been made to purchase their As in high school at the expense of the future. The concept of good writing that they have developed (though it is probably not so much a concept as a defense against one) is not a platform for liberated action, but a cage. We may anticipate such a result whenever a student is forced to adopt a pseudo-concept of what ultimately constitutes good writing (no spelling or grammar errors, clear transitions, introduction-body-conclusion) in place of a true concept.

A child, or adolescent, who shows that he or she is functioning with pseudo-concepts should not, then, be told that he must get the answer at all costs, or where to find the answer. He should instead be shown that his present action has produced certain contradictions, or inconsistencies, or untoward rhetorical consequences. The he should be given another task that permits solution of a similar problem by the intuition (invention) of the true concept. Perhaps the teacher will offer hints, but these should be hints that indicate, not what the right answer is, but how it might be sought. This is something like "challenging" the students, but it is not like
challenging them to a duel in which they have a pea-shooter and the teacher has a tank, nor is it like challenging them to swim or sink. It is challenging them to become what they can become, to become increasingly competent participants in a social reality.

Jerome Bruner has reported a serious kind of learning disability which would seem to be the consequence of what he calls a "pre-emptive metaphor." One child found it impossible to project a straight line through several points, not because the points didn't permit it, but because he had come to need to project himself against the appearance of something sharp. At a less pathological level, we have probably all experienced what Bruner calls functional fixation—an inability to see that the hammer might be tied to the rope to make a pendulum that could drive the distant nail, or an inability to understand a line of poetry—"and to his delight discover"—because one does not see that discover in this case is functioning intrinsically. We tend to say that habit fixes us. It may be also true (or more true) that an emotional trauma has fixed us. In any case, performance according to our highest attained function, and development beyond, seems most likely to take place where the tasks to be performed are not so "serious" as to be matters of ultimate consequence, where failure brings on something greatly feared, like death (where one isn't Socrates, but Crito) or perhaps social rejection. The suggestion that school ought to be as free as possible where failure does not entail dire consequences (not no consequences, just not dire ones) is based on an important developmental insight. It is some such insight, I think, that prompts a popular and respected teacher-friend of mine to open his large introductory lectures with the flat assertion that none of us (them) exists, and therefore none of what they are about to do matters, and therefore let's get on with it.

If I were, foolishly, to sum up in a word what kind of activity ought to prevail in a writing classroom I would use the word play. I do not mean the word in its degraded sense: simple amusement or diversion. I mean play in the extremely powerful sense that Johann Huizinga recovers for us in his book Homo Ludens. Huizinga presents play, not just as something that helps us cope, but as the warp and woof of the higher cultural functions. In this strong sense of the word, play becomes more basic than non-play.

Erik Erikson approaches the powerful sense of the word when he proposes the theory that the child's play is the infantile form of the human ability to deal with experience by creating mental situations and to master reality by experiment and planning. It is in certain phases of his work that the adult projects past experience into dimensions that seem manageable. In the laboratory, on the stage, and on the drawing board, he relives the past and thus relieves leftover affects; in reconstructing the model situation, he re-creates his failures and strengthens his hopes. He anticipates the future from the point of view of a corrected and shared past.

No thinker can do more and no playing child less. As William Blake puts it: "The child's toys and the old man's reasons are the fruits of the two seasons." As Erikson sees it, the child's play exists in the context of transcending, temporarily, the limitations of the "real world." It is, as Freud put it, regression in the service of the ego. Mastery in play involves not just mastery of the toys but of the traumas associated with them. The ball-game is a projection onto a play-ground of more serious business: We admire the professional athletes, not because they can hit thrown balls with a stick, but because their ability to do that is emblematic of mastery of other "real world" conflicts.

Freudian treatments of play sometimes do not give enough prominence to the developmental potential of play. Play provides not just "hallucinations" of mastery but openings that lead to actual mastery through cognitive development. Erikson argues the therapeutic power of play, its potential for recovering normal functioning; he does not consider with any thoroughness its implications for education. It is interesting, however, that Erikson's notion of the conditions that must prevail before play can have therapeutic power parallel those that the cognitive psychologists see as necessary to development. To be managed properly in the therapeutic situation, play must be accepted, accorded prestige, and taken as evidence of mastery. Moreover, it must be allowed to be played out. If you don't let the child kick down the tower he has built, you rob his play of its completeness and thus of the power it had to produce a sense of mastery. If you "help" the child shut the door when he is having some difficulty doing it himself, you shut off possibilities of development.

Huizinga and Erikson help us see that play is neither mindless, nor random, nor frivolous, that it is, in important respects, more mindful, more controlled, and more committed than non-play. Play is labile, it presents itself as independent of (unsunk in) reality. But it is often undertaken with the profoundest dedication. How we may have wished that our students would work at their classes as they do at their play. This dedication sets itself up light-heartedly; the intensity of play depends upon some sense of its consequence. Socrates is a powerful embodiment of this paradox: he played, to Crito's chagrin, even with his life. He is also an embodiment of the fact that play is both freedom and order. "Play," writes Huizinga, "only becomes possible, thinkable and understandable when an influx of kind breaks down the absolute determinism of the cosmos."41

Huizinga goes on to list the specific requirements for play; two of these seem especially relevant to this pedagogical inquiry—the requirement of a ground and a stake, that is, of a designated domain and something at risk.

The playground is a kind of magic circle, one could also say an ivory tower. Within it, much is allowed that the real world prohibits; much is meaningful that the real world would call nonsense, or worse. American football provides a striking example; actions that are praiseworthy on the field would be serious crimes outside the temporal and spatial bounds of the game.

A corollary here is the need for a decorum. I speak here of no particular decorum, but of some set of conventions (not always specified in a book of rules) without which play is anarchy. Not all conventions will do equally well, of course; some would create unfair advantage, and so obviate play; some would call for acts that players could be expected to find obnoxious, immoral or unhealthy. Another way of putting this is to say that play is not possible unless the players feel they are playing freely. You can play tennis with the net down, if you can create a decorum your opponent will accept. But without a decorum ("protocol") is a more desirable synonym than "the rules of the game"; play is not possible.

The concept of the stake in play is rather different from the notion of behavioral objectives, or goals, and the difference seems to me crucial.

From a developmental perspective, goals must inhere in tasks. An objective gained without performance of the task, while it may be immediately useful, is developmentally meaningless. We have got our fish, without learning how to. In a writing class, our goal, most generally, must be not any particular performance, but a competence that will apply to similar, though not identical, tasks in the future.

Huizinga argued that the real stake in the high play he was describing was simply "glory." That, of course, is what Achilles played for finally. That is what our sports heroes are supposed to play for. Transposed into contemporary jargon, "glory" is "self-realization." That, I think, is what we may say the stake is in the writing classroom, and in education gener-
ally. That is the goal one takes up when he or she achieves "competence motivation."

The following words of I. A. Richards introduce another important consideration:

A child of eight is constantly made to feel that he is not understanding something. At eighteen he may misunderstand nearly as often, but the testing instance, which makes him realise that this is so, infrequently arises. Unless either his company or his studies are exceptional, he will rarely be forced to face any such disagreeable facts. For he will have acquired enough skill in the reproduction of more or less appropriate language to disguise most of his failures both from the world and from himself. He can answer questions in a way which may convince everybody, himself included, that he understands them. He may be able to translate difficult passages with every sign of discerriment, write passable essays and converse with great apparent intelligence upon any subjects. Yet in spite of these acquirements he may be making at innumerable points, what Mr. Russell once called, in connection with the words number and two, "a purely prudential use of language." That is, he may be using words not because he knows with any precision what he means by them, but because he knows they are ordinarily used, and does with them what he has heard other people do with them before.34

To give our students chances at the "glory" of self-realization, it is no doubt necessary to press them, not into pre-fabricated molds, but out of them, out of the "purely prudential use of language" into the chaos of growth, with all the doubt and indecision and recognition that one doesn't yet really understand, that falls thereby to him or her. Glory and self-realization are cloudy goals but they nevertheless carry important implications for writing pedagogy, especially in contrast to, say, behaviorism. One is that we cannot offer definitions of "good writing" except in the sort of way we define identity, selfhood. We should stop apologizing for the fact that we can't come up with the specific behaviors involved in good writing, except to talk about such matters as "coherence," "organization," etc. To specify behaviors in advance would be as senseless (and as malig) as telling someone who to be. The general goals of coherence, organization, creativity are not goals anyone needs to be taught to have; they are the qualities of a realized self. And self is realized, not through "behavior," but through action, in the sense of the word we have used throughout this essay.

Can we build our classroom programs upon this premise, even in the face of the intense pressures to teach "basic skills" that are relevant to specific occupations? I earnestly hope so. There is nothing in the development of a specific rhetorical scene (that of the technical report, say, or the judicial opinion) that necessitates distortion of this larger issue. All we have to do is keep in mind the notion of writing as an "act upon a scene."

That's all, though I am ashamed of making it sound easy.

Because of the great variation in pedagogical scenes, we must not try to say what species of the genus "play" should obtain in the writing classroom, so much as where to look for them. One place we may look for them, I think, is at the juncture between the descriptions of rhetorical theory and the narrations of developmental psychology. The tentativeness of the theory in both areas should not deter us here. We need a ground and a decorum for our students' actions, and we may find them in the many interesting and non-trivial characterizations now available in rhetorical and developmental theory.

There are already striking correspondences among some theoretical formulations now emerging in rhetoric and those taking shape in cognitive and developmental psychology. Vygotsky's notion that the child's egocentric speech becomes differentiated into inner speech and external speech corresponds provocatively with Britton's notion that expressive discourse is a kind of matrix for the student writer which becomes progressively differentiated into poetic and transactional discourse.35 Kinneavy, too, sees expressive discourse as a kind of matrix, though also as a kind of mature discourse in its own right.36 Moffett's scales of abstractions supply a functional dimension to the classifications developed by Kinneavy; Kinneavy's modes of discourse (description, narration, classification, evaluation) compare interestingly with Young, Becker and Flke's conception that any unit of experience can be viewed as a particle, a wave, or a field.37 Burke's pentad shows a striking parallelism with Jakobson's notions of language functions.38

These correspondences suggest the lineaments of a paradigm in rhetoric. That paradigm is based not only upon characterizations of texts, but upon characterizations of growth in symbolic function.

We do not want such theory in our writing classes as a subject, however. The theory itself tells us that. Theory presented in advance of performance can have two unhappy effects: it may limit performance to the values the theory propounds (Is this not a real danger whenever the writing assignments follow, instead of precede, the text materials?), or it may create a debilitating self-consciousness which will prejudice performance entirely. After performance, theory can help us get a view of what the writing is finally trying to do; it can help consolidate the enterprise and give it a sense of direction. The first priority for a writing teacher, however, is not to teach theory as such, but to create for his or her class the circumstances necessary for rational writerly action. Good theory can help us design a rational scene, and help us design the tasks to be performed within these scenes. It can help us answer the question: What is it to have and to solve a problem as a writer? The scene should present, insofar as possible, a real readership and a real reason for writing instead of, say, talking. The tasks should invite real rhetorical acts, which means, among other things that:

1. the tasks should be open-ended; that is, they should permit the invention of solutions, not just the finding of answers, and at higher levels of performance than we have a right to expect just then;
2. they should invite this higher level of performance, not demand the "answer" that the student could produce were she to attain the higher level, or were she to "cheat" at the present one;
3. the tasks should be presented in a series of units that incorporate a profound redundancy, not simple drill, but repetition with a difference; not in straight lines, but in spirals;
4. the tasks should either recapitulate the stages of functional development, or should encourage a metaphorical application of the understandings achieved in one domain to another domain that is manageable at the same level of performance;
5. the tasks should set something at risk (but not threaten) and should require rigor according to a decorum (but not rigidity);
6. the tasks should be presented, insofar as possible, in a full-fledged rhetorical context.

Assignments that meet these criteria are made, not found. Because of this, I am reluctant to set out specific assignments that practice what I'm preaching. Let me try to do it this way:

As I sit here wondering what assignments would be good for my next freshman composition class here at the University of Wyoming (all my past assignments have failed in one respect or another), this is what runs in my mind. I think I might open the first semester course by asking the students to record a
rake of an open discussion, then transcribe it, then play with it in ways that would invite an understanding of what is involved in moving from an oral exchange to an understandable written one. I probably ought to re-read Moffett’s chapter on Drama as I’m planning this. We ought to be able to do some sentence-combining here. Of course I will not simply discuss the transcription and then ask the students to write an essay telling what they learned about the difference between oral dialogue and writing. Instead I will set up some assignments that will enable the students to move back and forth between the two modes, that will expose, in the way the students’ writings are responded to by me and other students, any failures to create in the writing a context that we, the audience, can re-cognize. I think here we might also manage to dramatize, and thus perhaps exercise, some of the anxieties students have about writing, etc. Etc. Nearer the end of the semester I might set students writing for each other, each student with the task of discovering something that his partner needs or wants to know, then researching the thing and writing it up in a way that his partner judges to be complete. Then each would get together with the other to decide what, if anything, needed to be done to prepare the paper for the audience of teacher-with-gradebook, etc.

PARTING WORDS

Students have “little motivation to learn writing when we begin to teach it,” says Vygotsky. True, no doubt, but this would seem to pose no great obstacle to teaching writing. The more fearful reflection is that they have even less motivation after we have taught it, or, worse yet, that there is something in their cultural and political situation that prevents them, with rare exceptions, from ever being motivated. I’m talking about real writing, not the writing that you learn only so you can “use” it to make a living or get famous. Of course, one can do worse than train one’s students in such “uses”; one can also do a whole lot better. At least one might do a whole lot better.

There are risks here. Developmental learning in school is, as Vygotsky pointed out, all of a piece.26 At one more remove, what goes on in school is of a piece with what goes on in a culture. To “do” development while all about you are doing training for the roles that the Reigning Order has assigned, to treat your students as people while all about you are treating them as tabula rasa, is to risk being called irresponsible, and worse. It is also to risk having your students say they “didn’t learn anything,” because they too have got used to thinking of knowledge as a commodity, and they too, like other good consumer-taxpayers, think they ought to get “their money’s worth.”

I find the rhetorical arguments I have developed here leading inescapably into political ones, just as I think political arguments lead inescapably back to rhetoric.27 To say that we must find ways to make our students aware of themselves as creators of their culture, and not just servants of it, is to take both a political and a rhetorical stand. This makes of rhetoric a high calling indeed.

Footnotes

9Vygotsky, who died in 1934 at the age of 38, was obviously a man of remarkable insight. Though Thought and Language was suppressed from 1936-1956, “it continued to have a major impact upon the thinking of a generation of Russian psychologists, linguists, and psychopathologists” (Bruner, in intro.). His ideas continue to inspire researchers dealing with language acquisition and the development of writing abilities. Bruner, Moffett (below) and Britton (below) all acknowledge the influence of Vygotsky.
12Zoellner, p. 296, et passim.
14We are also encouraged in this inference by Wilcox (above) and Page Tigar, “ADE Survey of Freshman English,” ADE Bulletin, No. 43, (Nov. 1974), pp. 16-17.
16Vygotsky, Thought and Language, p. 80.
17I have this quote from an examination paper I was given at Oxford University in 1965. I assume the text is accurate though I do not have (and would appreciate getting) a citation to the publication in which it originally appeared.
23Ohmann, English in America, p. 136.
38I obviously do not embrace Martin Steinmann, Jr.’s formulation of the identity of thought and expression as it is found in his article “Rhetorical Researches,” *College English*, 27 (Jan. 1966), pp. 278-90.
41Huizinga, *Homo Ludens*, p. 3.
43Burke’s notion of how to view a word.
49Burke’s work is a prime example of the tendency.
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Peter T. Koper, “Authority as Emancipator in the Composition Classroom”

John Brereton, “Loading the Patterns”

Paula Johnson, “Freshman English in the Ivy League”

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